



45 Congress St.

Salem, MA 01945

Bully Prevention and Intervention Plan

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

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APPENDIX A - BULLYING AND RETALIATION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Salem Academy Charter School (“SACS”), in partnership with parents, guardians, and the community, and in keeping with SACS's core value of respect for human differences, believes that a positive, safe, and civil environment in the school is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Bullying disrupts a student’s ability to learn by preventing that student’s full engagement with his or her education. Moreover, bullying compromises a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Therefore, SACS prohibits bullying. This plan applies to students and members of school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, and paraprofessionals.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, and retaliation, are prohibited:

1. On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the school district; and
2. At a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by SACS, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of the school.
3. Retaliation against any person associated with a report of bullying or the investigation thereof shall be prohibited, as is falsely accusing another as a means of harassment or bullying.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. “Respondent” means a student or staff member, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional, who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.
- B. “Aggressor” means a student or staff member who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.
- C. “Target” means a student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.
- D. “Bullying” for the purposes of the requirements related to Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 legislation means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:
 1. Directly or indirectly causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;
 2. Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to themselves, or of damages to the target’s property;

3. Creates hostile learning and/or social environment at school for the target;
 4. Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
 5. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school.
- E. “Retaliation” means any form of intimidation, harassment, or reprisal against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.
- F. “Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic device such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. This includes email, text messages, and internet postings on any app or platform. See M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.
- G. “Hostile Environment” is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student’s education.

II. LEADERSHIP

- A.** SACS acknowledges the importance of updating its Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (the “Plan”) at all levels. As required, the Plan will be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (“DESE”) and posted on the school system website. Moreover, the Plan will be reviewed annually and updated as needed, as mandated by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.
- B.** Priority Statements
1. SACS expects that all members of the school community will treat each other with respect. The school is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from all forms of unkindness, including bullying and cyberbullying. The SACS is committed to preventing and eliminating all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.
 2. SACS understands that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including but not limited to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, housing status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. SACS will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the SACS community and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.
 3. SACS will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. SACS will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation and take timely action to end that behavior and restore any target’s sense of safety. SACS will support this communication in all

aspects of the school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

4. This Plan serves SACS as a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and SACS is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, SACS has established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The Senior Director of Academics, Managing Director of Student Services, Upper School Principal, Lower School Principal, and Dean of Students are responsible for the implementation and oversight of this Plan.

C. Planning and Oversight

1. The Senior Administration Team members are responsible for the implementation and oversight of this Plan.
2. The Dean of Students will receive, investigate, record, and track incident reports that include information related to targets and respondents.
3. The Student Services Team will be responsible for collecting and analyzing school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problems and to measure outcomes.
4. The Student Services Team will plan supports that respond to the needs of the targets and respondents.
5. The Student Services Team will choose and oversee the implementation of the curricula that SACS will use.
6. The Student Services Team, in consultation with the Administrative Team, will develop new or revised policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designate key staff to be in charge of implementation of them.
7. The Dean of Students, with the support of the Administrative Team, will amend the student and personnel handbooks and codes of conduct as needed according to the Plan.
8. The Student Services Team, in coordination with the Administrative Team, will lead the parent or family engagement efforts and draft parent information materials.
9. Every year, the Student Services Team, in consultation with the Administrative Team, reviews and updates the Plan as needed. The Plan will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

III. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- A. SACS will meet the requirements under M.G.L. c.71, S 37037O, to provide ongoing professional development for all staff.

B. Annual Staff Training on the Plan

1. Annual training for all SACS staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that The Senior Director of Academics, Managing Director of Student Services, Upper School Principal, Lower School Principal, and Dean of Students will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to

participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.

C. Ongoing Professional Development

1. The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of the tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O. The content of professional development will be informed by research and will include:
 - (1) Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent and respond to bullying;
 - (2) Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop and respond to bullying incidents.
 - (3) Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among respondents, targets, and witnesses to the bullying;
 - (4) Research findings on bullying including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment.
 - (5) Information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
 - (6) Internet and electronic device safety as they relate to cyberbullying.

2. Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development. Additional areas identified by the school for professional development may include:
 - (1) Promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
 - (2) Fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
 - (3) Building relationships and communicating with families;
 - (4) Managing classroom behaviors constructively;
 - (5) Using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
 - (6) Applying constructive disciplinary practices;
 - (7) Teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
 - (8) Engaging students in school or classroom planning decision-making; and
 - (9) Maintaining safe and caring classrooms for all students.
- (10) Written Notice to Staff
 - (a) SACS will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school personnel handbook and the code of conduct.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Evaluating Curriculum

1. The Senior Director of Academics, Managing Director of Student Services, Upper School Principal, Lower School Principal, and Dean of Students, with input from appropriate stakeholders, engages in regular review and assessment of the adequacy of current programs. This may include the following:
 - (1) Review of current policies and procedures;
 - (2) Review of available data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying and behavioral incidents;
 - (3) Assessment of available resources, including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services;
 - (4) Reading current and relevant articles and research on the best methodology to prevent and intervene to address bullying and cyberbullying;
 - (5) Research and review of “field-tested” and research-based anti-bullying curricula and instructional guides.
 - (6) Review of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health and Wellness Curriculum Frameworks to provide a working curriculum context for anti-bullying curriculum and
 - (7) Assessments on initial and periodic needs, by surveying students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues.

B. Identifying Resources

1. The Senior Director of Academics and/or designee, with input from appropriate stakeholders, will identify counseling and other service resources currently available to targets, respondents, and their families.
2. SACS will identify current staffing and programs that support creating a positive school environment by focusing on early interventions and intensive services. Recommendations of additional resources, supports, and/or action items will be made relative to any service gaps identified by the review process. Administrators, the Student Services Team, and other educators and support providers may participate in identifying resources and areas of need.

C. Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches

1. Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research that, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:
 - (1) Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
 - (2) Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
 - (3) Emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
 - (4) Enhancing students’ skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communication and
 - (5) Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that respects diversity and difference.

- (6) Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Plan. SACS will review the Plan specifically as it relates to how students report instances of bullying at the beginning of each academic year.

D. General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts

1. The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of the SACS bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:
 - (1) Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
 - (2) Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including, but not limited to, students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and students experiencing homelessness;
 - (3) Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
 - (4) Encouraging adults to develop positive relations with students;
 - (5) Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors.
 - (6) Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
 - (7) Using technology safely and
 - (8) Supporting students' interest and participation in nonacademic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

V. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

A. General Guidelines for Reporting and Responding

1. All SACS employees will utilize the following guidelines in dealing with reported or observed bullying or retaliation situations:
2. Staff will not ignore bullying. Respondents count on adults to ignore bullying behaviors, and this allows them to continue bullying activities.
3. Staff will intervene immediately.
4. Staff will separate alleged Respondent(s) and target(s). Staff will remain neutral and calm in dealing with alleged bullying situations. The tone that staff take with students during the investigation can affect their ability to defuse the bullying.
5. Staff will reassure the reporter(s) and target(s) that they have done the right thing by reporting.
6. Staff will make sure that target(s) and witness(es) know that they will be protected from retaliation.
7. Staff will seek to empower the Respondent(s) to change by reminding the Respondent(s) that they have the power to stop the bullying. We will teach strategies to assist respondent(s) to stop.
8. Staff will maintain confidentiality, but information on bullying must be reported to the Dean of Students.
9. Staff will be objective in note taking.
10. Staff will be timely.

B. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

1. Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. Staff members will report immediately to The Senior Director of Academics, Managing Director of Student Services, Upper School Principal, Lower School Principal, and Dean of Students any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents, guardians, or other individuals may be made anonymously, although no formal disciplinary action will be taken solely based on an anonymous report. SACS will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community, including, but not limited to, a Bullying Incident Report Form (see Appendix A), a dedicated mailing address, and an email address.
2. Use of a Bullying Incident Report Form is not required as a condition of making a report. However, SACS will provide access to a Bullying Incident Report Form as follows:
 - (1) Include a copy of the Bullying Incident Report Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians;
 - (2) Make the form available in the main office of each school and other locations determined by the Executive Director and
 - (3) Post the form on the SACS website.
3. The Bullying Incident Report Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) or origin of students and parents or guardians.
4. At the beginning of each school year, the Dean of Students will provide the school community, including staff, students, and parents and guardians with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the school building-level administrators (Executive Director, Senior Director of Academics, Managing Director of Student Services, Upper School Principal, Lower School Principal, and Dean of Students), will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.
5. Reporting by Staff
 - (1) A staff member will report immediately to the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students when one witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. If the Dean of Students is the respondent, the report should immediately be made to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the respondent, the report should be made to the Chair of the SACS Board of Trustees. The requirement to report to the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or system policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.
6. Reporting by Students, Parents, Guardians, and Others

- (1) SACS expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged respondent solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member or with the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students.
- (2) If the report is about a staff member, the same process is followed. The report may be made to the Senior Director of Academics, Managing Director of Student Services, Upper School Principal, Lower School Principal, or Executive Director as well. If the Executive Director is the respondent, the report should be made to the Chair of the SACS Board of Trustees.

C. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

1. Safety

- (1) Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the respondent in the classroom, at lunch, or on a transportation vehicle; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and respondent’s access to the target. The Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.
- (2) The Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who: has reported bullying or retaliation; has witnessed bullying or retaliation; provides information during an investigation; or has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

(1) Notice to Parents or Guardians

- (a) Upon completion of an investigation of a report of alleged bullying or retaliation, the parents of the respondent(s) and the target(s) will be informed of the results of the investigation, whether the allegations were found to be substantiated, whether a violation of SACS policy was found, and (to the extent consistent with federal and state law) whether disciplinary action has or will be consistent with federal and state law) whether disciplinary action has or will be taken and whether or what steps will be taken to prevent retaliation or further actions of bullying.

(2) Notice to Another School or District

- (a) If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, nonpublic school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Dean of Students or Assistant

Dean of Students who was informed first of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the Dean of Students or Principal of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communication will be in accordance with state and Federal privacy laws and regulations and 603 CMR 49.00.

3. Notice to Law Enforcement

- (1) At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the respondent, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will notify the local law enforcement agency.
- (2) Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00, SACS policy, and agreed-upon standard practice with the Salem Police Department. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21, who is no longer enrolled in school, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the respondent.

D. Investigation

1. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with SACS policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will consult with legal counsel about the investigation. The Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will maintain a written record of the investigation, including preserving all email and text communication.
2. The Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students shall promptly investigate a report of bullying or retaliation, giving consideration to all the circumstances at hand, including guidelines for responding to a report of bullying or retaliation. The guidelines will be adapted as necessary to respond appropriately to the report.
3. Pre-investigation
 - (1) Even before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, SACS personnel will consider whether there is a need to take immediate steps to support the alleged target and/or protect the alleged target from further potential incidents of concern (See Section C (1) above). In taking any such action, however, the rights of both the alleged target and the alleged respondent will be considered.

E. Interviews

1. Once the allegations of the target are established, the investigator will gather other evidence, which often involves interviews of the alleged respondent and/or other witnesses. The investigator will remind the alleged respondent and witnesses about the importance of the investigation, the obligation to be truthful, and that retaliation against persons whom they believe might have reported the incidents or cooperated with the investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
2. Interviews may be conducted by the Dean of Students, the Assistant Dean of Students or their designee(s), and in consultation with the school counselor or school

psychologist, as appropriate. To the extent practicable and given their obligation to investigate and address the matter, the Dean of Students or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The Dean of Students or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation, including information detailing the investigation steps, findings, basis, and response. The records of the investigation will be maintained in accordance with federal and state privacy laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), 603 CMR 23.00, and 603 CMR 49.00. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

F. Determination(s)

1. The Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will make a determination based on all the facts and circumstances. If, after an investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted from participating in school or benefiting from school activities. The Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will:
 - (1) Determine what remedial action is required, if any, and
 - (2) Determine what responsive action and/or disciplinary action is necessary.
 - (3) The Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will promptly inform the parents or guardians of both respondent(s) and target(s) of the results of the investigation, consistent with applicable state and Federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students cannot report specific information to the target’s parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a “stay away” order or other directive that the target must be aware of to report violations. In addition, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students may consult with appropriate staff to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.
 - (4) The Dean of Students/ or the Assistant Dean of Students shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about DESE’s Problem Resolution System and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination. See Section VIII.
 - (5) The Dean of Students or the Assistant Dean of Students shall maintain a file of all reports of bullying and retaliation, along with the appropriate investigative materials.
 - (6) The SACS Student Handbook describes the due process appeals policy guaranteed to all students.

G. Responses to Bullying

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills Building
 - (1) Upon the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he/she will use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior

(M.G.L. c. 71, § 37037O(d)(v)). Skill-building approaches that the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students may consider include:

- (a) Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students in consultation with counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- (b) Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- (c) Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills-building activities at home; and
- (d) Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

- (1) If the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the plan and with the school code of conduct. Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, which will be considered in conjunction with state laws regarding student discipline.
- (2) If the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action or equivalent to that for acts of bullying or retaliation.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

- (1) The Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. Specific examples of responses to promote safety are included in "Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation," Section C1.
- (2) Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will work with appropriate staff to implement them immediately.

H. Responding to a Report of Bullying by SACS Staff

1. SACS recognizes that in some situations an instance of bullying could be reported where the respondent is a staff member. In such events, SACS will ensure the situation is properly investigated and that all of the witnesses can speak truthfully without fear of consequences. Retaliation against someone who reports bullying or

provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In the event that there is a situation where a student or staff member reports an incident of bullying by a staff member, then the investigation procedures listed above will apply. Additional safety measures may be appropriate where the respondent is a staff member and the alleged target is a student due to the power differential between staff and students.

2. The Executive Director or designee will conduct a thorough investigation and can rely on the support of the Managing Director of Operations and HR for guidance on potential action steps related to an individual's performance or employment. With the support of the Managing Director of Operations and HR, the individual in charge of investigating will communicate action steps with students, staff and families as is legally permissible.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

A. Parent Education and Resources

1. SACS, in collaboration with the School Family Community team (SFC), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (PAC), and others, will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by each school.

B. Notification Requirements

1. Each year, the Dean of Students or Assistant Dean of Students will notify parents and guardians of enrolled students about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. SACS will send parents and guardians written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's Internet safety policy.
2. All notices and information will be made available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents and guardians. The school system will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

A. Consistent with state and Federal laws and the policies of SACS, SACS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, creed, gender identity, ethnicity, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in English language or a foreign language, prior academic achievement, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents SACS from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a personal membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or Federal law, or SACS policies. All students are afforded the same protection under the Plan regardless of their status under the law.

B. In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school. SACS to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c 71, §§ 37H or

37H1/2, other applicable laws in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

VIII. PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM

- A. Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of Chapter 71 of the General Laws to include (g) (v): The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about DESE's Problem Resolution System ("PRS") and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the PRS. This information will be made available in both hard copy and electronic formats.

- B. Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the SACS may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at:
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available in the Executive Director's office.