



**PROSPECT HILL ACADEMY**  
CHARTER SCHOOL

# BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

**Early Childhood Campus**

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Somerville, MA 02143

**Upper Elementary Campus**

17 Franklin Street  
Somerville, MA 02145

**Upper School Campus**

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Prospect Hill Academy Charter School (“PHA”) Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (“Plan”) meets the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, S370 and is modeled after the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Model Plan for dealing with bullying behaviors in our schools. The Plan includes strategies for identifying, reporting and responding to bullying behaviors. This Plan is a key part of our school’s mission: **“Prospect Hill Academy Charter School will prepare each student for success in college, inspire a lifelong love of learning, and foster responsible citizenship,”** and it resonates with our seven core values of *high expectations for all, collaboration, balanced approach, data-driven decision making, equity, accountability, and personalization*. Please note the use of the words “target” instead of “victim” and “aggressor” instead of “perpetrator” or “bully” are used throughout this document to be consistent with language used by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### I. LEADERSHIP

School leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. Schools partner with a various representatives of community leadership in promoting positive school climate that is safe for all student learners.

#### A. Public involvement in developing the Plan:

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, the PHA Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. Consultation included: notice and a public comment period before the Plan was adopted by the board. Various constituencies both in the school community and in the larger community were asked for their input throughout the drafting and development process:

- a. Draft document period: October-November-December, 2010
  - Anti-Bullying Task Force
- b. Public Comment Period: November-December, 2010
- c. Board of Trustees Adoption: December 16, 2010

#### B. Assessing needs and resources:

The PHA Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is our system’s blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school culture initiatives. As part of the planning process, school

leaders, with input from families, students and staff, are assessing the adequacy of current programs; reviewing current policies and procedures; evaluating available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and analyzing available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services.

This mapping” process will assist PHA in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on these findings, PHA will revise or develop policies and procedures; establish partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement; and set priorities.

On an annual basis, PHA will utilize surveys of students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate, culture, and safety issues. School leaders will collect and analyze campus-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying (e.g., focusing on identifying vulnerable populations and “hot spots” in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses). This information will help to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.

### **C. Planning and oversight:**

PHA school leaders will: 1) receive reports on bullying; 2) collect and analyze building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes; 3) create a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors; 4) plan for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law; 5) plan supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors; 6) choose and implement the curricula that the school or district will use; 7) develop new or revise current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designate key staff to be in charge of implementation of them; 8) amend student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct; 9) lead the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials; and 10) review and update the Plan each year.

### **D. The Prospect Hill Academy Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan Priority Statement:**

PHA expects that all members of the school community will treat each other with kindness and with respect for differences.

PHA is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms

of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

PHA understands that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. PHA is committed to creating a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and providing all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

PHA 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. School leaders will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. PHA will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Prospect Hill Academy Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber bullying, PHA is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, PHA has established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation. K-12 and campus-based school leaders are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

## **II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School's ongoing professional development plans reflect the requirements under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, meals program staff, custodians, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals.

### **A. Annual staff training on the Plan:**

Annual training for all school staff on the PHA Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will include staff responsibilities under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee 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 will 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.

## **B. Ongoing professional development:**

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of 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 school-wide and professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- 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;
- information on the incidence and nature of cyber bullying and
- internet safety issues as they relate to cyber bullying

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 or district for professional development:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language; fostering an
- understanding of and respect for diversity and difference; building
- relationships and communicating with families; constructively managing
- classroom behaviors; using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices; teaching students skills
- including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for
- others; engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

## **C. Written notice to staff:**

Prospect Hill Academy will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff responsibilities, in the school employee handbook. Additionally, the Plan will be shared electronically with all staff on an annual basis.

### **III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of all students are addressed. These students include targets, aggressors or bystanders of bullying or cyber bullying. PHA will also address the emotional needs of these students' families. The PHA Plan includes strategies for providing supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the school's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, available services reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets, aggressors and bystanders. PHA provides counseling or referral to appropriate services for students who are aggressors, targets, and family members of those students.

#### **A. Identifying resources:**

PHA currently employs four school counselors/social workers (4.0 FTE) and three nurses (3.0 FTE) as resources to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families. Schools leaders review staffing and program needs at least annually to ensure the creation and ongoing promotion of positive school environments, focusing on early interventions and intensive services, and develop recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps.

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School is committed to working in collaboration with local and state agencies to adopt evidenced based curricula and to provide additional preventative services to students, parents and guardians, and faculty and staff.

#### **B. Counseling and other services:**

School counselors, nurses, leaders, and special educators provide a variety of skill-based services to students within the educational setting that include on-going emotional support, risk assessment, crisis intervention, and help with community based counseling referrals when appropriate. School counselors meet with parents and teachers as needed to help address students' academic, emotional and behavioral concerns as collaboratively as possible. School counselors work with administrators to provide linguistically appropriate resources to identified families. School counselors maintain up to-date information on community based mental

health referrals as well as Community Service Agencies (CSAs) within the local vicinity, providing services to Medicaid eligible students. School counselors, leaders, and educators work collaboratively to develop behavior plans and social thinking groups for students with social skill weaknesses. The team also works together to educate and support parents, conduct parent workshops and apprise parents of outside resources to enhance parenting skills and provide for the needs of children.

**C. Students with disabilities:**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when an IEP Team determines that a student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

**D. Referral to outside services:**

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School utilizes a referral protocol for referring students and families to outside services. School counselors and other specialists are committed to helping students and families access appropriate and timely service; all referrals comply with relevant laws and policies. PHA utilizes a list of local service providers that is updated annually by the school counselors, nurses, and leaders.

**IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School will provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's evidence-based curricula. Effective instruction includes classroom approaches, whole-school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development.

**A. Specific bullying prevention approaches:**

Bullying prevention curricula is informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- *Responsive Classroom* for students in grades K-6, including beginning each day with a "morning meeting" aimed at relationship and community-building;
- advisory program and curriculum in grades 7-12;
- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- 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;

- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber bullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications;
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference; and
- providing parents and guardians with information regarding the school's bullying prevention curricula

Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the PHA Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan through school assemblies and/or small group meetings at the beginning of each school year.

**B. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts:**

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- communicating with parents and guardians regarding the school's goals and expectations for students and students' safety using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline; using positive behavioral supports;
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- 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;
- using the Internet safely; and
- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

**V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, Prospect Hill Academy Charter School has policies and procedures in place for

receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur.

#### **A. Reporting bullying or retaliation:**

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 must be recorded in writing. All employees required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other non-employees may be made anonymously. PHA will make reporting resources available to the school community through widespread communication and circulation of the PHA Bullying Incident Reporting Form (Appendix A).

Use of the PHA Bullying Incident Reporting Form Report is not required as a condition of making a report. That said, PHA will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school's website.

At the beginning of each school year, PHA will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or 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 principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the PHA Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

##### **1. Reporting by Staff**

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with PHA's policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

##### **2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others**

PHA 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 principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor 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. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

## **B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation:**

### **1. Safety**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; predetermining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or at other school or school-related events; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation. The confidentiality of students and witnesses reporting alleged acts of bullying will be maintained to the extent possible given the school’s obligation to investigate the matter.

### **2. Obligations to Notify Others**

#### **a. Notice to parents or guardians:**

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it.

#### **b. Notice to Another School or District:**

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 principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR.

**c. Notice to Law Enforcement:**

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. 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 principal or designee 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 aggressor. In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with local law enforcement/school resource officer, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

**C. Investigation:**

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Interviews will be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with district policies and procedures for investigations and for possible disciplinary action. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with the Head of School regarding consultation with legal counsel pertaining to the investigation of the alleged report.

#### **D. Determinations:**

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will:

- 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and
- 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, 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.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee 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 in order to report violations.

#### **E. Responses to Bullying:**

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School has incorporated a range of individualized strategies and interventions that may be used in response to remediate a student's skills or to prevent further incidences of bullying and/or retaliation.

##### **1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior through Skills-Building**

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, Prospect Hill Academy will utilize a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L.

c. 71, § 370(d)(v). Skill building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with school counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

## **2. Taking Disciplinary Action**

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, 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 PHA Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and with the school's code of conduct/student handbook.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline. If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the school's code of conduct/student handbook.

## **3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others**

The principal or designee(s) 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. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee 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 principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

## **VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES**

The Prospect Hill Academy Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan includes strategies to engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of each of our schools as well as the district to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. Provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the schools include: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school or district plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyber bullying. Parents and guardians will also be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Prospect Hill Academy Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Each campus will collaborate with parent leaders, Parent and Community Outreach Coordinators, and Parent Advisory Boards to create parent resource and information networks. Schools will join with these parent groups to 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 the school.

Schools will annually inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the antibullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyber bullying and online safety. The schools will send parents written notice each year about the student related sections of the PHA Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and the Internet Acceptable Use Policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. Prospect Hill Academy Charter School will post the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and related information on its website.

## **VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses and at school bus stops or in school related activities. Schools will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. Prospect Hill Academy Charter School will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular

activities, and parent or guardian involvement. Acts of bullying, which include cyber bullying, are prohibited:

- 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 through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district, and
- 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 a school district, 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 a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited. As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

## VIII. DEFINITIONS

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as noted below.

**Aggressor** is a student who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

**Bullying**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is 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:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target; infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Cyber bullying** is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyber bullying.

**Hostile environment**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, 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 a student's education.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**Staff** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, and athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## **IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Prospect Hill Academy Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Prospect Hill Academy Charter School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this Plan covers the behavior.

**APPENDIX A: PHA BULLYING INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

1. Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report: \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. Check whether you are the: Target of the behavior  Reporter (not the target)

3. Check whether you are a:  Student  Staff member (specify role) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent  Administrator  Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your contact information/telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

4. If student, state your school: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

5. If staff member, state your school or work site: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Information about the Incident:**

Name of Target (of behavior): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of Incident(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Incident(s)** (Be as specific as possible): \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ Student Staff Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ Student Staff Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ Student Staff Other \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.**

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FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

**9. Signature of Person Filing this Report:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

**10: Form Given to:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date Received:** \_\_\_\_\_ **II.**

**INVESTIGATION**

**1. Investigator(s):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Interviews:**

**Interviewed aggressor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Interviewed target Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Interviewed witnesses Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Any prior documented Incidents by the aggressor?**  Yes  No

**If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously?**  Yes  No

**Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION**  Yes  No

**Summary of Investigation:**

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

**III. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION**

**1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:**

YES  NO

- Bullying  Incident documented as \_\_\_\_\_
- Retaliation  Discipline referral only \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Contacts:**

- Target's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Law Enforcement Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Action Taken:**

- Loss of Privileges  Detention  STEP referral  Suspension
- Community Service  Education  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Describe Safety Planning:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Follow-up with  
**Target:** scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ **Initial and date when completed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Follow-up with Aggressor:** scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ **Initial and date when completed:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Report forwarded to Principal: Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Report forwarded to Head of School:**  
**Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
(If principal was not the investigator)

**Signature and Title:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**  
\_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX B: PHA BULLYING DETERMINATION FLOW CHART**

