



Rules and Behavioral Expectations

Bullying/Harassment

This Bullying Prevention Policy is adopted pursuant to and shall be implemented in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/22-110, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, 23 Ill. Admin. Code § 1.295, and other applicable federal and Illinois laws. This policy applies to NewHope Academy, NewHope Academy West Campus, NewHope Academy East Campus, and NewHope Academy Extension of Services, collectively referred to as 'NewHope.

Nothing in this Section is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

Bullying based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited at NewHope. No student enrolled at NewHope shall be subjected to bullying:

- During any school-sponsored education program or activity;
- While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities;
- Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment; or

Bullying is prohibited during any school-sponsored educational program or activity; while at school, on school property, on school transportation, or at a school-sponsored or school-sanctioned event; through school technology; and through nonschool technology when the conduct causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of the school. This item applies only in cases in which the school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does **not** require the school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

"Bullying" includes "cyber-bullying" and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
- Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
- Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
- Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying may take various forms, including, without limitation, harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, posting or distributing sexually explicit images, theft, public

humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is illustrative and non-exhaustive.

“Cyber-bullying” under this policy is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. “Cyber-bullying” includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this policy. Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, cyberbullying also includes the posting or distribution by electronic means of an unauthorized digital replica if the posting or distribution creates any of the effects identified in the definition of bullying.”

Bullying is contrary to Illinois law and the policies of NewHope. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, having knowledge of any incident(s) considered to be acts of bullying as defined in this policy are asked to promptly report the bullying to the Director. A student may report bullying orally or in writing to the Director, a teacher, a social worker, or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Reports may also be made by telephone, email, in person, or anonymously. Anonymous reports may also be made in writing and provided to the address below, however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

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Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, includes procedures for promptly informing parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying within 24 hours after the school's administration is made aware of the students' involvement in the incident and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. The school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or legal guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained by the school within the 24-hour period.

"Restorative measures" means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school. (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

The Director or designee shall promptly review every report to determine whether the alleged conduct falls within NewHope's jurisdiction and shall promptly investigate and address all reports within NewHope's jurisdiction. A student's disability, including whether conduct may be a manifestation of disability, shall be considered when

determining appropriate interventions, supports, services, and consequences, but shall not be used as a basis for declining to investigate a reported incident.

NewHope will comply with the following procedure for promptly investigating and addressing reports of bullying:

- NewHope will make all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
- Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
- Notifying the principal or school administrator or his or her designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
- Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.
- Information concerning a report and investigation shall be maintained in accordance with applicable federal and State student privacy laws. NewHope cannot promise complete confidentiality when disclosure is necessary to investigate, protect students, or comply with law.
- As soon as possible after a report is received, the administrative team will be notified of the report of the incident(s) of bullying.

Interventions that may be taken to address findings of incidents of bullying in the school, include, but are not limited to: school therapy services, restorative measures, social emotional skill building, and community-based services. Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in an intentional act of bullying will be subject to disciplinary consequences as deemed appropriate and consistent with the school's disciplinary policies. Consistent with applicable federal and State student privacy laws, NewHope may communicate relevant information concerning a bullying incident to a student's placing or referring school district when necessary to coordinate educational programming, student safety, services, supports, or legally required procedures. An individualized education program ("IEP") meeting may be convened to discuss the impact, if any, on the student's current educational program, placement, supports, and services.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying per this policy is a violation of this policy and strictly prohibited. Anyone engaging in retaliation or reprisal against any person who reports an act of bullying may face consequences and appropriate remedial action as deemed necessary by NewHope and consistent with the school's disciplinary policies. Appropriate consequences and remedial action, which are consistent with the school's disciplinary policies, may also be taken against a person found to have falsely accused another of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying. No person shall be punished for making a good-faith report of bullying or providing information during an investigation, even if the investigation does not substantiate bullying. Knowingly making a false accusation or knowingly providing materially false information may result in appropriate remedial or disciplinary action consistent with applicable law and school policy.

Please also note the following related to the development, notification and publication, and evaluation of this policy:

This policy is based on engagement with a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.

This policy shall be included in the student handbook, published on the school's website, and posted wherever the school's other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are posted. A copy of this policy may also be requested from Bethany Arteaga Director.

This policy will also be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

This policy shall be implemented consistently with NewHope's other applicable policies and with the requirements governing nonpublic, nonsectarian elementary and secondary schools.

NewHope shall review and reevaluate this policy and its outcomes and effectiveness at least once every two years and shall make any necessary and appropriate revisions.

- 1) the frequency of victimization;
- 2) student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school;
- 3) identification of areas of the school where bullying occurs;
- 4) the types of bullying utilized; and
- 5) bystander intervention or participation.

Following each biennial review and after any revision, NewHope shall file the current bullying prevention policy with the Illinois State Board of Education in the manner required by ISBE.

E-BULLY Tipline: Provides assistance to kids, teens, parents and school personnel coping with cyberbullying and Internet safety issues. If you believe that you or someone you know is being bullied online, please call [888.414.7678](tel:888.414.7678) to contact an Internet Safety Specialist.

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