

## **Forest Academy Anti-Bullying Policy**

It is the policy and commitment of the Academy to creating and supporting an educational environment for all students that is safe, secure, and conducive to learning. Remedial measures shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior and protect the victim of the act.

### **BULLYING IS PROHIBITED**

Bullying of a student, whether by other students, staff, visitors, board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, or volunteers, is prohibited. All students are protected under this policy, and bullying is prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivation

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is defined as any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm 1 or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of 1 or more students.
2. Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the schools educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health.
4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited at school. "At school" is defined as on school premises, at school-sponsored activities or events, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or using a telecommunications access device or a telecommunications service provider if the telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider is owned by or under the control of the Academy.

"Telecommunications access device" and "telecommunications service provider" mean those terms as defined in Section 219a of the Michigan Penal Code (MCL § 750.219a).

Bullying that does not occur "at school," as defined above, including bullying that occurs over the Internet (cyber-bullying) that causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with this policy and applicable law.

### **REPORTS OF BULLYING**

Every student is encouraged to report any situation that the student believes to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to a Teacher, Counselor, Principal or other staff member.

Staff members shall promptly report all student situations that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to the Building Principal. Complaints against administrators shall be reported to the Director of Schools. Complaints against the Director of Schools shall be reported to the Management Company.

Retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with reliable

information about an act of bullying is prohibited. Retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a report of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as suspected bullying behavior.

Making intentionally false accusations about bullying is prohibited. Retaliation and making intentionally false accusations about bullying shall result in corrective and/or disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion, where applicable.

### **INVESTIGATING BULLYING**

All complaints about bullying that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated and documented. The Principal is responsible for the investigation. If the investigation results in a finding that an instance of bullying has occurred, it shall result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary or corrective action, up to and including expulsion for students, up to and including discharge for employees, up to and including exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

### **DOCUMENTING BULLYING**

Where the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, notification will be provided to the parent or legal guardian of a victim of bullying and the parent or legal guardian of a perpetrator of the bullying.

The Academy shall document any prohibited incident of bullying that is reported and shall document all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals. The Director of Schools shall provide a report of all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals, to the Board on an annual basis.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Academy will comply with all applicable laws regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information within student educational records.

### **NOTIFICATION**

This policy will be annually circulated to parents and students, and will be posted on the *Academy's* website.

### **DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS RESPONSIBILITY**

The Director of Schools is the school official responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented. The Director of Schools is directed to develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy. Guidelines shall include reporting and investigative procedures, as needed.

Reference: Matt's Safe School Law, Public Act 241 of 2011 (MCL § 380.1310b).

Boards must conduct at least one public hearing prior to adopting a policy that complies with MCL 380.1310b.

The policy must be adopted by June 6, 2012, and within 30 days of its adoption, a copy of the policy must be provided to the Michigan Department of Education.

Date Adopted: 4/24/12

Authorized Signature: Nancy Murray