



## Bullying Policy

### Philosophy of Gateway Preparatory Academy

Gateway Preparatory Academy is committed to a safe, civil, and inviting educational environment for all its students, employees, volunteers, and patrons. Such an environment must be free from harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Gateway expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities.

Gateway expects students of all levels to demonstrate a proper regard for the rights, welfare, and intellectual freedom of other students, school staff, volunteers, and patrons.

Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of bullying, harassment, or intimidation may still be prohibited by other Gateway policies, such as the Student Discipline Policy, or by general classroom, program, and facility rules.

### Definitions

**Bullying** is defined as intentionally or knowingly placing a student or school employee in fear of physical harm or in fear of harm to their property by:

- Endangering the physical health or safety of a student or school employee
- Physical brutality
- Forced consumption of any food, liquid, drug, or other substance, or
- Physically obstructing freedom of movement

**Bullying** is also defined as repetitive, negative actions intended to harm, threaten, or frighten someone. Such behavior may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Social targeting with intent to harm
- Emotional targeting with intent to harm
- Targeting on social media sites or “cyber-bullying” with intent to harm

**Bullying always includes a *pattern* of negative behavior that is of significant intensity and duration, implies an imbalance of power, and continues even when the victim's distress is obvious.**

**Cyber-Bullying** is defined as using the Internet, a cell phone, or any other device to send or post text, video, or images with the intent or knowledge that the text, video, or image will hurt, embarrass, or threaten another individual; or with a reckless disregard for the potential of such transmission to inflict such harm, embarrassment, or threats.



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**Harassment** is defined as repeatedly communicating to another individual, in an objectively demeaning or disparaging manner, statements that contribute to a hostile work or learning environment. Harassment is illegal when an employer, supervisor, co-worker, or student singles out another individual because of any of the following characteristics or when the content of derogatory remarks relates directly to any of these protected categories:

- Race
- Sex
- National Origin
- Gender Identity
- Marital Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Religious Affiliation
- Ancestry
- Age
- Arrest or Conviction Record
- Military Service

Illegal harassment involves a pattern of abusive and degrading conduct directed against a person because of his or her protected class that is sufficient to interfere with work or school and creates and offensive and hostile work environment.

**Hazing** is bullying that occurs for the purpose of initiation or admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition of membership or acceptance into a group.

**Intimidation** is bullying by means of a written, verbal, or physical act intended create an intimidating or threatening environment.

## Prohibitions

Gateway Preparatory Academy strictly prohibits bullying, harassment, cyber-bullying, hazing, intimidation or any other act that endangers the physical health or safety of a student or school employee, any brutality of a physical nature, any forced or unwilling consumption, any forced or coerced activity of a sexual nature, physically obstructing the freedom of movement of a student or school employee; as well as any intense, repetitive, negative patterns of behavior that are intended to harm, threaten, or frighten someone.

Infractions defined as bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation shall be handled in accordance with Gateway Preparatory Academy's *Student Discipline Policy* and shall follow specified procedures as outlined in that policy.



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Gateway Preparatory Academy considers bullying a major infraction, in most cases, subject to the discretion of the Administration. Like other major infractions, bullying may be grounds for a suspension or an expulsion. Other consequences for bullying may include but are not limited to admonishment, work projects, classroom or administrative detentions, temporary removal from the classroom, community enrichment, etc. Consequences for bullying or harassment may also include mandatory meetings between students and the Administration, mandatory meetings between students, parents, and administrators, as well as the establishment of a contract of behavior whose content will be determined by the Administration.

## **Student Assessment**

Gateway Preparatory Academy provides opportunities for student assessment of the prevalence of bullying, cyber-bullying, hazing and harassment and responds to students' assessment in appropriate ways, and specifically for those locations where students may feel unsafe or where additional adult supervision may be required such as playgrounds, hallways, and lunch areas.

## **Retaliation**

Gateway Preparatory Academy strictly prohibits retaliation against harassed students and their parents in reporting subsequent problems and new incidents and will take strong, responsive action against such retaliation.

## **Discretionary Privilege of the Administrators and Faculty of Gateway Preparatory Academy**

In the interest of their students' development and growth, the Administration and Faculty of Gateway Preparatory Academy retain the privilege and acknowledge the obligation to determine disciplinary consequences based on the following factors related to student infractions:

- The age of the child or children involved
- The degree of harm inflicted
- The surrounding circumstances
- The nature and severity of the behavior(s)
- The relationship between the parties involved
- The context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred
- The pattern of behavior demonstrated by an individual student



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## **Administrative Response to Allegation of Bullying and/or Harassment**

The administration will always respond to confirmed allegations of bullying and/or harassment. The response will be in accordance with this *Bullying Policy* and all other related policies, State Law and Board Rule and school procedures and precedents.

Although Gateway Preparatory Academy will always address any reports of bullying by an investigation, and where appropriate, disciplinary action, Gateway will not take disciplinary action on unconfirmed allegations of bullying. In addition, Gateway is not obligated to take any action on anonymous reporting of bullying.

## **Parental Notification**

Gateway Preparatory Academy will notify parents whenever there is an alleged incident of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, hazing, or retaliation involving a parent's student. Gateway Preparatory Academy has no obligation to notify parents on anonymous allegations of bullying, though the Administration may choose to do so.

## **Training**

Gateway Preparatory Academy employees, staff and volunteers will receive yearly training on bullying, cyber-bullying, hazing and harassment from individuals qualified to provide such training on a schedule determined by Gateway Preparatory Academy.

## **Board Reviewed and Approved:**

JANUARY 12, 2017