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**"EVERY STUDENT CAN LEARN. JUST NOT ON THE SAME DAY OR IN THE SAME WAY."**  
– GEORGE EVANS

## **Dream Academy Schools Anti-Bullying Policy**

*Policy and Amendments Approved by BOD 11/8/2021*

What is Bullying?

Dream Academy Schools follows the definitions of bullying and cyber-bullying as defined by Illinois State Law (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7):

“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:

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

“Bullying”, as defined in this subsection (b), may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

“Cyber-bullying” means 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, photo-electronic 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 web-blog 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 Section. “Cyber-bullying” also includes the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the school administration. Illinois law also prohibits bullying on the basis of 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 aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic. This Policy is consistent with subsection (a-5) of this Section [free exercise of religion]. 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.

### **Reporting and Investigation Policies and Procedures of Bullying at Dream Academy Schools:**

Dream Academy Schools may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information in order to gain access to the student’s account or profile on a social networking website. If Dream Academy Schools decides to conduct an investigation after a complaint of cyber-bullying with sufficient evidence, it may require a student to cooperate and share content over the course of the investigation. Appropriate federal and state laws governing student privacy rights will be followed in both the investigation of the incident.

Dream Academy Schools does not tolerate any instance of bullying on the premises of the school as well as any off-campus school-sponsored activities. Consequences of any instance of bullying from students, parents, or teachers and staff will be met with a “three-strike” consequence system:

1. Verbal warning and communication with respective parent/guardian and mediation of involved parties using Restorative Practices

2. Written warning to be kept on file and mediation of involved parties
3. Expulsion of student or teacher/staff member

Any investigation will be completed within ten (10) school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received. Dream Academy Schools will assist any and all parties involved with finding and receiving appropriate interventions such as assisting in finding services for school counseling, mental health counseling, school psychologists, and any other available community-based services.

Any reports and investigations of bullying will include:

- 1) The frequency of victimization.
- 2) Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school.
- 3) Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.
- 4) The types of bullying that are common or occurring.
- 5) Bystander intervention or participation.

Any reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying will be subject to the same disciplinary actions, and may also be subject to expulsion.

Any investigation that leads to a finding of a false accusation will result in a meeting between the school director as well as the parties responsible with the false accusations. Mediation between all parties will be conducted and mandatory. Other possible repercussions will be considered and could potentially lead to suspension from the program considering the severity of the accusations.

The completed investigation will be available internally for Dream Academy Schools staff and available to involved parents and guardians.

Please report any incidents of bullying to the site director; all reports will be handled with confidentiality.

Reports can be made via phone at 727-238-7636 or email your report to [\*\*bullying@dreamacademyschools.org\*\*](mailto:bullying@dreamacademyschools.org).

Complaints are addressed by Wendy Spivey, Chief Operating Officer, and Jamie Maloney, Chief Executive Officer of Dream Academy.

**Anonymous** reporting may be done in writing and mailed to DREAM ACADEMY C/O ADMINISTRATION, 6012 US Highway 19N, New Port Richey, FL, 34652.

Dream Academy School's bullying policy was developed following state guidelines, as well as through discussions with the board of directors and parent/guardians. The policy is consistent with

the mission of Dream Academy and upgraded annually. Please contact the director with any questions or suggestions about the bullying policy or procedures.

This policy is reviewed regularly based on the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy that includes, but is not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation.

***The policy is posted on our website: [dreamacademyschools.com](http://dreamacademyschools.com) and is included in the student handbook, and, where applicable, posted where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted in the school, and is distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.***