

Vincent Gray Academy

Policy for Bullying Prevention

The Vincent Gray Academy believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The school has an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

The Vincent Gray Academy will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; Cyber bullying via social platforms of any kinds, and social isolation or manipulation, of any type will not be permitted at any time or in any degree.

The Vincent Gray Academy expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designer. Staffs who witness such acts take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, during the lunch period, whether on or off campus, and during a school-sponsored activity.

To ensure bullying does not occur on school campuses, The Vincent Gray Academy will provide staff development training in bullying prevention and cultivate acceptance and understanding in all students and staff to build and maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.

Teachers should discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying. Students who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

The Vincent Gray Academy has adopted a Student Code of Conduct to be followed by every student while on school grounds, and during lunch period, whether on or off campus.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the non-sectarian nonpublic school and is consistent with subsection (a-5) of this Section [free exercise of religion].

As part of the process of reviewing and re-evaluating the policy under subsection (d) of this Section, contains a policy evaluation process to assess 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 non-sectarian nonpublic school may use relevant data and information it already collects for other purposes in the policy evaluation. The information developed because of the policy evaluation must be made available on the Internet website of the

school. If an Internet website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, school board members, school personnel, parents, guardians, and students.

The policy is consistent with the policies of the school board, charter school, or non-public, non-sectarian elementary or secondary school.

The Student Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Any student who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- Students are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designer.
- Students can rely on staff to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner.
- If the complainant student or the parent of the student feels that appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached, the student or the parent of the student should contact the principal. The school system prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Is 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 and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. "Restorative measures" means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that:
- The school will make reasonable efforts to keep a report of bullying and the results of investigation confidential.

Staff who witness acts of bullying shall take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. People witnessing or experiencing bullying are strongly encouraged to report the incident; such reporting will not reflect on the target or witnesses in any way.

- A. Any conduct interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of Vincent Gray Academy or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees of and, as it applies to behavior against other students:
 1. Where there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student acting and the target of that behavior; and
 2. Where the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or

3. Where the conduct materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities, or performance, or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.
4. Where the behavior has a negative impact on a student's emotional well-being.

B. Bullying conduct that occurs:

1. On school premises, at school functions or activities, by use of electronic technology and communications on school premises, during school functions or activities (whether the functions or activities take place before, during or after school hours), on school provided technology, networks, forums or mailing lists.
2. By use of electronic technology and communications off school premises when such use substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.

C. Cyberbullying or bullying using technology or other electronic communication.

4. Any harming conduct that causes physical harm to a student or a student's property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property, or violates a student's reasonable expectation of privacy, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student.
5. Any harming conduct that is directed at a student or students based on the actual or perceived student's: race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, gender, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, academic status related to student performance disability, status with regard to public assistance, age, other protected class characteristic under the Human Rights Act; (*Actions that extend beyond the scope of bullying and violate the civil rights of federally protected classes may be investigated and dealt with as a violation of Policy - Harassment and Violence.*)
6. Conduct that is characterized as, but is not limited to: teasing, abusive, intimidating, defaming, threatening, terrorizing, exclusionary, or provocative conduct that induces or causes others to act in violation of this policy.
7. No student, employee or other personnel of Vincent Gray Academy shall plan, direct, encourage, aid, or engage in bullying and/ or hazing.
8. No employee or other personnel of Vincent Gray Academy shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying and/or hazing.
9. Any act of reprisal or retaliation by any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of Vincent Gray Academy against any person who asserts, alleges, or makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, who provides information about bullying or prohibited conduct, who testifies, assists, or participates in an

- investigation of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, or who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying or prohibited conduct. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or intentionally disparate treatment.
10. No student or employee shall supply information in a complaint or investigation that is determined to have been falsely and maliciously supplied.

III. Vincent Gray Academy RESPONSE

1. Vincent Gray will act to investigate all complaints of bullying reported to the school and will discipline or take appropriate action when any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of Vincent Gray is found to have violated this policy. Vincent Gray Academy shall act to initiate an investigation of all complaints of bullying immediately being made aware of a report of alleged conduct prohibited by this policy.
2. Remedial and restorative responses to prohibited conduct shall be offered to actors, targets and bystanders that are tailored to the behavior or conduct, the students' developmental ages and behavioral histories. The goal of disciplinary consequences is to deter future incidents of bullying. Behavior intervention or discipline shall be consistent with the requirements of The State of Illinois and the State Board of Education Student Behavior Intervention and other policies, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and applicable statutory authority.
3. Within the limitations of appropriate data protection requirements, parents of students alleged to have engaged in prohibited conduct and parents of alleged targets of that conduct, shall be notified of the alleged conduct and the investigation into the allegations.
 1. Vincent Gray Academy cannot always monitor the activities of students and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel.

III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the definitions included in this section apply.

1. "Bullying" means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:
 1. an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern:
or

2. materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges. The term "bullying" specifically includes cyberbullying as defined in this policy.
2. "Cyberbullying" means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data; including a post on a social network, internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or another electronic device. The term applies to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on school property, at school functions or activities, or on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists, or off school premises to the extent that is substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment. "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's or students' physical or mental health; (3) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or (4) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school. Bullying 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, 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 Section. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of a 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.

- C. “Immediately” means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.
3. “Intimidating, threatening, abusive or harming conduct” means but is not limited to conduct that does the following:
 4. “On school premises, on school property, at functions or activities.” means all school buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. VGA property also may mean a student’s walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, VGA does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.
 5. “Prohibited conduct” means bullying or cyberbullying as defined in this policy or retaliation or reprisal for asserting, alleging, reporting, or providing information about such conduct or knowingly making a false report about bullying.
 6. “Remedial response” means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of a student who is the target or victim of prohibited conduct.
 7. “Student” means a student enrolled in Vincent Gray Academy.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE

1. Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or prohibited conduct under this policy shall report the alleged acts immediately to Executive Director, Lillian Grinston at 618-8757880 ext. 3 or lilly@vincentgray.org an appropriate school official designated by this policy. A person may report bullying anonymously. However, the school district may not rely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other remedial responses.
2. Vincent gray Academy encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal or building supervisor available in the school office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.
3. The building principal, the principal’s designee, or the building supervisor (hereinafter the “building report taker”) Executive Director, Lillian Grinston is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct at the building level. Any person may report bullying or other prohibited conduct directly to a school district human rights officer or the superintendent. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the

superintendent or the school district human rights officer by the reporting party or complainant.

The building report taker shall ensure that this policy and its procedures, practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented and shall serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters. The building report taker or a third party designated by the VGA shall be responsible for the investigation. The building report taker shall provide information about available community resources to the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the perpetrator, and other affected individuals as appropriate.

4. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who witnesses, observes, receives a report of, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct shall make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct and shall inform the building report taker immediately. School personnel who fail to inform the building report taker of conduct that may constitute bullying in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.
5. Reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law. The building report taker, in conjunction with the responsible authority, shall be responsible for keeping and regulating access to any report of bullying and the record of any resulting investigation.
6. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, or work assignments, or educational or work environment.
7. Vincent Gray Academy will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.
8. Is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians Contains procedures for promptly investigating and addressing reports of bullying, including the following:
 - (A) Making 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 investigation about the reported incident of bullying.

(B) Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.

(C) 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.

(D) 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.

Adopted /revised 6/25/23