

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SUMMARY FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This new law prohibited bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying incidents.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is updated to reflect M.G.L.c.71, 37O as amended by Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 and Sections 72-74 of Chapter 38 of the Acts of July 2013, which changed the definition of “aggressor” to include “a member of a school staff, including, but not limited to an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional.” The amendment also made the plan applicable to school staff, including but not limited to, the individual listed in the amended aggressor definition. These requirements are included in Greater Lowell Technical High School’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (“The Plan”). The Plan includes the requirements of the law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, and to respond to it when it occurs. This Plan will be reviewed biennially by the Assistant Superintendent-Principal and/or designee, as mandated by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 sec. 5(d). Consultation will include, at a minimum, notice on the GLTHS website, and a public comment period prior to adoption.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order to work as collaboratively and as efficaciously as possible, to prevent and intervene on all acts of bullying, it is essential for school personnel, students, parents or guardians, law enforcement agencies, and other interested parties to use common language.

Aggressor, as defined in M.G. L. c. 71, §370, is a student or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, and educator, administrators, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional who engages in bullying or retaliation towards a student.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;
2. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
4. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
5. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying may include conduct such as physical intimidation or assault, including intimidating an individual into taking action against his/her will, oral or written threats, teasing, put-downs, name-calling, stalking, threatening looks, gestures, actions, cruel rumors, false accusations and social isolation, based on a students’ identification with any protected classes.

Greater Lowell Technical High School recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or

sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The school or district will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. For more details, please view Greater Lowell Technical High School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan on our school website at www.gltech.org.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Harassment is defined as a course of conduct which annoys, threatens, intimidates, alarms, or puts a person in fear of their safety. Harassment is unwanted, unwelcomed and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens or offends the target and results in a hostile environment for the target.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

School Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, and athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a school computer or over the Internet using a school computer),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic devices, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

REPORTING BULLYING OR RETALIATION

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, the Greater Lowell Technical High School has policies and procedures in place for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur.

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. School staff members must report immediately to the Assistant Superintendent-Principal designee, or to the Superintendent-Director or designee when the Assistant Superintendent-Principal or the Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor or to the School Committee or designee when the Superintendent-Director is the alleged aggressor, if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, and paraprofessionals.

Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school staff members, may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken solely because of an anonymous report. Greater Lowell Technical High School will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form available in hard copy as well as electronically on the school website; www.gltech.org, and the phone numbers of the Superintendent-Director, Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Senior Assistant Principal, Assistant Principal, and the Dean.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. Greater Lowell Technical High School will:

1. Include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians;
2. Maintain Incident Reporting forms in the Main Office, Guidance Department, Nurse's offices, and Business office;
3. Post it on the school's website;
4. Include in the student, teacher, and employee handbooks, and other locations determined by the Assistant Superintendent-Principal or designee. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

When the Assistant Superintendent-Principal designee/Superintendent or designee/School Committee or designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the Assistant Superintendent-Principal or designee/Superintendent or designee/School Committee or designee determines that a violation of the district's anti-bullying policy has occurred he or she shall:

- Determine what remedial action is required, if any;
- Determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary including where appropriate consultation with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying
- social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development;
- Notify the parents or guardians of the target(s) and the student aggressor(s) about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation;

- Notify the parents/guardians of the target(s) of the action to be taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation;
- Inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Problem Resolution System and the process for accessing that system regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination; and
- In the event of a staff member, the administrator will consult with the Director of Human Resources to determine the appropriate course of action.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL STAFF

Greater Lowell Technical High School will provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development shall include, but shall not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM

A parent/guardian who wishes to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). The information can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700.

**GREATER LOWELL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL
CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS/ONLINE RESOURCES**

Administrative Office

Superintendent-Director	978 441-4800
Assistant Superintendent/Principal	978 441-4807

Main Office

Senior Assistant Principal	978 441-4416
Assistant Principal	978 441-4412
Dean	978 441-4414

Guidance Department

Director of Guidance and Counseling Services/ Title IV Coordinator	978 441-4955
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Special Education Department

Director of Special Education	978 441-4853
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ON-LINE PARENT RESOURCES

Common Sense Media	Http://commonsensemedia.org
Cyberwise	Http://www.cyberwise.org
Get Net Wise	Http://kids.getnetwise.org/tools
Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center	Http://marccenter.webs.com
Safe Teens	http://www.safeteens.com