

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING Rev 4

River Mill Academy is committed to providing a nondiscriminatory environment that is conducive to learning. To this end, the school specifically prohibits harassment on the basis of race, religion, sex, ethnicity, national origin or disability.

Harassment and/or bullying, as defined in Section B, is prohibited at all levels: between students, between employees and students, between peers or coworkers, between supervisors and subordinates, or between non-employees, employees and/or students.

Any student who believes that he/she has been harassed and/or bullied in violation of this policy should report such behavior immediately to a teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school. A school employee who is notified of or otherwise becomes aware of conduct which may violate this policy shall report the matter to the principal. Failure to do so may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been harassed and/or bullied in violation of this policy should report such behavior to the principal, and/or to our River Mill Academy Board of Directors.

All complaints of harassment and/or bullying shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Conclusive evidence of such may result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including dismissal in the case of employees, or up to and including long-term suspension or expulsion in the case of students.

Conversely, consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have **falsely accused another** as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying range from peer and administrative counseling up to and including suspension/expulsion, or termination in the case of faculty.

River Mill Academy prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation range from suspension/expulsion, or termination in the case of faculty.

Prohibition of discrimination and harassment

Any violation of this policy is considered serious and appropriate action will be taken.

A. Application of policy

All persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding nondiscrimination. Visitors also are expected to comply with applicable laws, including the prohibition against

harassment and bullying of students or harassment of employees. This includes electronic bullying.

This policy will apply in the following circumstances:

1. While in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours;
2. While on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity;
3. While waiting at any bus stop;
4. During any school function, extracurricular activity, or other school activity or event;
5. When subject to the authority of school personnel; and
6. Any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools.

B. Definitions - For purposes of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

1. Discrimination means any act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on their membership in a socially distinct group or category, such as race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, or disability. Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional.
2. Harassment means any offensive verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or to alter the conditions of an employee's employment and create a hostile working environment. Harassment is unwanted, unwelcome, and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim. The hostile environment can be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior or a single incident, if sufficiently severe.
3. Harassing behavior may include but is not limited to epithets, derogatory comments or slurs and lewd propositions, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassing behavior. It is possible for harassment to occur at various levels; between fellow students or co-workers, between employees and students, or imposed by non-employees, including visitors, on employees and/or students.
4. Bullying shall mean unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person by another person that has the effect of:
 - a) Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a person;
 - b) Damaging, extorting or taking anyone's personal property;
 - c) Placing a person in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;

- d) Placing a person in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property;
 - e) Creating an intimidating or hostile environment.
5. Electronic bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs) which has the effect of:
- a) Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a person;
 - b) Placing a person in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
 - c) Placing a person in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
 - d) Creating an intimidating or hostile environment.
6. Sexual Harassment includes any unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or sexually suggestive comments when:
- a) Submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;
 - b) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for student or employment decisions affecting such individual; or
 - c) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's academic or work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Romantic or sexual advances toward students by employees or romantic or sexual relationships between school employees and students is prohibited by North Carolina law and shall be reported to law enforcement.

C. Procedures for Handling a Reported Incident


1. Any student who believes s/he is the victim of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination should immediately inform a trusted teacher, advisor or the Principal.
2. Any adult (faculty, parent volunteer, visitor, et al) who believes s/he is the victim of harassment, bullying and/or discrimination should immediately inform a member of the core administrative team (Principal or Assistant Principal).
3. When anyone reports harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination to a school employee, that employee shall notify the Principal within 24 hours.
4. If the Principal is involved in the allegation, then the Assistant Principal will immediately inform the Chairman of the Board of Directors who will chair the investigation, working together with the other members of the Board of Directors. In all other cases, the

Principal will be immediately informed and will chair the investigation or appoint a designee to chair the investigation.

5. The Investigation Chair will conduct an investigation of the matter using the Incident Report Form (Attachment A). The Chair may convene a group, including some or all of the following: teachers, other members of the administrators, and/or the school counselor; as appropriate. The Investigation Chair will balance confidentiality and the need to gather facts as all times during the investigation.

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Approved by River Mill Board of Directors


Chairperson

2/18/16
Date

Attachment A

Incident Report Form

Date of incident: _____ **Time of incident:** _____ **Repeat Infraction?** Yes No

Location of Incident (circle all that apply): Hallway Restroom Classroom Gym

Cafeteria Locker Room Bus Stop On Bus Parking Lot School Sponsored Event

Text/Phone/Internet/Social Media Other: _____

Name of victim(s): _____ **Name of suspected offender:** _____ **Name of witnesses/bystanders:** _____

Type of Bullying: Verbal Physical **Result in Injury:** Yes No **Report to police:** Yes No

Bullying Behaviors (circle all that apply): Shoved/Pushed Hit Kick Punched

Threatened Stole/Damaged Possessions Writing/Graffiti Told Lies/False Rumors

Taunting/Ridiculing Intimidation/Extortion Inappropriate Touching Demeaning Comments

Staring/Leering Cyber-bullying using Text Messages/Websites/Email Other: _____

Was bullying behavior based on racial, sexual orientation, religion, or disability?

Reported to school by (circle all that apply): Teacher Student Bystander Victim/Target

Parent Bus Driver Anonymous Other: _____

Describe the Incident: _____

Physical Evidence (circle all that apply): Notes Email Graffiti Video/Audio Website

Other: _____

Action Taken:

Consequences: _____

Remediation: _____

Parent/Victim Contact: _____
Date Time Person Making Contact

Result: _____

Investigation Chair Signature Date