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DuBois Integrity Academy Anti-Bully Prevention Policy

Policy Statement

DuBois Integrity Academy believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. DuBois Integrity Academy has an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, an acceptance among students, staff, and volunteers. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts students' ability to learn and a school's ability to educate students in a safe environment; therefore, behavior that infringes on the safety of any student will not be tolerated.

Definition

DuBois Integrity Academy defines "bullying" as follows: The repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at another student that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to a student or damage to a student's property;
- Places a student in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for a student;
- Infringes on the rights of a student at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

DuBois Integrity Academy defines "cyber-bullying" as follows: 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, social networking, and Internet postings.

DuBois Integrity Academy defines "retaliation" as follows: Any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying or has reliable information about bullying.

Examples of Bullying and Cyber-bullying Include:

- Hurting someone physically by hitting, kicking, tripping, pushing, etc.
- Stealing or damaging another person's things
- Impersonating another person in order to use the Internet to intimidate someone
- Ganging up on someone in person or on the Internet
- Teasing someone in a hurtful way
- Using put-downs or verbal assault, such as making fun of someone's race, looks, or gender
- Touching or showing private body parts
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Creating a Web page to hurt, embarrass, or scare someone
- Excluding someone on purpose or trying to get other students not to play with someone
- Sending hurtful text messages

DuBois Integrity Academy recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiation (race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.) or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Reporting Bullying Procedures

All students and/or staff shall immediately report incidents of bullying, harassment and intimidation to the Dean of Students, School Counselor, or School Social Worker. School staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. Each complaint of bullying shall be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling on a school bus to and from school or a school-sponsored activity and during a school-sponsored activity.

Staff Receiving a Report from a Student: DuBois Integrity Academy's staff receiving a report of bullying will begin by affirming the student's feelings. They will look into the incident by asking questions of the reporter. The staff will then assess the student's safety by asking questions about what the student needs in order to feel safe. Finally, the staff will tell the student that a report will be made and identify who the student can look to for support.

Staff/Students/Parents Reporting to Administration: When reporting incidents of bullying to Administration, staff, students and parents will report using the "DuBois Integrity

Bullying Reporting Form,” documenting the date and time of the incident, who was involved, where the incident occurred, the behaviors or verbal interactions witnessed, immediate safety concerns (if any), specific concerns regarding the students involved, and immediate action that was taken.

Protecting Students Who Report: Retaliation against students for reporting bullying is prohibited. Students who retaliate against others will immediately receive consequences as identified in this policy. Students may report bullying anonymously. No disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report unless substantiated by further investigation. False accusations of bullying against others are not allowed and will result in consequences outlined in this policy. When interviewing the student accused of bullying or other students about the bullying incidents, staff will make every effort to maintain confidentiality. In some cases, however, the bullying incidents may be too severe or jeopardize safety and warrant breach of confidentiality. In these cases, students will be assured that adults will do everything possible to protect them from retaliation.

School Procedures for Investigating Reports

The following actions will be taken when bullying is reported:

1. Investigate

- Upon receipt of any report of bullying, DuBois Integrity Academy will direct an immediate investigation involving appropriate personnel. The investigation shall include interviewing the alleged perpetrator(s) and victim(s), identified witnesses, teacher(s) and staff members and reviewing video surveillance if available. The School Counselor, School Social Worker, and/or other support staff will be utilized for their expertise as determined by the circumstances of the matter.

2. Notify

- At an appropriate time during or after the investigation, parents/guardians of the accused and the victim will be notified. If the incident involves an injury or similar situation, appropriate medical attention will be provided and the parent/guardian should be notified immediately.

3. Discipline

- Upon confirming that bullying has occurred, the accused student will be charged with bullying and given an age-appropriate consequence which shall include, at minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling as appropriate under the circumstances.

4. Follow Up

- Follow up is important to the accused and the victim. A planned method to provide after-care and follow up will be implemented by the Dean of Students, School Counselor, or School Social Worker. All previously stated prohibition on retaliation will be reiterated.

Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Actions

Bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated. Remedial actions/disciplinary actions will be taken after each incident of bullying and upon a finding of guilt.

Disciplinary action may include but is not limited to the following:

- Loss of privileges
- Reassignment of seats in the classroom, cafeteria or school bus
- Reassignment of classes
- Parent Conferences
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension Detention
- Termination of placement/Expulsion (through appropriate due process hearing)
- If necessary, counseling and other interventions will also be provided to address the social emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of students who are victims of bullying and students who commit an offense of bullying. (Reviewing and emphasizing school behaviors, expectations, and rules; conflict resolution and problem-solving conferences with the aggressor, etc.)

Staff Education and Responsibilities

Each year, DuBois Integrity Academy will provide written notice to all school staff of the bullying prevention and intervention policy. Staff will be trained annually on the plan, policy, and curriculum chosen by the school. The training will cover ways to prevent and intervene in bullying, information about the complex nature of bullying, research on bullying and children who may be more vulnerable to bullying by others, and information on cyberbullying and Internet safety. Staff at DuBois Integrity Academy will do the following things to prevent bullying and help students to feel safe at school:

- Closely supervise students in all areas of the school
- Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it occurs
- Teach lessons that support social and emotional skills
- Teach students about bullying
- Respond quickly and sensitively to all reports of bullying
- Take families' concerns about bullying seriously
- Utilize consequences for bullying based on the school bullying policy

- Provide immediate consequences for retaliation against students who report bullying, consistent with the school bullying policy
- Provide immediate consequences for false allegations of bullying consistent with Dubois Integrity Academy's standard consequences

Student Curriculum and Parent Education

DuBois Integrity Academy will use the following methods to help address bullying at our school: The Sandford Harmony Social and Emotional Learning Program, BrainPop Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional (CASEL) framework, and the Healthy Lifestyle Choices Curriculum. The bullying prevention curriculum will be presented to the students throughout the school year in assemblies, through classroom lessons, and in individual and group meetings. DuBois Integrity Academy will provide parents and/or guardians with information on bullying prevention and how they can reinforce the curriculum at home and within the community. Parents will also be provided with information describing the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying and information about Internet safety. DuBois Integrity Academy will also provide students, parents and/or guardians with written notice of our bullying policy and post it on our school Website.

Information Regarding Discrimination and/or Harassment

Any student (or parent/guardian or friend of a student) who has been the victim of discrimination and/or harassment by any person, including a fellow student, teacher, administrator or other school system employee, is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school. The school takes such conduct very seriously.

All students and their parents/guardians are urged to carefully review Rules (Equal Educational Opportunities) and (Harassment Reporting and Investigation).

The school does not tolerate discrimination and/or harassment based upon race, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. Students or employees found to have engaged in such acts will be promptly and appropriately disciplined in such a way as to eliminate and deter future conduct related to discrimination and/or harassment. The school encourages collaboration with students and parents to prevent discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability.

Any person who knowingly makes a false charge of discrimination and/or harassment may be subject to disciplinary action, as well as criminal or civil penalties.