



# Winchendon Public Schools

Winchendon Public Schools 01475

# Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan



Winter 2024

Winchendon Public Schools  
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Updated Jan. 2024

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## **Table of Contents**

[Statement of Purpose](#)

[Section I: Leadership](#)

[Public Involvement in Developing the Plan](#)

[Assessing Needs and Resources](#)

[Planning and Oversight](#)

[Priority Statement](#)

[Section II: Training and Professional Development](#)

[Annual Staff Training on the Plan](#)

[Ongoing Professional Development](#)

[Written Notice to Staff](#)

[Section III: Access to Resources and Services](#)

[Identifying Resources](#)

[Counseling and Other Services](#)

[Students with Disabilities](#)

[Referral to Outside Services](#)

[Section IV: Academic and Non-Academic Activities](#)

[Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches](#)

[General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention](#)

[Section V: Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation](#)

[Reporting Bullying and Retaliation](#)

[Promoting Safety for the Target and Others](#)

[Obligations to Notify Others](#)

Updated Jan. 2024

### **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



[Investigation](#)

[Determinations](#)

[Responses to Bullying](#)

[Section VI: Collaboration with Families](#)

[Section VII: Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation](#)

[Section VIII: Definitions](#)

[Section IX: Relationships to Other Laws](#)

[Bullying Incident Report Form](#)

[Bullying Investigation Form](#)

[Bullying Investigation Flow-Chart](#)

Updated Jan. 2024

**Notice of Non-Discrimination**

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## **Statement of Purpose**

The Winchendon Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (BPIP) meets the requirements of *M.G.L. c. 71, §370* and is modeled after the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Plan for dealing with bullying behaviors in our schools. The BPIP includes strategies for identifying, reporting, and responding to bullying behaviors. The BPIP is a key part of our school's mission and vision statements:

### **Mission**

Our mission is to collaboratively provide a safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environment to create compassionate and powerful critical thinkers in an ever changing world.

### **Vision**

Our vision is to provide an equitable and excellent well rounded education that will prepare every student for success in college, career, and life!

### **Beliefs**

Our core values are grounded in the importance of respect, responsibility, accountability, integrity and empathy.

We believe all students can learn and in order for students to reach their fullest potential, we will provide:

A culturally responsive and safe learning environment

Equitable opportunities to grow

High expectations in all settings

Welcoming classrooms and school communities to foster caring relationships and a sense of belonging

School building schedules designed to ensure adequate time on learning for all content areas

Effective High Quality Instructional Material (HQIM) and resources to access rigorous curriculum and instruction that aligns to on or above grade level state standards

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## Winchendon Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

The BPIP also *complements* our schools' **student wellness and discipline policies**. The Winchendon Public Schools recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics; including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics and implements policies and practices to address the unique vulnerabilities of such students. Please note the use of the words "target" instead of "victim" and "aggressor" instead of "perpetrator" is used throughout this document to be *consistent with the language used by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*.

Updated Jan. 2024

### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## **I. Leadership**

School leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. Schools partner with various community members in promoting a positive school climate that is safe for all student learners.

### ***A. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan***

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, §37O, the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP was collaboratively developed with input from Winchendon Public School Staff and the community.

### ***B. Assessing Needs and Resources***

The Winchendon Public Schools BPIP is our system's blueprint for enhancing our capacity to *prevent and respond* to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As a part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families, students, and staff, will assess the adequacy of current programs; review current policies and procedures; review data on bullying and behavioral incidents, and assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services.

This process will assist our schools and district in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on these findings, our schools will revise or develop policies and procedures; establish partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement; and set priorities.

Annually, our schools will utilize surveys to obtain input from students, staff, parents, and guardians on school climate and school safety issues. Data from each school will be collected and analyzed on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying (e.g., focusing on identifying vulnerable populations and areas of concern in school buildings, at school-sponsored events, on school grounds, on social media, or on school buses). This information will help to identify patterns of behavior and areas of concern, and will inform future decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



### ***C. Planning and Oversight***

The Winchendon Public Schools BPIP has identified the building principal or his/her designee as the individual who is responsible for receiving all reports of bullying. The building principal or his/her designee is responsible for collecting and analyzing building data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes. This same individual is also responsible for investigating reports of bullying and sending a notice of findings to the parents or guardians of targets and aggressors at the conclusion of each investigation.

The Winchendon Public Schools Director and Assistant Director of Pupil Services and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction will work with building principals to plan ongoing professional development that is required by the law.

The building principal or his/her designee is responsible for planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors as well as for choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use to instruct students about issues of bullying and cyberbullying.

Each building principal or his/her designee is responsible for implementing the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP; for amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct; leading parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials, and reviewing and updating these materials annually, or more frequently if necessary. The Winchendon School Committee and the superintendent or his/her designee are responsible for developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP, including an Internet safety policy, and for designating key staff to be responsible for reviewing and updating said policies and protocols annually. The Winchendon School Committee is ultimately responsible for the approval of all new policies or modifications to existing policies.

### ***D. BPIP Priority Statement***

The Winchendon Public Schools BPIP outlines a comprehensive approach to addressing *bullying and cyberbullying*, and each school in the district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established the BPIP for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. Each building principal or his/her designee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan.

Each school in the district expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## II. Training and Professional Development

The Winchendon Public Schools ongoing professional development plan reflects the requirements under *M.G.L. c. 71, §370* and provides ongoing professional development for **all staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals.**

### *A. Annual Staff Training on the Plan*

Annual training for all school staff on the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP will include staff responsibilities under the plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of bullying prevention curricula offered at all grade levels. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired.

### *B. Ongoing Professional Development*

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of the tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences and for others. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by *M.G.L. c. 71, §370*, the professional development will be informed by research and will include:

- Developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- Developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop incidents of bullying;
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witness to the bullying;
- 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
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; *and*
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.





Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with *autism* or students whose disability *affects social skills development*.

Additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development include:

- Promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- Fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- Building relationships and communicating with families;
- Constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- Using positive behavioral intervention strategies (PBIS);
- Applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- Teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- Engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; *and*
- Maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

### ***C. Written Notice to Staff***

Each school will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff responsibilities, in employee handbooks.

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



### III. Access to Resources and Services

A key aspect of promoting a positive school climate is addressing the underlying emotional needs of all students including targets, aggressors, and bystanders of bullying or cyberbullying. The district's BPIP includes strategies for providing support and services necessary to meet the needs of students and their families. In order to enhance the school's climate, schools will provide services to prevent and effectively respond to bullying and cyberbullying. These services include but are not limited to, universal and selective interventions, counseling, or referrals to appropriate resources for all stakeholders.

#### *A. Identifying Resources*

Appropriate staff, together with building administrators, will work to identify the school's capacity to provide counseling, case management, and other services for targets, aggressors, and bystanders, and their families. Schools will conduct an annual review of staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments, focusing on early interventions and intensive services, and develop recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps. The Winchendon Public Schools works in collaboration with local and state agencies to adopt **evidence-based curricula** and to provide additional preventative services to students, parents and guardians, and faculty and staff.

#### *B. Counseling and Other Services*

Our clinical staff (school counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and adjustment counselors), school nurses, and special educators provide a variety of skill-based services to students within the educational setting. These include ongoing emotional support, risk assessment, crisis intervention, and help with community-based counseling referrals when appropriate. Our clinical staff collaborates with parents and teachers to address students' academic, emotional, and behavioral concerns. Our clinical staff and school nurses work with administrators to provide appropriate resources to families. Our clinical staff maintains up-to-date information on community-based mental health referrals and Community Service Agencies (CSAs) including providing services to Medicaid-eligible students. Our clinical staff, special educators, and families work collaboratively to implement behavior plans and social groups to support students in developing social skills. In addition, Our clinical staff and special educators work together to educate and support families by conducting workshops and providing resources.

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## Winchendon Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Below is a list reflecting some activities/programs offered our various schools:

- Individual and/or group counseling;
- Case management/consulting services;
- Crisis intervention;
- Facilitating classroom meetings to resolve problems (Responsive Classroom);
- Evidence-based curriculum on various social/emotional topics;
- Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (PBIS);
- Social Thinking;
- Life Skills Curriculum;
- Advisory programs;
- Mentoring;
- Mindfulness activities;
- Lunch/social skills groups;
- Universal mental health screener;
- Student/staff training workshops;
- Transition planning;
- Care Solace Referrals;
- *and* Classroom observations.

### ***C. Students with Disabilities***

As **required** by *M.G.L. c. 71B, §3*, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines that a student has a disability that affects the social skills development of the student or that the student is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

### ***D. Referral to Outside Services***

Winchendon Public Schools has established a referral protocol for referring students and families to appropriate outside services through Care Solace.

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## **IV. Academic and Non-Academic Activities**

### ***A. Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches***

Bullying prevention curricula are informed by current research which emphasizes the following approaches:

- Using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation;
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying;
- Emphasizing cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- Enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communication;
- Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference; *and*
- Providing parents and guardians with information regarding the schools' bullying prevention curricula

### ***B. General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts***

The following strategies are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including students with disabilities; students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender; and students who are homeless;
- Communicating with parents and guardians regarding the schools' goals and expectations for safety;
- Using positive behavioral supports (PBIS) and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- Modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including conflict resolution, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports (PBIS) that aid in social and emotional development;
- Promoting the ethical and responsible use of technology; *and*
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## V. Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

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

### ***A. Reporting Bullying and Retaliation***

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be *oral or written*. **Oral reports made by or to a staff member must be recorded in writing.** All employees are required to report instances of bullying or retaliation to the principal or his/her designee as soon as they are made aware of or witness bullying or retaliation. Reports made by students, parents/guardians, or other non-employees may be made anonymously. The schools will make reporting resources, including the district's bullying reporting form, available to the school community in each school office and on the district's website.

At the beginning of each school year, schools will provide school staff with written notice of district policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or his/her designee, will be included in each school's student handbook.

#### ***1. Reporting by Staff***

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or his/her designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or his/her designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with each school's policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

#### ***2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others***

The district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student or staff member to report it to the principal or his/her designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided a practical, safe, private environment to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or his/her designee.

***B. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others***

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or his/her designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. There may be circumstances in which the principal or his/her designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at *603 CMR 49.00*. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; predetermining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target, and altering the aggressor’s schedule to limit or eliminate access to the target. The principal or his/her designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation as necessary.

The principal or his/her designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation. The confidentiality of students and witnesses reporting alleged acts of bullying will be maintained to the extent possible given the school’s obligation to investigate the matter.

The principal or his/her designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target’s sense of safety and that of others as well. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or his/her designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct. If so, the principal or his/her designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement additional supportive measures immediately.

Updated Jan. 2024

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



### ***C. Obligations to Notify Others***

#### ***1. Notice to Parents and Guardians:***

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or his/her designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of the incident and of the investigation procedures. Said notice shall comply with the requirements of *603 CMR 49.00* and shall inform the parents of the target of their right to access the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Problem Resolution System (PRS) if dissatisfied with the investigation conducted.

#### ***2. Notice to Another School or District***

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, nonpublic school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or his/her designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify the principal or his/her designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations and *603 CMR*.

#### ***3. Notice to Law Enforcement***

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or his/her designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal or his/her designee will notify the Winchendon Police Department. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of *603 CMR 49.00* and the established Memorandum of Understanding between the Winchendon Public Schools and the Winchendon Police Department. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or his/her designee shall contact the Winchendon Police Department if he/she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. In making this determination, the principal or his/her designee will, consistent with the BPIP and applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, Winchendon Police Department, and other individuals the principal or his/her designee deems appropriate.

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



#### ***D. Investigation***

The principal or his/her designee will investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and in doing so, will consider all information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. The investigation of the complaint of bullying shall, **in most instances**, be completed within fourteen (14) school days from the date of Principal's or Designee receipt of the report or complaint of bullying. Where, due to extenuating circumstances, the investigation cannot be completed within fourteen (14) school days, the Principal or Designee shall provide written notice to the parents or guardians of the extension of the investigation timeline and identify an alternate date for the completion of the investigation. In the event that the investigation is extended for a period of time in excess of seven (7) additional school days, the Principal or designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis pending completion of the investigation and written notice of the Principal's or Designee's findings and determinations. During the investigation, the principal or his/her designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or his/her designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Interviews will be conducted by the principal or his/her designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or his/her designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with district policies and procedures for investigations and for possible disciplinary action. If necessary, the principal or his/her designee will consult with the superintendent, and/or the Director of Pupil Services regarding consultation with legal counsel pertaining to the investigation of the alleged report.

#### ***E. Determinations***

The principal or his/her designee will make a determination based on all of the facts and circumstances. If, after the investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or his/her designee will take reasonable steps to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or school activities. The principal or his/her designee will:

- Determine what remedial action is required; *and*
- Determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Updated Jan. 2024

#### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.





The principal or his/her designee may choose to consult with the student's teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or 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.

The parents or guardians of both the target and alleged aggressor shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and provided with *written notice* of the Principal's or Designee's findings and determination relative to the complaint of bullying. All such notices shall comply with the requirements of Massachusetts regulations at *603 CMR 49.00*. **Due to the confidentiality of student records, the principal or his/her designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directives that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.**

#### ***F. Responses to Bullying***

The Winchendon Public Schools have incorporated a range of individualized strategies and interventions that may be used in response to remediate a student's skills and to prevent further incidents of bullying and/or retaliation.

##### ***1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skill-Building***

Upon the principal or his/her designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior (*M.G.L. c. 71, §37O(d)(v)*). **Skill-building approaches** that the principal or his/her designee may consider include:

- Offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curriculum;
- Providing relevant educational activities for individual groups of students, in consultation with school counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- Implementing a range of academic and non-academic positive behavioral supports (PBIS) to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills-building activities at home;

Updated Jan. 2024

#### **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



- Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and/or
- Making a referral for evaluation.

## ***2. Taking Disciplinary Action***

If the principal or his/her designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or his/her designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP and with the school's code of conduct/student handbook.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the **federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Implement Act (IDEA)**, which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

*If the principal or his/her designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the school's code of conduct/student handbook.*

Updated Jan. 2024

### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## VI. Collaboration with Families

The Winchendon Public Schools BPIP includes strategies to engage and collaborate with students' families to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and two-way communication are **essential aspects** of **effective collaboration**. Provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention curricula used by the schools include:

- Information on how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home;
- Facts about the dynamics of bullying; *and*
- Information to promote the ethical and responsible use of technology and prevent cyberbullying.

Schools will collaborate with School Councils and other parent support organizations (PTO, SEPAC, etc.) as appropriate to create parent resource and information networks. Schools will join with these parent groups to offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used in schools.

Schools will annually inform families about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The schools will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP and the Winchendon Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. All notices and information made available to families will be in hard copy and electronic formats and will be available in the family's native language as needed. The Winchendon Public Schools BPIP and related information will be posted on the district's website.

Updated Jan. 2024

### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## VII. Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

The Winchendon Public Schools will not allow any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation. Schools will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. The Winchendon Public Schools will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curriculum, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and family involvement. Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, can occur in the following environments:

- On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off of school grounds;
- At a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned by the school district; *and*
- At a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device regardless of whether or not the device is owned, leased, or used by the school district, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witness, infringe on the target's rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process of the orderly operation of the school. **As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, nothing in this plan requires the Winchendon Public Schools to supervise any non-school-related activities, functions, or programs.**

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

Updated Jan. 2024

### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



## VIII. Definitions

***Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as noted below.***

**Aggressor:** A student or school staff member who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

**Bullying:** As defined in *M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O*, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of 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 of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- 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.

**Clinical Staff:** School counselors, school psychologists, social workers, adjustment counselors, and nursing staff.

**Cyberbullying:** 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.**

**Hostile environment:** *As defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O*, 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.

**Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS):** PBIS is a prevention framework for establishing and sustaining effective school-wide and individual behavior supports needed to enhance academic, social, and behavioral outcomes for all students.

Updated Jan. 2024

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



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

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

**Target:** A student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## **IX. Relationships to Other Laws**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to public schools of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law. Nothing in the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies. In addition, nothing in the Winchendon Public Schools BPIP is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under *M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, 37H1/2, and/or 37H3/4*, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this BPIP covers the behavior.

Updated Jan. 2024

### Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



**Winchendon Public Schools  
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

**Winchendon Public Schools Bullying Incident Report Form**

**Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of 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 of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:**

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
  - 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.

Person Completing Form (can be anonymous): Today’s Date:
Date and Time of Incident:
Where did the incident happen:  <input type="checkbox"/> On school property <input type="checkbox"/> On a school bus <input type="checkbox"/> At a school-sponsored event <input type="checkbox"/> On the way to/from school <input type="checkbox"/> At a bus stop <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Who reported the incident? <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Close adult relative <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other  _____
Student(s) involved:
Name of student target: Grade: School:
Name of alleged aggressor(s) if known: Grade: School:
Name of witness(es): Grade: School:

Updated Jan. 2024

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



Details of the incident. Please be as specific as possible. (attach a separate sheet and/or other reports/documentation if necessary)

To your knowledge, has this occurred before?  YES  NO

Are there immediate safety concerns?  YES  NO

Updated Jan. 2024

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.





**Winchendon Public Schools  
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan  
Winchendon Public Schools Bullying Investigation Form**

**TO BE COMPLETED BY PRINCIPAL OR DESIGNEE**

<b>Date:</b>
<b>Name (s) of Target(s) Interviewed:</b>
<b>If applicable for target:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For students identified with a disability on the autism spectrum, the IEP Team must consider and specifically address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing (See M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010).</li><li>• Whenever the IEP Team evaluation indicates that a student's disability affects social skills development, or when the student's disability makes him or her vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing, the IEP must address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing (See M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010).</li></ul>
<b>Name(s) of Aggressor(s) Interviewed:</b>
<b>Names of witness(es) Interviewed:</b>
<b>Summary of Findings: (Please attach a separate sheet and/or other reports/documentation if necessary)</b>

Updated Jan. 2024

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



**Action Taken:**

**Parent Notified:**  **YES**

**Date of Contact:**

**Signature of Principal or Designee:**

Updated Jan. 2024

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.

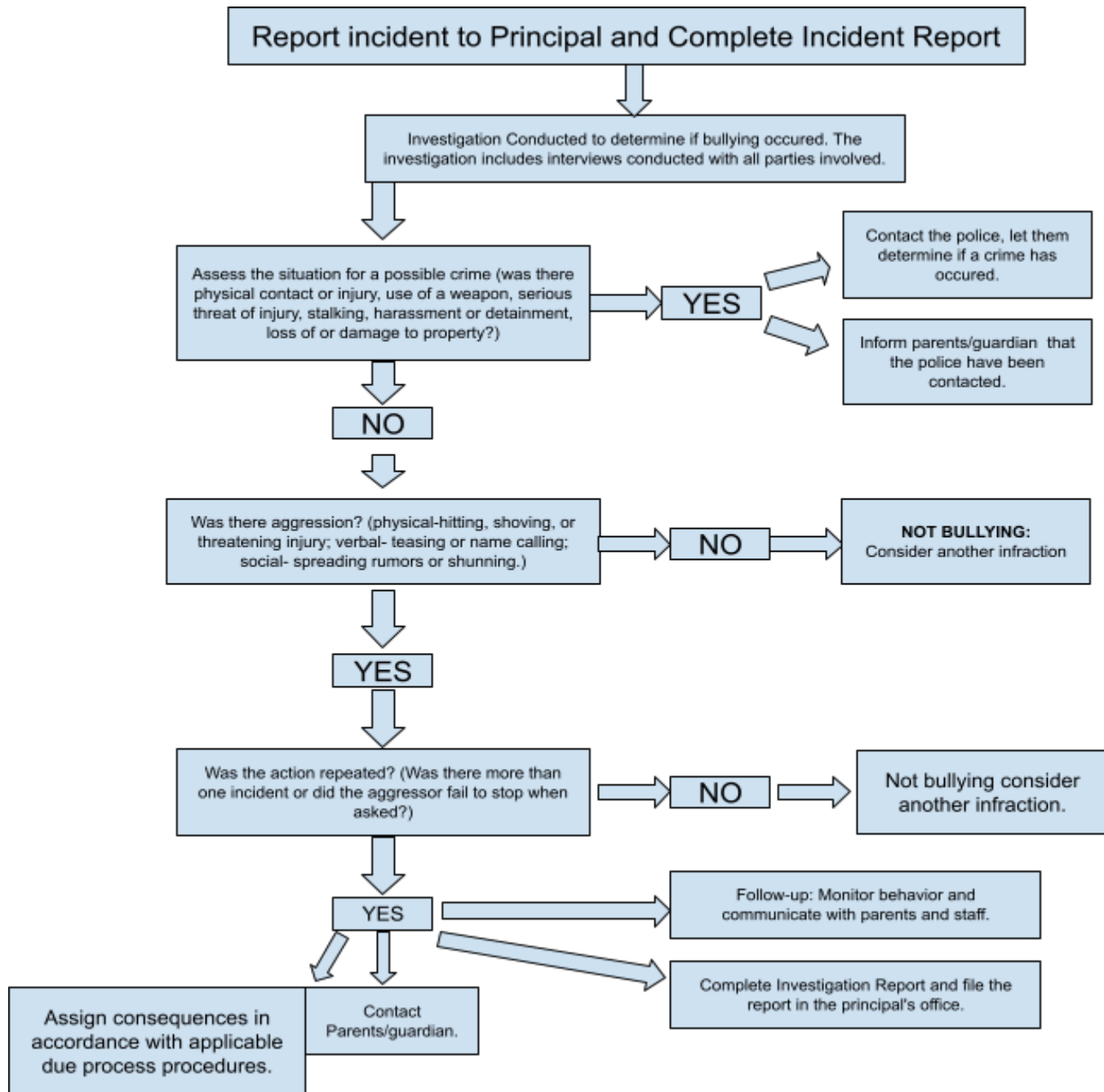


**Winchendon Public Schools  
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan  
Winchendon Public Schools Bullying Investigation Flowchart**

Updated Jan. 2024

[Notice of Non-Discrimination](#)

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.



Updated Jan. 2024

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Winchendon Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.