



Purpose

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of a safe school environment to the educational process of Deep Roots Charter School. The Board has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and to achieve academic standards. At Deep Roots Charter School, school employees, faculty, administration, students, parents, and community work together to provide a safe and healthy environment where every child can learn and become empowered to make a difference in their communities.

Bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors that disrupt both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment, is prohibited at Deep Roots Charter School. Because students learn by example, school administrators, staff, school employees, students and volunteers are directed to: demonstrate appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect and refuse to tolerate bullying.

Definitions

Bullying is defined as an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts:

1. directed at another student or students;
2. which occurs in a "school setting" or occurs outside of school and materially and substantially interferes with the educational process or program in the school, as allowed by law;
3. that is severe, persistent, or pervasive; and
4. that has the effect of doing any of the following:
 - a. substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - b. in creating a threatening environment; or
 - c. substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

School setting shall mean in the school, on school grounds, on school property, other sites used by the school, on the school's server or school's electronic, web-based, Internet or on-line programs, in school vehicles, at designated bus stops or at any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school and any time spent necessarily traveling to and from these locations. Additionally, any student whose out of school conduct materially and substantially interferes with the educational process in the school is also subject to this Policy.

Students shall conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school employees, volunteers, and contractors.

Delegation of Responsibilities

The CEO and/or their designee.

Guidelines

The Board believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents and guardians, school employees, and community members of the school, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school and community property on the part of students, school employee, and community members,

Because bystander support of bullying can bolster these behaviors, the school prohibits both active and passive support for acts of bullying. School employees should encourage all students to refuse to engage in these acts and to report them immediately to the CEO of the school.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or school employee who commits one or more acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including out-of-school suspension from the charter school and/or expulsion from the charter school, in the case of a student, or suspension and/or termination in the case of an employee, as set forth in the school's approved code of student conduct or employee handbook.

Consequences for a student who commits an act of bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with the school's approved code of student conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to: correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the behavior and protect the victim of the act. Depending upon the incident, expulsion may be recommended to the Board.

The Board requires the CEO and/or their designee at the school to be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this Policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this Policy to the CEO and/or their designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this Policy. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report without further prevention, education, and intervention.

The Board requires the CEO and/or their designee to determine whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this Policy. In so doing, a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident will be conducted. An investigation is to be conducted within three school days after a report or complaint is made known to the school. The investigation may include interviews with students, school employees, and community members (including parents), the collection of documents (if the alleged bullying occurred online or in written form), and the gathering of other evidence.

The CEO and/or their designee will compile all of this information into one file which shall be used as the basis for determining if the student will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Bullying varies in nature and severity, and all circumstances will be taken into account when determining disciplinary consequences.

Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the School's legal and investigative obligations. However, even if one or more of the parties may have requested confidentiality, the request may not be honored if their safety and/or the safety of others may be compromised.

The parents of the student(s) involved shall receive notice from the school on the outcome of the investigation (in compliance with current privacy laws and regulation).

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying in good faith. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

The Board prohibits any person from falsely accusing another of bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have made a false accusation of bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with school policies, procedures, and agreements.

The Board requires school officials to annually disseminate the Policy to all school employee, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, or in a school vehicle and to develop procedures for investigating and addressing any alleged violations of this Policy.

The Board directs the CEO and/or their designee to develop procedures necessary to implement this Policy and to develop appropriate prevention, intervention and education strategies related to bullying, including training for school employees and students as appropriate.

The Board directs that procedures be implemented to assist school employees and students in recognizing and developing strategies related to bullying, including but not limited to those requirements delineated in the Charter School Law, Chapter 12 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code and the applicable House Bill 1067 Public School Code amendments relating to bullying.

Deep Roots Charter School will comply with applicable federal and state laws, including Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code and applicable provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) and its applicable implementing regulations regarding the discipline of special education students and thought-to-be eligible students who engage in an act of bullying.

This policy shall be reviewed every three (3) years by the CEO and/or his/her designee. The CEO may propose revisions to this Policy to the Board of Trustees following the review.