

Dartmouth High School Anti-Bullying Policy

School Year 2010-2011

Every student has the right to attend school without fear of threat or intimidation by other students. Harassment/bullying/cyber-bullying will not be tolerated at Dartmouth High School.

Harassment is defined as any conduct of a verbal or physical nature that embarrasses, distresses, agitates, disturbs, causes fear, causes an apprehension of harm, harms or troubles a student on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation or disability.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use of written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act, gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students directed at another that has the effect of:

- Causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or of damage to his or her property;
- Placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- Creating a hostile environment at school for the bullied student;
- Infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means, and includes the distribution of electronic communications or the posting of electronic material that may be accessed by one or more persons.

Retaliation is defined as engaging in acts of bullying toward a person as revenge for that person reporting bullying or providing information during a bullying investigation.

Reporting Bullying

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to bullying and/or harassment should report the incident verbally or in writing to any member of the school staff (teacher, guidance counselor, social worker, administrator, nurse, school resource officer, security guard, etc.).

Adult receiving a report from a student.

First, affirm the student's feelings. Second, ask questions about the bullying. Third, assess the child's safety by asking questions about what he or she needs to feel safe. Finally, tell the student that you will be making a report and offer support.

Adult reporting to administration.

School staff that witness bullying or receive a report of bullying from a student must tell the principal or assistant principals immediately, followed up with a completed "Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form" (on Integrity). Information should include date and time of incident, who was involved, where the incident occurred, the behaviors witnessed, if there are any safety needs, specific concerns for the student who was bullied or the student who did the bullying and what immediate action, if any, was taken .

Consequences of Bullying

A report (verbal or written) of harassment and/or bullying will be investigated promptly and in an impartial and confidential manner, to insure prompt and appropriate action. Any individual who is found, after an appropriate investigation, to have engaged in harassment and/or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. A “Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form” will be completed. A student’s misconduct that falls under our anti-bullying policy may constitute discrimination or harassment in violation of other applicable state and/or federal laws. If a law is believed to have been broken, law enforcement will be notified by the school.

Parent Notification

If an incident of bullying has been determined, the parents and/or guardians of both the student who was bullied (target) and the student who bullied (aggressor) will be notified. The parent and/or guardian of the student who was bullied will also be notified of the action taken by the school to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation toward their child.

Staff Education and Responsibilities

Each year, our school will provide written notice to all school staff of the bullying prevention plan. Staff will be trained annually on the plan and curriculum chosen by our school. The training will cover ways to prevent and intervene in bullying, information about the complex nature of bullying, research on bullying and students who may be more vulnerable to bullying by others, information on cyber bullying and internet safety and our investigative/reporting procedures.

Staff at Dartmouth High School will do the following to prevent bullying and help students feel safe at school:

- Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it happens
- Teach students about bullying and provide lessons that support social and emotional skills
- Respond quickly and sensitively to all reports of bullying
- Take families’ concerns about bullying seriously

Student & Parent Education

Throughout the four years at Dartmouth High School, all students will be provided bullying prevention instruction during health classes, freshman seminar classes, advisories and grade 10 English classes through the teaching of the novel *Speak*. We will also have a presentation of *Rachel’s Challenge* whose objective is to create a safe learning environment for all students by re-establishing civility and delivering proactive antidotes to school violence and bullying. The *Rachel’s Challenge* initiative will be sustained through training and ongoing meetings and activities planned by the *Rachel’s Challenge* team. Parents will be provided with information describing the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying and information about Internet safety as well as our anonymous reporting procedures. Parents/guardians will also be provided with a copy of *Net Cetera-Chatting with Kids About Being Online*.