

MIDWEST CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI ACADEMY

MCMA Anti-Bullying Policy: (Approved by MCMA Board of Directors 02/01/2022)

"Bullying" includes "cyber-bullying" and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
- (2) Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
- (3) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
- (4) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electro-magnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the non-sectarian nonpublic school and is consistent with subsection (a-5) of this Section [free exercise of religion].

Nothing in this Section is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the

United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

The school procedures for promptly reporting bullying, including, but not limited to, identifying and providing the school e-mail address (if applicable) and school telephone number for the staff person or persons responsible for receiving such reports and a procedure for anonymous reporting; however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The complaint manager is Eileen Contos, Director, 630-783-8644, office@mcmacademy.org.

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the bullying policy includes procedures for promptly informing parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. Examples of restorative measures may include: teaching students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, and teaching students to serve, build, and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities.

The bullying procedures for promptly investigating and addressing reports of bullying, including the following:

- (A) Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
- (B) Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
- (C) Notifying the principal or school administrator or his or her designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
- (D) Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The school interventions that can be taken to address bullying, which may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.

School will consider consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person found to have falsely accused another of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying.

The school prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying and will determine appropriate consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation.

The bullying prevention and response plan is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.

The bullying policy is posted on the school's existing internet website and is included in the student handbook, and, where applicable, posted where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted in the school, and is distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

To assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the bullying policy, actions will include, but is not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. The non-sectarian nonpublic school may use relevant data and information it already collects for other purposes in the policy evaluation. The information developed as a result of the policy evaluation must be made available on the Internet website of the school. If an Internet website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, school board members, school personnel, parents, guardians, and students.

The bullying policy is consistent with other school policies.