



Belmont Charter School
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy

Mission: Our purpose, in partnership with the Belmont Community, is to promote the academic, social, and emotional success of each child.

Purpose: Belmont Charter School is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for all of our students. Belmont recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious behaviors. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment of bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

Definition of bullying: As defined by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has any of the following effects:

- Substantial interference with a student's education.
- Creation of a threatening environment.
- Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying may also involve cyber bullying in which students are bullied via email, chat rooms, and blogs. Examples of common mediums that students may use are MySpace and face book.

Three Types of Bullying: Belmont Charter School recognizes that bullying and harassment is manifested in various forms. The three forms of bullying are:

- **Physical:** the most commonly known form; including hitting, kicking, pushing, and taking personal belongings.
- **Verbal:** includes taunting, teasing, name calling, and threats.
- **Psychological:** involves spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, and engaging in social exclusion, extortion, or intimidation.

Enforcement and Reporting Procedures:

Belmont Charter School requires that complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained and consistent with Belmont's investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.

Bystander support of harassment or bullying can sustain the continuation of such behaviors. Belmont defines bystander support as any student or staff member who knowingly dismisses any act of harassment or bullying without action such as reporting or confronting bullying or harassment of students. Belmont Charter School prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. Staff should encourage

students and peers to support students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, or report them to the designated authority.

Communication to Staff, Students, and Families:

Belmont Charter School will post the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy on the Community Education Alliance web-site, in the Student/Parent Handbook, given to each staff member, and sent home with a letter explaining the importance of enforcing the policy. Belmont Charter School will provide professional development on the policy and a variety of strategies and resources to use in and out of the classroom. Belmont Charter School will also post signs that communicate our No Bullying Policy.

Belmont Charter School requires the Charter Director to annually distribute the policy to all school staff, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that the policy addresses all acts of bullying and harassment that occur on school property, at school sponsored events, and or actions off school property in which impedes student learning or feeling of safety on or around school grounds.

Reporting Procedures:

Belmont Charter School requires the Charter Director and/or the Dean of Students 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 Charter Director or Dean of Students. All other members of the school community, including parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be in 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.

Belmont Charter School requires the Charter Director and/or Dean of Students to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. The Charter Director and/or Dean of Students must conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within three school days after a report or complaint is made.

Remedial Measures and Consequences

Consequences for a student who commits an act of bullying or harassment 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 will be consistent with Belmont Charter Schools Code of Student Conduct. Remedial measures are designed to: correct the problem behavior; prevent future occurrences of behavior, and protect the victim.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who commits one or more acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions to and including suspension or expulsion.

Factors for Determining Remedial Measures and Consequences:

- Age, development, and maturity of parties involved
- Degree of harm
- Surrounding Circumstances
- Nature and severity of behavior (s)
- Incidences of past or continuing patterns of bullying and harassment
- Relationship between the parties involved
- Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

Factors for Determining Remedial Measures:

Personal

- Life skill competencies
- Experiential deficiencies
- Social relationships
- Strengths
- Traits
- Interests
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- Classroom participation
- Academic performance

Environmental

- School culture
- School Climate
- Student-staff relationships
- Management of classrooms and other educational environments
- Staff ability to prevent and de-escalate difficult situations
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports
- Social relationships
- Community Activities
- Neighborhood culture
- Family dynamics

Examples of Remedial Measures

Personal

- Framing the aggressive behavior as a failed attempt to solve a real problem. The designated staff member will assist the misbehaving student to find a better way to solve the problem or meet the goal.
- Restitution and restoration
- Restorative justice
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience

- Supportive interventions, including participation with Family Support Services, and mediation
- Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored
- Parent conferences
- Referral to outside services

Environmental (Classroom, School Building, Community)

- Set up a time, place, and person to help the bully reflect on the offending behavior, maintaining an emotionally-neutral and strength based approach
- School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to bullying, harassment, or intimidation
- School climate improvement
- Modifications in student routes or patterns traveling to and from school
- Use of monitors throughout the building and or surrounding community
- Professional development for staff
- Parent conferences
- Involvement in community based organizations

Examples of Consequences

- Loss of privileges
- Referral to Behavior Support Office
- Referral to Charter Director
- Lunch detentions
- After school detentions
- In school suspensions
- Out-of-school suspension
- Legal action
- Expulsion