

VIII. DEFINITIONS

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, as noted below. Schools or districts may add specific language to these definitions to clarify them, but may not alter their meaning or scope. Plans may also include additional definitions that are aligned with local policies and procedures.

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying, is 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, § 370 for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is 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.

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

School 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 is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Support Services: The strategy to help the target and aggressor will be based on the nature of the offense, the age of the victims & aggressors, and the decision based upon the results of the investigation. It may require the district to review its student curriculum to assure it is clear, and achieves the objectives of properly educating and imparting the message to the students. This will require pre & posttests of understanding and comprehending lessons. This district incorporates 2nd Step in the elementary schools, and practices Positive Behavior Support.

The counseling services for the aggressor and victim may include the following:

Social emotional skills programs to prevent bullying by:

- Classroom Teachers
- Guidance Counselors
- School Adjustment Counselors
- School Psychologists
- Behavior Analyst Intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors:
- Guidance Counselors
- School Adjustment Counselor
- School Psychologists

To provide services for targets, aggressors and their families, the district uses culturally and linguistically appropriate resources outside the district. The district maintains a list of translation and/or interpreter services.