

Bullying (includes Cyberbullying) Policy and Procedures

General

In order to promote a safe learning environment for all students, Lafayette Preparatory Academy (LPA) prohibits all forms of bullying. Any form of bullying or intimidation by students toward school personnel or students on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity, or in a school-related context is strictly prohibited. LPA also prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying among or against students.

Definitions

Bullying - In accordance with state law, bullying is defined as intimidation, unwanted aggressive behavior, or harassment that is repetitive or is substantially likely to be repeated and causes a reasonable student to fear for his or her physical safety or property; substantially interferes with the educational performance, opportunities or benefits of any student without exception; or that substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying may consist of physical actions, including gestures, or oral, cyberbullying, electronic, or written communication, and/or any threat of retaliation for reporting of such acts.

Cyberbullying is defined in this subsection as the transmission of a communication including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager.

Lafayette Preparatory Academy has jurisdiction over cyberbullying that uses LPA's technology resources or that originates on school property, at a school activity or on school transportation. Even when cyberbullying does not involve school property, activities or technology resources, LPA will impose consequences and discipline for those who engage in cyberbullying if there is a sufficient nexus to the educational environment, the behavior materially and substantially disrupts the educational environment, or LPA is otherwise allowed by law to address the behavior.

School Day – A day on the school calendar when students are required to attend school.

School Event/Activity - Any school-sponsored event or activity, supervised by LPA staff. This does not include PTO or parent-sponsored events without LPA staff supervision.

Designated Officials

The Dean of Students of each building is hereby designated as the individual to receive and investigate reports of bullying. Each Dean of Students shall designate at least two teachers in the building who are

authorized to receive and investigate reports of bullying in the Dean of Student's absence or at the Dean of Student's discretion.

The Head of School will serve as LPA's anti-bullying coordinator. The anti-bullying coordinator will receive all completed investigative reports from all buildings and analyze the report to identify information that would inform LPA's antidiscrimination and anti-bullying education and training programs. In addition, the anti-bullying coordinator will assist in making any relevant reports as required by state and federal law.

Reporting Bullying

School employees, including substitutes are expected to intervene to prevent student bullying, appropriately discipline the perpetrator, assist the victim and report the incident to the appropriate Dean of Students for further investigation and action. Any school employee, substitute or volunteer who witnesses or has firsthand knowledge of bullying of a student must report the incident to the appropriate Dean of Students or designee as soon as possible, but no later than two school days after the incident.

Students who have been subjected to bullying, or who have witnessed or have knowledge of bullying, are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to a school employee. Any school employee receiving such a report shall promptly transmit the report to the Dean of Students or designee.

If the bullying incident involves students from more than one building, the report should be made to the Dean of Students or designee of the building in which the incident took place or, if more appropriate, to the Dean of Students or designee of the building attended by the majority of the participants in the incident.

Investigation

Within two school days of receiving a report of bullying, the Dean of Students or designee will initiate an investigation of the incident. Reports that involve students from multiple buildings will be investigated cooperatively by the Deans of Students of each building involved, or those Deans of Students may request that the anti-bullying coordinator (Head of School) or Executive Director conduct the investigation. If at any time during the investigation the Dean of Students determines that the bullying involves illegal discrimination, harassment or retaliation as described in Harassment Policy and Procedures, the Dean of Students will report the incident to the Executive Director, who will conduct the investigation. If the alleged bullying involves a special education student or a student with disabilities, the Dean of Students will also notify the Special Education Director.

The investigation shall be completed within ten school days of the date the report of bullying was received by the Dean of Students unless good cause exists to extend the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation, the Dean of Students will decide whether bullying or harassment occurred and, if so, whether additional discipline is warranted in accordance with the LEA's student discipline code. The

Dean of Students will generate a written report of the investigation and findings and send a copy of the completed report to LPA's anti bullying coordinator. The Dean of Students or designee will document the report in the SIS records of the victim and the alleged or actual perpetrator of bullying. The victim's report and reports of unsubstantiated allegations of bullying will be in the Parent/Student Contact Logs. Reports of actual bullying will be recorded as a discipline referral for those found to have perpetrated bullying. All reports will be kept confidential in accordance with state and federal law.

If the incident involved allegations of illegal discrimination or harassment, the Executive Director's decision may be appealed through Harassment Policy and Procedures. Student discipline may be appealed when allowed by law in accordance with Board policy.

The Dean of Students or other appropriate school staff will work with victims and their families to access resources and services to help them deal with any negative effects that resulted from the incident.

Consequences

Students who participate in bullying or who retaliate against anyone who reports bullying will be disciplined in accordance with LPA's discipline code. Such discipline may include student reparations/restoration with those impacted, loss of privileges, think sheet, behavior conference, detention - lunch, recess or after school, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, and removal from participation in activities, exclusion from honors and awards, and other consequences deemed appropriate by the Dean of Students, Head of School and/or Executive Director. LPA will also contact law enforcement when required by law or notify social media companies of inappropriate online activity when appropriate.

Even in situations where LPA does not have jurisdiction to discipline a student for bullying, such as when the acts take place off campus and there is an insufficient nexus to LPA, the Dean of Students or designee will take appropriate actions to assist student victims. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, contacting the parents/guardians of the victim and the alleged perpetrator/s, communicating that this behavior is not allowed on school grounds or at school activities, notifying the appropriate school staff to assist the victim, and taking additional action when appropriate, such as notifying law enforcement or social media companies of inappropriate online activity.

LPA employees and substitutes who violate this policy will be disciplined, leading up to and including termination. Discipline may include suspension with or without pay, a negative evaluation, and prohibition from being on school property or at school property or at school activities, mandated training or other appropriate remedial action. Volunteers who violate this policy will no longer be permitted to volunteer.

Policy Publication

LPA shall annually notify students, parents/guardians, school employees, substitutes and volunteers about this policy and LPA's prohibition against bullying. A copy of this policy shall be included in student handbooks and posted on LPA's website.

Training and Education

LPA's anti-bullying coordinator (Head of School) will provide information and appropriate training designed to assist employees, substitutes and volunteers who have significant contact with students in identifying, preventing and responding to incidents of bullying.

LPA will provide education and information about bullying and this policy to students every year. The Dean of Students of each school, in consultation with school counselors and other appropriate school employees, will determine the best methods for facilitating the discussion. Methods may include, but are not limited to: assemblies; homeroom presentations; class meetings; team or club meetings; special presentations by counselors, social workers or mental health professionals; and back-to-school events. When practical, parents/guardians will be invited to attend.

In addition to educating students about the content of this policy LPA will inform students of:

- the procedure for reporting bullying,
- the harmful effects of bullying,
- any initiatives the school has created to address bullying, including student peer-to-peer initiatives, and
- the consequences for those who participate in bullying or engage in reprisal or retaliation against those who report bullying.

School counselors, social workers, mental health professionals, school psychologists or other appropriate school staff will educate students who are victims of bullying about how to overcome the negative effects of bullying including, but not limited to:

- the student's self-worth and self-esteem,
- teaching the student to defend him- or herself assertively and effectively without violence,
- helping the student develop social skills.
- encouraging the student to develop an internal locus of control.

Additional School Programs and Resources

The Board directs the Executive Director or designee to implement programs and other initiatives to address bullying, respond to such conduct in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim, and make resources or referrals available to victims of bullying. Such initiatives may include educating parents/guardians and families on bullying prevention and resources.

