



GOLDEN VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOLS

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY AND PLAN

(BOT approved 2017.08.29)

Bullying Behavior Defined

Bullying is defined in California Education Code Section 48900(r)(1). It means **severe** or **pervasive** physical or verbal act(s) or conduct including written or electronically transmitted material. Bullying is **one** or **more** acts committed by a student or group of students, directed toward one or more students which can reasonably be predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following on the targeted student(s):

- fear of harm to person or property
- detrimental effect on physical or mental health
- interference with academic performance
- interference with the ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided in school

Harassment consists of unwelcome written or spoken comments or conduct which violates an individual's dignity and/or creates an intimidating, degrading, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment.

California Education Code Section 220 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or an other characteristic contained in the definition of hate crimes (Penal Code Section 422.55).

Further, in California, required school safety plans must include policies and procedures to reduce **bias-related discrimination, harassment, intimidation and bullying** based on identified actual or perceived characteristics identified above.

Accordingly, the term "bullying" for the purposes of this Prevention and Intervention Plan, is used in a comprehensive way to additionally include bias-related discrimination, harassment and intimidation.



Examples of Bullying Behavior

- **Verbal & Written:** name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats, “jokes” concerning perceived gender expression, sexual orientation or other distinguishing characteristics
- **Physical:** hitting, tripping, punching, kicking, scratching, spitting, interfering with a person’s medical assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, etc.
- **Social & Psychological:** ignoring, shunning, excluding, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, spreading rumors, using threatening looks or gestures, hiding or damaging personal property
- **Cyber:** use of electronic devices such as computers, phones, or cameras to accomplish verbal, written or social/psychological bullying behavior

This *Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan* describes our process for **preventing and responding to bullying in our school community and our goal to create a more peaceful world**. This plan includes Golden Valley Charter Schools’ policies and procedures for creating a positive, peaceful education environment, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student and adult behavior.

Responsibilities

We exist in a society where incidents of bullying behavior may occur. Preventing and responding to this behavior in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility. In order for bullying to be addressed appropriately, all administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the greater school community must recognize bullying behavior and take individual and collective responsibility for its elimination at Golden Valley Charter Schools and in our world.

Faculty and Staff Responsibilities

- Respect and support students
- Model and promote appropriate behavior
- Have knowledge of school policies relating to bullying behavior
- Implement policies relating to bullying behavior
- Respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the Golden Valley



Charter Schools *Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan*

- Address behavior that is disruptive, abusive and/or destructive to individuals or the class as a whole
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community
- Teach students skills and strategies to recognize and address bullying and destructive behavior as outlined in the Golden Valley Charter Schools Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Respond to all reported and observed incidents of bullying as described in the Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan and the school discipline policy.
- Ensure that students are supervised at all times.
- Report all instances of bullying.
- Create a culture where it is acceptable and encouraged to report bullying incidents.

Student Responsibilities

- Be kind and helpful to everyone.
- Respect individual differences.
- Behave as responsible citizens at school and in our greater community.
- Act as peacekeepers in the school community.
- Resolve differences with respect, seeking help when needed.
- Follow the Golden Valley Charter Schools *Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan*.
- Act as a responsible witness or bystander by understanding destructive and bullying behavior.
- Report incidents of bullying according to the Golden Valley Charter Schools Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Know what is unacceptable behavior at Golden Valley Charter Schools.
- Help to create and maintain a culture where bullying is not tolerated by speaking out and exercising kindness, courage and compassion.
- Be assertive. Tell a person who is using bullying behavior that you do not like the



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behavior and how it makes you feel.

- Seek help from a teacher or other adult if bullying behavior continues.
- If you see someone else being bullied, tell the person who is “bullying” to stop.
- Report any instances of cyber-bullying to a teacher or another adult.
- Act as a responsible bystander. If you see someone being bullied, help them.

Parent Responsibilities

- Support their children to become responsible citizens and develop responsible behavior.
- Be aware of the Golden Valley Charter Schools *Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan* and assist their children in understanding bullying behavior.
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying, consistent with the school *Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan*.
- Report incidents of school related bullying to the teacher and principal.
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

School Community Responsibilities

- Model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community.
- Support the Golden Valley Charter Schools *Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan* through words and actions.
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Practice Empathy And Compassion Everywhere

Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan

This plan outlines our process for preventing and responding to all forms of bullying in our community.

Bullying Prohibited

Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at school-sponsored or school-related activities, events, function or programs whether on or off school grounds, on field trips, during transportation to or from field trips, or through the use of technology or any electronic device owned, leased or used by Golden Valley Charter Schools.

Bullying is also prohibited at a location, activity, event, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school, if the act or acts in question create a hostile environment at school for any person, infringe on the rights of any person at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

Golden Valley Charter Schools expects administrators to communicate clearly to students, faculty, staff and the greater school community that bullying will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students and termination for employees.

All faculty and staff members are required to report any bullying or harassment they see or learn about. Each allegation of harassment or bullying will be promptly and reasonably investigated. The administration will be responsible for handling all complaints alleging harassment or bullying. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying, is prohibited and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students, and termination for employees.

Procedures

Reporting Acts of Bullying, Harassment or Retaliation

1. If any employee of Golden Valley Charter Schools observes, has been reported to, or otherwise becomes aware of a possible act of bullying, harassment, or retaliation, that person must report the event to a school administrator within one full school day, using the Bullying Incident Reporting Form, or other appropriate means of communication.
2. If a student expresses a desire to report or discuss a possible incident of bullying,



- harassment or retaliation with a staff member, the staff member will, in a timely manner, provide the student with a practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate way of doing so.
3. Reporting forms may be obtained in the school's main office, classrooms, on the school website, and other locations determined by the school. All members of the school community (students, faculty, staff, parents, and members of the greater community) may report an act of bullying or retaliation to a school administrator via the Bullying Incident Reporting form or other appropriate means of communication. If a student requires help completing the form, a staff member will provide the necessary assistance.
 4. Golden Valley Charter Schools will create ways in which Bullying Incident Reporting forms may be submitted to the school administration, including means to report anonymously.
 5. Information obtained from the Bullying Incident Report form shall be recorded and filed by the school.

Investigating of Acts of Bullying, Harassment and Retaliation

1. The designated administrator must initiate an investigation of a report of bullying, harassment, or retaliation within one school day after being notified of a possible incident, consistent with due process rights, using the Bullying Investigation and Determination form.
2. The designated administrator will conduct an investigation to determine both whether an act of bullying, harassment, or retaliation occurred, and which person(s) were responsible for the act(s) and/or who played a role in perpetrating it.
3. Other related complaints regarding the involved parties, including those from previous schools, will be reviewed as part of the investigation process.
4. The designated administrator will contact the parents/guardians of all related parties by the end of the administrator's day in which the investigation was initiated and inform them of the status of the investigation.
5. Discussions with all parties should be documented by the investigating administrator as soon as possible after the event.
6. When an act of bullying, harassment, or retaliation has been determined the designated administrator will apply consequences consistent with due process rights using the school Code of Conduct as a guide.



7. Measures will be taken to ensure that any person providing information contributing to the investigation of an incident will be protected from retaliation.
8. If the act of bullying, harassment or retaliation are considered to be delinquent acts, the individual involved shall be reported to the designated administrator promptly and if necessary to the responsible law enforcement agency in accordance with the laws of the State of California.
9. The designated administrator will notify parents/guardians of all parties involved in the incident, the outcome of the investigation and whether disciplinary action was taken.
10. The designated administrator will create a written record of the incident and any disciplinary actions taken, as well as the statements of each party involved.

Following Up on Acts of Bullying, Harassment or Retaliation

1. After the determination that an act of bullying, harassment, or retaliation has occurred and after appropriate disciplinary action has been taken, the designated administrator will develop with all parties involved and their parents or guardians an appropriate plan of action - a Safety Plan for the “target” or a Conduct Plan for the “aggressor”. Both plans will include notifying teachers not only of the incident, but also of all the parties involved, specifying their roles.
2. The Safety Plan will include, but not limited to, the following: a staff member (as designated by the administrator, student, and the parents/guardians) will be assigned as a check-in person to regularly meet with the student to ensure the following:
 - No acts of retaliation have occurred.
 - Strategies are provided for dealing with future incidents, emphasizing immediate reporting of any further acts.
 - Information regarding outside support services are provided to students and family.
 - The frequency and duration of check-ins will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but ***will not be less than two times per week for a period of four weeks.***
 - After two weeks, the check-in person will provide a progress report on the emotional well-being of the student to the designated administrator.
 - The safety plan cannot be discontinued without the agreement of the student, the parents/guardians, the designated check-in person, and the designated

3. The Conduct Plan will include, but not be limited to, the following: a staff member (as designated by the administrator, student, and the parents/guardians) will be assigned as a check-in person to regularly meet with the student to ensure the following. Compulsory Conduct meetings will be held by the designated administrator as part of the Conduct Plan.
 - No further acts of bullying, harassment, or retaliation have been committed.
 - The student has been educated regarding acceptable alternative behaviors.
 - The student has received further education regarding the school’s bullying prevention policy, including the potential for more severe school consequences and/or criminal charges being filed. In addition, the student will be informed of the consequences for retaliating against targets, reporters or witnesses.
 - The frequency and duration of these meetings will be agreed upon and will depend upon future actions. However, the *minimum requirement will not be less than two times per week for a period for four weeks.*
 - Information regarding outside support resources will be made available to the student and their parents/guardians.
 - A progress report identifying student conduct will be provided after two weeks.
 - Discontinuation of the conduct plan will be determined by the designated administrator. All meetings and the ending of the conduct plan should be documented and kept throughout the student’s school career. Parents/guardians will be notified of the discontinuance of a conduct plan.

Strategies

At Golden Valley Charter Schools we will:

- Openly talk about bullying - what it is, how it affects us, what we can do about it.
- Teach students the skills they need to build their self-esteem.
- Empower students to take responsibility for their own well-being, and give students the opportunity to practice these skills.



- Investigate all reports of bullying behavior according to the procedures described in the Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Follow up on all reports of bullying behavior according to the procedures described in the Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Respond to substantiated instances of bullying behavior according to the discipline policy and all relevant GVCS policies and procedures.
- Involve students, faculty, staff, parents and members of the greater community in creating a positive and peaceful school community.

Programs & Curriculum

Golden Valley Charter Schools utilizes a variety of programs and curriculum in our classrooms. As we are a Waldorf School, each teacher works within the developmental stages of the child as described by Rudolf Steiner and works to educate the whole child - the head, the heart and the hands. Specific curriculum is introduced to the students, at particular times based on this work. Supplementary programs and curriculum are used to complement the Waldorf curriculum to create an environment that is in line with our goals of creating a peaceful school community. Following are the cornerstone pieces that we implement as we strive for that peaceful school community.

Virtues Project

The Virtues Project is an initiative created to inspire the practice of virtues in everyday life. The Virtues Project empowers individuals to live more authentic, meaningful lives, families to raise children of compassion and integrity, educators to create safe, caring, and high performing learning communities, and leaders to encourage excellence and ethics in the work place. It has inspired and mobilized people worldwide to commit acts of service and generosity, to heal violence with virtues.

We work to instill the virtues into everyday life in the classroom and the school community. Golden Valley practices the virtue of the month to focus on one virtue each month during the school year, bringing a consciousness around a particular virtue and working to develop a clear understanding of that virtue as it lives in the individual, the classroom, and the greater community.

Agreements are a specific “code of conduct” by which different groups in our community can interact peacefully. Agreements should be made at all levels of our community: Between Faculty, Staff, Governing Councils and Students. Each body must create agreements together that are attainable and able to be “agreed upon” by all parties involved. Classroom agreements will be made in each grade, complimenting the curriculum for the year and the developmental and social needs of each class. As each body of the school has established agreements, each body must also establish follow-up actions or consequences for breaking agreements.

Class Meetings & Sharing

Regular Class Meetings or an organized Class Sharing Time are important tools toward creating a peaceful school environment. Class meetings can be very effective and have a powerful influence on the trust and honesty as well as the level of communication that exist in a class.

An effective class meeting has very specific ground rules for how individuals interact. These ground rules should be set and agreed upon by the group. In an organized class meeting, the teacher / facilitator leads the meeting so that each student has the opportunity to share something with the group. As students share with the group, the teacher / facilitator has the task of engaging the group in a discussion and keeping that discussion on task and positive by asking guiding questions and participating according the established procedures for the class meeting. A class meeting offers a safe venue for students to make acknowledgements or share concerns with their class as a whole.

Student Council

Our Student Council is a student run governance body that exists in our school. Student Council works to plan special days for students, to recommend changes to policies that directly effect students, and advocate for students in our school community. Student government is a positive way for students to be actively involved in their school, empowering students and giving them a voice in their school. Grades 5 - 8 are involved with Student Council with each grade being represented by two students chosen by their class and their teacher.

Empathy training is simply offering tools and practice to sharpen student's listening skills. The focus is on listening to what is most important to the person talking rather than listening for the story. This program would offer these skills to middle school students who could serve as 'empathy first responders' for the younger grades.

Student Empowerment Project

This concept has been used in other school's to empower students to co-create their school social health experience. It is focused on offering students a new approach to deal with conflict through 'empathy' and basic mediation training. The curriculum would be offered to middle school grades who then could practice and support the younger grades on the playground or during 'buddy' time. It would also include fun, interactive training that will help students develop their sense of values and leadership skills, expanding their 'toolbox' in stressful or conflict situations both when they are directly involved or a witness to conflict.

Cyber Civics

Cyber Civics is a computer literacy program designed to bring an appropriate approach to online communication. It teaches etiquette, as well as respect for this powerful form of communication. Cyber Civics begins in Grade 6 and continues through Grade 8.

Faculty / Staff Development

Throughout the school year, Golden Valley Charter Schools hosts a variety of Faculty / Staff enrichment and development events. Presentations are geared toward a variety of topics, but social health and a peaceful school environment are areas that will be addressed regularly.

Parent Enrichment

Throughout the school year, Golden Valley Charter Schools hosts a variety of Parent Enrichment events. Presentations are often oriented toward Waldorf Education, child development, parenting, responsible use of technology, and creating positive relationships and a positive social environment.

As a result of implementing a *Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan*, we strive to see:

- Golden Valley Charter Schools providing a safe place for students to learn and play.
- an initial increase in the number of students who report bullying behavior, followed by an elimination of bullying behaviors.
- better attendance at school.
- better performance in school work.
- Golden Valley Charter Schools faculty and staff utilizing strategies and procedures as described in the Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Golden Valley Charter Schools students utilizing strategies and procedures as modeled and taught by school faculty and staff.
- parents and community members recognizing and supporting the school Anti-Bullying Plan.
- the whole school community working to create a peaceful and supportive school environment.

Evaluation

Golden Valley Charter Schools conducts annual parent surveys, as well as faculty and staff surveys. By including questions related to the school climate, we will have the opportunity to gather information from our community as a whole regarding the social health of our school from a variety of perspectives. Student surveys are also an important tool. An annual review of reported bullying behaviors as well as suspensions and expulsions is included in our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). The LCAP is presented to our school district as well as the state and outlines goals and outcomes measuring overall school performance

The Healing Social Life is found, when in the mirror of each human soul, the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community, the virtue of each one is living.

Rudolf Steiner