

THE EINSTEIN ACADEMY ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

The Einstein Academy is committed to safeguarding each students' rights and promoting a safe and healthy school environment that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment; therefore, The Einstein Academy has adopted a zero-tolerance policy and does not tolerate harassment/bullying of students.

Bullying and harassment of any kind is prohibited, but not limited to:

1. during any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned program or activity;
2. in school, on school property, on school buses or school vans or any transportation provided by The Einstein Academy;
3. through the transmission of information via electronic communication from an Einstein computer or computer network, or other electronic school equipment;
4. when the behavior or communication occurs off campus or through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school and has one of the effects enumerated in the bullying definition. This paragraph applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require Einstein to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

Definitions:

"Bullying," including "cyberbullying," means any severe or pervasive (repeated over time) physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically (i.e., cyberbullying), directed toward a student or students, that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the following effects:

1. placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
2. causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
3. substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
4. substantially interfering with the student's 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: cyberbullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, ostracism, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting, opposing or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Cyberbullying 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, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, 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. Cyberbullying 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.

Harassment:

Which includes a sufficiently severe action, or a persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be or which a reasonable person would perceive as ridiculing or demeaning.

Discrimination:

Derogatory epithet based on race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.

Reporting:

If a student believes they or a peer has been the victim of bullying, they should report the situation to an advisor, teacher, or school administrator. Parents should report the situation directly to Cathryn Ilani, the Head of School, at einsteinacademy@msn.com or 847-697-3836. Anonymous reports are also accepted. No disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report that has not been substantiated in the course of an investigation. Students and parents/guardians should also report violations of the bullying policy to school personnel.

Investigation:

When a report is received, school personnel will collaborate with parents and students to agree upon a course of action, working as quickly as possible to ensure students' safety, gather information, and clarify facts. It is important to notify the principal or school administration of the incident as soon as possible. School personnel will make all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date of the report and consider additional relevant information received during the investigation about the reported incident of bullying. Appropriate school personnel will be involved, as needed. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the parents or guardians of all students involved in an alleged incident of bullying will be notified of such, along with threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, within 24 hours after the school's administration is made aware of the student's involvement in the incident. As appropriate, the school's administration shall also discuss the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. The school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or legal guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained by the school within the 24-hour period. School personnel will also give parents and students involved an opportunity to meet with the Head of School or other administrators to discuss the investigation, the findings, and the actions taken to address any bullying found to have occurred.

Interventions may be provided, as needed, to the parties involved in the bullying, including but not limited to school social worker services, counseling, school psychological services, restorative measures, and others. "Restorative measures" refers to a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline (e.g., suspensions and expulsions) that:

1. are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community.
2. contribute to maintaining school safety.
3. protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate.
4. teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to succeed in school and society.
5. serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities.
6. reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs to keep students in school.
7. increase student accountability if the bullying incident is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

No Retaliation:

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is a violation of The Einstein Academy policy and will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining interventions and consequences according to this Policy. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if our investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining and consequences or other appropriate remedial actions. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining and consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

Consequences:

If a student is determined to have engaged in bullying behavior, they will be subject to disciplinary actions appropriate to the offense, the student's age and past behavior, and the circumstances surrounding the events. Disciplinary actions may include a series of graduated consequences and, in severe cases, suspension or expulsion. Disciplinary actions will be thoughtfully taken in an attempt to promote student safety and well-being, change and improve behavior, and uphold the school's Mission, Philosophy, and Core Values. Regarding rude, mean, or bullying behaviors exhibited outside of school and among Einstein students, teachers and administrators may get involved if students' actions impact the school experience, be it academic or social, for individuals or the community. In such instances, school personnel will work thoughtfully with a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians, to determine the best course of action.

Policy Evaluation:

The Head of School shall assist the Board of Trustees with its evaluation and assessment of the policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, but is not limited to, factors such as:

1. The frequency of victimization.
2. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school.
3. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.
4. The types of bullying being utilized.
5. Bystander intervention or participation.

Illinois State Law:

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.

Our anti-bullying and harassment policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians. The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that The Einstein Academy already collects for other purposes. This policy is fully consistent with The Einstein Academy policies and with the policies of the school board, charter school, or non-public, non-sectarian elementary or secondary school, and can be found on our school's website, student/parent handbook, and faculty/staff handbook.

References:

ISBE Bullying Policy Requirements, <http://www.iasb.com/law/ISBEBullyingPolicyRequirements.pdf>

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