

## **SFA Charter School Procedures Prohibition Against Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying**

### **Absolute Prohibition Against Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying**

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying are strictly prohibited. This stance is demonstrated through:

- daily classroom social and emotional development support
- student accountability to classroom expectations
- Age appropriate anti-bullying guidance lessons provided for all students
- Instruction with anonymous reporting box for harassment, intimidation, or bullying reports
- SFACS Code of Conduct signed by all parents and students
- Prohibition Against Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Policies and Procedures shared with all parents and students each year

### **Dissemination of Prohibition Against Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Information**

The school's policy and procedures regarding its prohibition against harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be provided at least annually to all students, parents, teachers, staff, administrators, SFA teacher candidates, and all other SFA employees regularly on site. This is documented through student review and signature on SFACS Code of Conduct and instruction through periodic Anti-Bullying guidance lessons.

Annual professional development in responsibility, prevention, awareness, and reporting of harassment, intimidation, and bullying will be provided to teachers, staff, administrators, SFA teacher candidates, and all other SFA employees regularly on site.

### **Applying Prohibition Against Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Procedures**

These procedures should be followed under the following circumstances:

- If there is a student who reports harassment, intimidation, or bullying orally, in writing or through the anonymous reporting box
- If a student, parent, or other source has heard in student talk or has been informed by a student of harassment, intimidation, or bullying
- If a staff member has observed signs or clues typically related to harassment, intimidation, or bullying

### **Reporting Procedure**

#### **Reporting by Faculty and Staff**

Teachers and staff members will report immediately to the CEO/Principal or designee if he/she witnesses or becomes aware of possible harassment, intimidation, or bullying involving a student. This requirement to report does not limit the authority of the staff to respond to disciplinary actions consistent with SFACS Code of Conduct and school policies/procedures for behavior management and discipline.

#### **Reporting by Students, Parents, Guardians, and Others**

Students, parents, guardians, and others may report harassment, intimidation, or bullying orally or in writing to a teacher, administrator, or counselor or to the anonymous reporting box.

Students who either believe that they are the victims of bullying or have witnessed harassment, intimidation, or bullying are expected to report incidents orally or in writing to a teacher, administrator, or counselor or to the anonymous reporting box.

### **Investigative Procedure**

The following are standard guidelines for responding to a report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. All reports will be taken seriously. These guidelines will be adapted as necessary to respond as appropriately as possible to the report.

The CEO/Principal or designee will investigate promptly any and all reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. In doing so, consideration will be given to the information available, including the nature of the allegation and the ages of the students involved. Three stages of investigation will take place:

#### **Pre-Investigation**

Before fully initiating the investigation, the CEO/Principal or designee will determine if there is a need to take temporary and immediate actions to support and/or protect the alleged victim from further potential incidents or concern. In taking such action, the rights of both the alleged victim and the alleged bully must be taken into account. Possible adjustments to the school environment or increased supervision will be considered depending on the circumstances.

#### **During Investigation**

Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner and be consistent with current school policies and procedures. The investigation should be completed within three school days after the date of the initial report but the CEO/Principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation. During the investigation, the CEO/Principal or designee will interview students, staff, witnesses and parents/guardians as necessary. Using the "Bullying Checklist for schools" by Texas School Safety Center, the investigator will seek to determine the basis of the complaint to see if the report meets the definition of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. (see Prohibition Against Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Policy)

To the extent possible, given the responsibility to investigate and address the matter, the investigator will maintain the confidentiality of the individual(s) who reported and the witness(es). The CEO/Principal or designee, upon determination of a substantiated report, will notify the parents/guardians of the student who has been an alleged target and the parents of the alleged aggressor within three school days after the initial report. The CEO/Principal or designee may only disclose information to a parent/guardian about his/her own child.

#### **Post Investigation**

School personnel are required to weigh all of the facts and circumstances objectively to determine if the alleged events occurred and if a charge of harassment, intimidation, or bullying is substantiated. If substantiated, the administrator or designee will take steps reasonably designed to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefitting from school activities.

The CEO/Principal or designee will:

1. Determine what remedial or adaptive actions are required, if any, and

2. Determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary actions are necessary.

The response will be individually tailored to the circumstances, taking into account the nature of the behavior and the ages of the students involved. All behavior management and disciplinary actions for students who have committed acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be in accordance with the SFACS Code of Conduct/school policies.

Depending on the circumstances, the CEO/Principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teachers, support staff, and/or school counselor to provide additional support/guidance for those who were involved in the incident, including a student who is a target of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, as well as, a student who engaged in conduct that was harassing, intimidating, or bullying.

### **Notifications**

The CEO/Principal or designee will notify the parents or guardians of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the date the incident is reported, and a parent or guardian of the alleged bully on or before the third business day after the date the incident is reported or within a reasonable amount of time after the incident, about the results of the investigation and, if harassment, intimidation, or bullying is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. All notices to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations.

Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the CEO/Principal or designee cannot report specific information to the alleged target's parent or guardian about the consequence/disciplinary action taken toward another student unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the victim must be aware of in order to report violations. School personnel may, however, share information about the process followed leading to the determination of whether bullying did occur, what general measures are being taken to protect the victim from further acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and what is being done to ensure that the target is safe.

### **Bullying Resources:**

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/>

<http://www.violencepreventionworks.org/public/bullying.page>

<https://www.ncpc.org/?s=bullying+for+kids>