
Vision Academy Charter School of Excellence Board of Trustees Anti-Bullying Policy

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of a safe school environment for students to thrive and achieve academic excellence at Vision Academy Charter School of Excellence (VACSE). A safe and respectful environment is foundational for learning. Therefore, bullying, defined as disruptive behavior that interferes with students' learning or the school's mission, is strictly prohibited. All administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers are expected to model respectful behavior and actively discourage bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical acts or a series of acts:

1. Directed at another student or students.
2. Occurring in a "school setting" or outside of school if it materially disrupts the educational environment or creates a nexus with the school as permitted by law.
3. Severe, persistent, or pervasive in nature.
4. Resulting in:
 - Substantial interference with a student's education.
 - Creation of a threatening environment.
 - Disruption of the school's orderly operations.

A "school setting" includes school property, grounds, vehicles, designated bus stops, and school-sponsored activities or events. Conduct outside of school is also subject to this policy if it significantly disrupts school operations.

Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to demonstrate self-discipline, maturity, and respect for the rights and welfare of others, as well as school property. This policy seeks to cultivate a community atmosphere of mutual respect among students, staff, and families.

Bystander Responsibility

To reduce bullying, VACSE prohibits active or passive support for bullying. Students are encouraged to disengage and report incidents to a teacher, administrator, or staff member.

Consequences and Remedial Actions

Consequences for those who engage in bullying may range from behavioral interventions to suspension, expulsion, or other disciplinary actions as outlined in the Code of Conduct. Measures will be determined based on the specific incident, the student's age, and history of behaviors. Remedial actions aim to:

- Correct the behavior.
- Prevent recurrence.
- Protect the victim.

Reporting and Investigation

All VACSE employees are mandated to report suspected bullying to the school principal or a designated staff member. Students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report bullying, with the option to do so anonymously. However, disciplinary actions will not be based solely on anonymous reports. The school principal will ensure a thorough investigation is conducted within three school days of the report.

Prohibition of Retaliation

VACSE strictly prohibits retaliation against individuals who report bullying. Consequences for retaliation will be determined by the nature of the act and may include disciplinary actions outlined in school policies.

False Accusations

Falsely accusing another of bullying is equally prohibited. Consequences will align with the school's Code of Conduct or Employee Handbook.

Policy Dissemination

This policy will be shared annually with students, staff, and families, emphasizing its application in all school-related settings.

Compliance with Federal and State Laws

VACSE adheres to all applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to the Pennsylvania Safe Schools Act, IDEA, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, in addressing bullying incidents.

Annual Reporting

VACSE will submit an annual Safe School Report, including:

1. Anti-Bullying Policy updates.
2. Incident reports.
3. Information about bullying prevention and education initiatives.

This policy represents the first edition for Vision Academy Charter School of Excellence and establishes the foundation for maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment.

Adopted on:

President

Secretary