BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Girls Global Academy expects students to treat one another in accordance with the values of the school and contribute to a positive and joyful culture. Acts of bullying interrupt and disrupt the learning experience for our school community. GGA aims to provide a safe, inclusive, and equitable environment and all members are encouraged to report incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. The bullying policy is intended to describe how the school will identify, prevent, and respond to bullying, to work with students and families to remedy situations, and to connect students with services as needed.

Bullying Defined

Bullying means any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

1. May be based on a youth's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, place or residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or on a youth's association with a person, or group with any person, with one or more of the actual or perceived foregoing characteristics; and
2. Can reasonably be predicted to:
    a. Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person or property;
    b. Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health;
    c. Substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance; or
    d. Substantially interfere with the youth's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an agency, educational institution, or grantee.

Cyberbullying is defined as any bullying done through electronic means which meets the definition of bullying above, including, but not limited to, social media, electronic mail (email), texting or tweeting.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Bullying is prohibited

Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at school sponsored or school related activities, functions or programs whether on or off school grounds, on or off a school bus or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school, at any transit stop at which youth wait to be transported to the school or an event sponsored by the school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school.

Bullying is also prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related 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 the victim, infringe on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a youth, volunteer or staff member who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying, or witnesses an act of bullying is also prohibited.

Administrators will make expectations clear to students and staff that bullying will not be tolerated and will be the grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and dismissal for students. Retaliation against anyone who reports bullying, provides information about an act of bullying, or witnesses an act of bullying is also prohibited.

Proactive approaches for bully prevention

- Create and promote a school wide culture of positive behavioral intervention and supports
- School-wide bullying prevention campaigns, code of conduct assemblies, positive behavior support program
- Investigate all reports of bullying
- Resources and support for all individuals involved in bullying

Investigating Instances of bullying

Girls Global Academy will investigate and address all incidents of bullying that school personnel know or reasonably should have known are occurring. Incidents of bullying will be promptly investigated by the Principal or a designee. If the investigation reveals that bullying occurred, Girls Global Academy will take prompt and effective steps to end the bullying, eliminate its effects and prevent it from recurring.

Prior to the investigation of an incident, the Principal will take steps to ensure the safety of the alleged victim referenced in a reported bullying incident. Once an investigation is concluded, further steps will be taken as needed to assure the continued safety of the victim from additional incidents of bullying or retaliation.

Reporting Instances of Bullying

All staff members are required to report any bullying they witness or are made aware of. Staff members should immediately record all such incidents in accordance with school procedures for reporting behavior incidents and notify:

Brianey Winslow, Dean of Students
Girls Global Academy Public Charter School
733 8th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
Submit Form

Any student who believes that they have been the target of bullying or who is aware of bullying is strongly encouraged to promptly report the matter orally or in writing to:

Brianey Winslow, Dean of Students
Girls Global Academy Public Charter School
733 8th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
Submit Form

Incidents of bullying can be reported to another administrator, or to any other faculty or staff member or member of Girls Global Academy with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Also, any student who is subject to retaliation in violation of this policy or who knows of another student who has been subject to retaliation is urged to report it as soon as possible.

A parent who witnesses or becomes aware of bullying /retaliation is strongly urged to promptly notify:

Brianey Winslow, Dean of Students
Girls Global Academy Public Charter School
733 8th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
Submit Form

Anonymous Reporting

Reports made by students, parents, and community members may be made anonymously, although no formal response will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. However, such a report may trigger an investigation.

Bystander Policy

Students are expected to report rumors of bullying, planned bullying, as well as bullying actually observed. Students who watch and laugh, but do not report what they have witnessed, are considered bystanders and will be treated as participants.

Investigation Procedures

The Dean of Students will be responsible for investigating reports of bullying and can be contacted at 202-600-4822 or via email. If an incident of bullying or retaliation is reported, the Wellness Specialist will respond quickly and appropriately to investigate and intervene. Complaints or reports of bullying/ retaliation will be investigated in an adequate, reliable and impartial manner. Each investigation will include, as necessary, interviewing witnesses, obtaining documents and allowing the complainant and accused to present evidence.

Investigations will be initiated within two (2) business days of receiving the complaint. During that time, the Principal will also take the following steps:

- create a written record of the complaint, which will also be included in the final determination letter;
- take appropriate action to protect, to the extent possible, the safety of the alleged target, which may include contacting relevant parties, intercepting the target or alleged perpetrator if information is received regarding a pending act of bullying or retaliation, and ascertaining the presence of teachers or other employees at a location that has been identified as the site of a pending act of bullying or retaliation;
- inform the target, alleged perpetrator, and if applicable, witnesses, of the alleged incident and of the initiation of the investigation;
- make a good-faith attempt to inform the parents or guardians of the target about the alleged incident and any planned investigation, if the target is less than eighteen (18) years of age and if the contact information for the parents or guardians is available or can be requested. If the Principal determines that informing the parents or guardians may cause harm to, or endanger the health or well-being of the target, the Principal shall document facts giving rise to such determination, and document the decision not to inform in writing;
- make a good-faith attempt to inform the parents or guardians of the alleged perpetrator about the alleged incident and any planned investigation, if the alleged perpetrator is less

than eighteen (18) years of age. If the Principal determines that informing the parents or guardians may cause harm to, or endanger the health or well-being of, alleged perpetrator, as the case may be, the Principal shall document facts giving rise to such determination, and document the decision not to inform in writing; and
- take into account whether the individuals involved have disabilities and whether there are resulting protections or considerations that must be included in the investigation.

Within thirty (30) days of receiving a report of bullying, the Executive Director will conduct the investigation and respond to the parents of the students involved in writing, summarizing the course and outcome of the investigation and identifying an appropriate resolution. The written determination will also include the following:

- A description of the incident(s) including the names of individuals involved and behaviors alleged, location of occurrence(s) and whether or not bullying occurred;
- Whether the incident was based on a trait that is covered in the Human Rights Act (as listed in the definition of bullying); and
- The actions that were taken as a result of the findings.

If it is determined that bullying has occurred, appropriate corrective and remedial action will be taken. Girls Global Academy will make determinations as to whether a reported incident constitutes bullying based on all of the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident. Girls Global Academy will use a preponderance of the evidence standard (i.e., more likely than not that bullying occurred) when resolving complaints.

Steps will be taken as necessary to protect suspected victims of bullying during the course of the investigation process. Girls Global Academy will make every effort to protect confidentiality during the course of the investigation. However, if the Wellness Specialist learns during the course of the investigation that the reported incident involves criminal activity, the Wellness Specialist shall communicate such information to the appropriate enforcement agency. If the reported incident or statements during the investigation indicate credible and imminent threat of harm or criminal activity, the Wellness Specialist and Principal shall immediately report such information to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and to the Principal. The individual responsible for conducting the investigation will be responsible for making determinations about confidentiality.

Girls Global Academy will take steps to provide the complainant and accused with periodic updates on the status of the investigation. Once a determination has been made, Girls Global Academy will notify the complainant and accused about the outcome of the investigation, the result of any school disciplinary proceeding that results and the appeal process. The Principal

will determine if parents or guardians should be informed prior to or after the investigation of the incident.

Girls Global Academy may notify appropriate law enforcement agencies if school staff determine that the behavior cannot be safely and appropriately handled through school-based disciplinary action. Law enforcement agencies will be notified if mandatory reporting requirements are triggered.

Responses to bullying

- Verbal redirects
- Student Conference with Wellness Specialist
- Principal and student conference
- Parent / guardian contact
- Parent conference
- Restoration
- Mediation
- Behavior Plan
- Referral for services
- Out of school suspension
- Restorative support upon re-entry

Sanctions and Remedies for Bullying

Girls Global Academy takes a tiered approach to responding to inappropriate behavior. The same approach will be taken when responding to bullying. Girls Global Academy's levels of discipline are designed to (a) appropriately correct the bullying behavior; (b) prevent another occurrence of bullying or retaliation; (c) protect the target of bullying; and are flexible and can be varied in method and severity based on: (i) nature of the incident; (ii) developmental age of the person committing the act at issue, and; (iii) any history of problem behavior from the person committing the act at issue. The Wellness Specialist will confer with the Principal to determine what disciplinary consequences are appropriate.

<u>Appeals</u>

Any party who is not satisfied with the outcome of the initial investigation and response from Girls Global Academy may appeal in writing to the Principal. Appeals must be made within 30 days of the conclusion of the initial investigation. The secondary investigation shall be completed within 30 days of receipt of an appeal, unless: (1) circumstances require additional time to complete a thorough investigation; (2) the higher-level authority sets forth those circumstances in writing; (3) the additional time is not to exceed 15 days. After completing the

secondary investigation, the Principal shall notify the parties in writing of the results of the investigation and of the party's ability to seek additional redress under the DC Human Rights Act.