



Boston Higashi School

800 North Main Street  
Randolph, MA 02368-3663 USA  
phone: (781) 961-0800  
facsimile: (781) 961-0888  
web: [www.bostonhigashi.org](http://www.bostonhigashi.org)

# **BOSTON HIGASHI SCHOOL**

## **BULLYING PREVENTION & INTERVENTION PLAN**

**JUNE 28, 2011**

*Accredited by National Commission for the Accreditation of Special Education Services  
The Boston Higashi School is affiliated with Lesley University.*

## **Boston Higashi School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Boston Higashi School is committed to creating and preserving a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. The BHS Plan is written in accordance with Massachusetts' law required under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

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*The mission of the Boston Higashi School is to help children and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder learn to reach their full potential through the application of the methodology of Daily Life Therapy®. This unique educational philosophy developed by the late Dr. Kiyo Kitahara, of Tokyo Japan, incorporates a broad and balanced curriculum including academics, art, music, physical education, computer technology and social education. Our students take on challenges, learn to overcome obstacles and gain confidence in their own success. This process allows our students to develop a love for learning so they may fully enjoy their family, community and all that life has to offer. As each student grows and learns, their personality and individual character matures allowing them to benefit from and most importantly contribute to society as adults.*

*The Boston Higashi School does not discriminate with regard to race, sex, color, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or age.*

## I. LEADERSHIP

The Boston Higashi School's (BHS) Child Safety Committee (CSC) will play a critical role in developing and implementing the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans ("Plan") in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote a positive school climate. Educators have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. The CSC will be responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying.

### **Child Safety Committee Members:**

Deborah Donovan, Principal  
Dr. Ann Roberts, Director of Clinical Services  
Jennifer Lambert, Director of Training and Curriculum  
Toshihiro Ogimura, Director of the Training Institute  
Ronald J. Lauri, Director of Quality Assurance  
Christopher White, Residential Director  
Masaki Mitsuyama, Assistant Residential Director  
Heather Katz, John Kolwaite, Jamie Marshall, Division Directors  
Tracy Johnson, Nurse Manager

- A. **Public involvement in developing the Plan.** As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Plan has been developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, students, parents, and guardians. All interested parties have been provided adequate notice and a public comment period for parents of BHS students before this Plan was adopted by the BHS Board of Directors. The Plan will be posted on the BHS website.
- B. **Assessing needs and resources.** This Plan is the school's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of this planning process, BHS school leaders, with the input from families and staff, assessed the adequacy of the school's current programs; reviewed current policies and procedures; reviewed available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assessed available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. This process assisted BHS to identify resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on our findings BHS has developed policies and procedures along with establishing new partnerships with community agencies.

Given the special needs population of the entire school, much data already exists in school that can be analyzed initially and periodically regarding bullying. Daily student logs and notebooks provide data that informs the faculty about student's condition on a daily basis. Documented conversations with parents provide additional data regarding concerns. From all of the data collected, a report will be made to the Child Safety Committee (CSC). Student's parents completed an initial survey to assess whether their child has been exposed to any bullying at BHS. The BHS psychologist will conduct assessments as needed related to bullying, including school climate, building and grounds "hot spots", day and residential

issues, issues related to transportation, and individual needs. These will be used to help identify patterns of behaviors, areas of concern or programmatic issues, which will be reported to the CSC. The CSC will make recommendations to other BHS committee's in developing preventative strategies including age-appropriate curricula, professional development, training, and in-school support services. **Due to the intensive special needs of our students they are never left alone or without direct staff supervision.** The BHS psychologist or CSC members will recommend other needs assessments as needed throughout the school year. All assessments will be reviewed by the CSC and forwarded to the school's Executive Committee as needed.

C. **Planning and oversight**. Following are the BHS school leaders responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

- 1) Receiving reports on bullying: Child Safety Committee (CSC)
- 2) Collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes: (CSC)
- 3) Creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors: (CSC)
- 4) Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law: **Ms. Jennifer Lambert, Director of Training and Curriculum**
- 5) Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors: **Dr. Ann Roberts, Director of Clinical Services**
- 6) Choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use: **Ms. Jennifer Lambert and the BHS Faculty**
- 7) Developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them: **The BHS Executive Committee**
- 8) Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct: **Ms. Pat Downey, Personnel Manager and Ron Lauri, Director of Quality Assurance**
- 9) Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials: **Principal Deb Donovan and the BHS Parents Association**
- 10) Reviewing and updating the Plan each year, or more frequently: (CSC)

D. **Developing priority statements.** The Boston Higashi School is committed to the success of its bullying prevention and intervention policy and procedures.

The BHS expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The BHS is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The school will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying, and the school is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The BHS Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

## II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### **Boston Higashi School Professional Development Program Outline Bullying Prevention and Intervention**

#### **School Year 2010-2011**

**December 2010:** Introduce Massachusetts's *Bullying Prevention and Intervention* law to all Boston Higashi School staff, including but not limited to, educators, residential instructors, administrators, school nurses, education office staff, custodians, and cafeteria staff. The professional development program will include:

- I. Introduce Bullying Prevention and Intervention definitions (aggressors, bullying, cyber bullying, hostile environment, target and retaliation) and prohibited areas (school grounds, adjacent areas to school grounds, school-sponsored events, bus stops.)
- II. Research findings and information on specific categories of students at risk for bullying, including cyber bullying and the use of social media.
- III. Introduce *Massachusetts's Bullying Prevention and Intervention* law, focusing on the Boston Higashi School responsibilities and staff responsibilities in prevention and intervention of bullying school-wide.

**January 2011:** Introduce *Boston Higashi School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention* policy and procedures to all Boston Higashi School staff, including but not limited to, educators, residential instructors, administrators, school nurse, education office staff, custodians, and cafeteria staff. The professional development program will include:

- I. The Boston Higashi School's commitment statement to provide a safe learning environment to all students, and how we as a community promote a safe learning environment i.e. staff to receive *Personnel Policy Handbook* noting the school's policy and procedures on anti-bullying prevention and interventions, as well as the school's code of conduct.
- II. Identifying what bullying is, and communicating with parents regarding bullying concerns, i.e. Boston Higashi School Policy on Internet use and Social Media Safety, parent survey and collaborating with parents.
- III. Staff responsibilities, and duties, for reporting bullying to school leaders.
- IV. Boston Higashi School's Child Safety Committee's role in reviewing parent's surveys regarding bullying, staff reporting requirements, investigation procedures and prevention strategy monitoring.
- V. Introduction to the school's Anti-bullying curriculum by Committee for Children: Second Step A Violence Prevention Curriculum and MARC Curriculum: Bullying Prevention and Cyberbullying Prevention.

**February 2011:** Introduce Committee for Children: Second Step A Violence Prevention Curriculum and MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention in full. The Second Step curriculum includes topics such as, empathy training, emotion management, and problem solving and the MARC Curriculum, which focuses specifically bullying, and cyberbullying prevention. \* Note that the Boston Higashi School will be working on modifying curriculums with special education teachers all month, so that, our students are able to comprehend material at their own individual level. Additional topics to be covered are:

- I. Information and identification of the interactions between aggressor, target and witnessing bullying. \* This will also be covered in the January 2011 professional development under the *Boston Higashi School's Anti-bullying Prevention and Intervention* policy and procedures under staff responsibilities.
- II. Promote and model respect language, building relationships with students and families, constructively implementing positive classroom management strategies, using positive behavioral intervention strategies (Daily Life Therapy® and Non-Abusive Psychological Physical Intervention program) and engaging students in decision-making to maintain a safe learning environment.

**March 2011 –June 2011:** Implement Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum and MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention school-wide. Curriculum will be introduced to students, and ongoing professional development for curriculum implementation to be conducted throughout the school year to ensure appropriate content delivery and exposure to violence prevention and anti-bullying.

**New Employees:**

All new employees, starting January 2010 will receive all the above-mentioned professional development during the first two-week of training in both the day and residential program. New employees will also receive the Boston Higashi School Personnel and Policy Handbook, which include the school's policy and procedures on anti-bullying prevention and interventions, as well as the school's code of conduct.

### III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed. The BHS Plan will describe the strategies for providing supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the school's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, available services reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets and aggressors. The BHS Plan includes a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets, and family members of those students.

**A. Identifying Resources.** This Plan, with input from staff, families, and the BHS Parents Association, reviewed the adequacy of the school's current programs and staffing with respect to identifying and establishing those elements that support a positive school environment through early intervention and intensive services as part of a preventative approach to bullying. New age-appropriate curricula on bullying-prevention in each grade, staff training and parent programs are being provided as part of the Plan in response to fulfilling identified needs. Bullying-prevention approaches, informed by research including a dynamic understanding about why bullying may occur, will be used to help all elements including targets, aggressors and families address these issues. Teachers/Instructors and Master Teachers are the first resources in this Plan. Research has shown that "bonding" with a trusted adult and adult supervision are key elements in bullying prevention and both are areas forming critical components of BHS educational practice. Other initiatives include teaching positive skills to students such as how to form friendships, to have social skills in groups and to learn leisure and conversational skills, all of which are proactive measures. In addition the Plan includes safety processes such as separation of target/aggressor, and management of "sub-bullying" and on-looker behaviors. Referrals will be made through the school's incident reporting system to the CSC where subsequent types of responses and interventions will be planned as needed on a case-by-case basis.

**B. Counseling and Other Services.** The BHS is both an international program and one that serves students from all over the United States. These students are unable to access services in their local communities for most of the school year. In these cases the BHS licensed Clinical Psychologist would coordinate services for the student in conjunction with the family on an emergency basis to assess the immediate need and so that an appropriate action plan could be developed. For local families, referrals would be made to resources of their choice within their home communities that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. BHS will collaborate with the student's home school district to identify and secure counseling and other services.

BHS has identified Bridgewater State College, in particular their **MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center) Program** that provides evidence-based training programs on bullying prevention, intervention, and referral sources. On December 7, 2010, senior staff from the BHS attended a training session presented by the MARC Program at Bridgewater State College as part of the research initiatives in the development of the BHS Plan.

**C. Students with disabilities.** Due to the diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder, all of the students at BHS will meet the qualification for a disability affecting social skills development or be vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability as required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3 as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010. Each student, at his/her next IEP Team Meeting, will have consideration given to how this should be individually addressed. In addition, BHS will attach information to the IEP to show how a student's skills and proficiencies need to be developed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing

**D. Referral to outside services.** The Boston Higashi School's Director of Clinical Services, in conjunction with the Child Safety Committee, will refer students and their families to outside services. The protocol in this referral process will begin with a notification to the student's local school district in partnership to help identify appropriate mental health services in their community. Appropriate referral and identified services will be made in a timely manner. The Director of Clinical Services will maintain a logbook of all referrals, contact names and date of initial service. All referrals for outside services will be reviewed by the CSC on a monthly basis.

#### IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

##### **Boston Higashi School: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Curriculum**

##### **Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum**

##### **MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention**

##### **School Year 2010-2011**

The Boston Higashi School is committed to providing a safe learning environment to all our day and residential students. To ensure that all students learn in a safe school environment, the Boston Higashi School will adopt new curriculum programs with a focus on *violence prevention* and *anti-bullying*. The curriculum programs that the Boston Higashi School will adopt are Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum and MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention. Both curriculums will be modified in accordance with each student's learning style, method of communication and student specific accommodations, as stated on the Individualized Education Programs.

The Second Step curriculum was developed from the Committee for Children: a nonprofit working globally to prevent bullying, violence and child abuse. Second Step is a research – based curriculum working to provide a safe learning environment in school settings. The curriculum includes specific lesson plans addressed to meet the needs of students as well as staff training initiatives to help promote a safe and healthy school climate. Although the curriculum is research-based with students within the public school setting, little research in best practices for anti-bullying has been conducted solely with students with severe disabilities. With this in mind; the Boston Higashi School has collaborated with Committee for Children, Adam Peck, Client Support Service Representative in choosing the best curriculum program to implement, as a first step in meeting our student's diverse needs. Second Step is not solely a language-based curriculum, but includes lesson content that can be modified to assist our students in learning the material in multiple ways.

The Second Step curriculum is designed for students K-8 with a focus on violence prevention, which specifically addresses bullying at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level and beyond. The school will implement the curriculum content on violence prevention and anti-bullying in classrooms to all students served, elementary through young adults, while continuing to build on the successes of the Boston Higashi School's safe and cohesive school climate. The Second Step curriculum addresses content that focuses on empathy training, emotion management and problem solving, which can be difficult concepts for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, therefore modification will be made to ensure learning. The curriculum scope and sequence will be adopted in full, and modifications will be made on the delivery of concepts through the use of visuals, role playing, social stories, modeling, setting clear expectations and routines throughout all learning environments, and through repetition of lessons.

The MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention, was developed by Elizabeth K. Englander, Ph.D. from the Massachusetts MARC Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater

State University. The MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention specifically addresses topics surrounding bullying and cyberbullying prevention that begin at the kindergarten level and extend up to grade 5. The curriculum focuses on positive social behaviors within the school community. Mainly, the methodology and approaches utilized in this curriculum encourages students to discuss and share their thoughts and knowledge surrounding bullying and cyberbullying. The Boston Higashi School will provide supports by means of visuals, social stories, role-playing, teacher and peer modeling as well as student-specific modifications when utilizing the MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention.

The Boston Higashi School ensures, that in addition to the Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum and MARC Curriculum: Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention teachers will continue to address and promote general teaching approaches to support bullying prevention efforts:

- Clear expectations for students
- Establishing school and classroom routines
- Creating a safe classroom environment for all students
- Using positive behavioral supports
- Building positive relationships with students
- Modeling and teaching respectful behavior
- Using positive approaches to aid in respectful social and emotional development
- Support student's interests and participation in academic and non-academic activities.
- Provide Internet monitoring and safe guards

Enclosed are the Second Step Curriculum and MARC Curriculum scope and sequence. All students will be exposed to the curriculums, starting at the elementary levels, and new curriculum concepts will be introduced and added at each student's individual level, as students demonstrate understanding and mastery of concepts. Anticipated start date for implementation, following professional development with special education teachers, is March 2011.

## V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, the BHS has put in place policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community – students, parents, and staff – know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur. The following procedures that are included in this Plan are based on the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

A. **Reporting bullying or retaliation.** Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A BHS school staff member is required to report immediately to the Principal or designee (Day Program-Director of Special Education Residential Program-Residential Director) any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school staff members may be made anonymously. The BHS will use its Incident Reporting Tracking System to receive and process any reports of bullying or retaliation (*See Attachment C: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Report Form*). However, the use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. At the beginning of each school year the BHS will provide the school community including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policy for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. The BHS will include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of each year's information packets for students and parents/guardians. The form will also be available in the education office and posted on the school's website. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the Principal will be incorporated into the Personnel Policy Handbook, Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book and on the school website.

### 1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the Principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

### 2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The school expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee. Any student that knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying/retaliation will be subject to

possible disciplinary action in accordance with the provisions outlined in the school's Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book.

**B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.**

1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Boston Higashi School's Principal or designee will work with a student's IEP TEAM to address the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor for bullying or retaliation. Disciplinary actions for students will be addressed on an individual basis, specifically addressing and determining the nature and cause of the bullying behavior, such as, if it's a manifestation of a student's disability. As part of the process, the Boston Higashi School will immediately put in safeguards to eliminate the bullying behavior, such as adding additional supervision, reducing contact between aggressor and victim and/or implementing schedule changes.

For the school's policy on discipline please refer to the school's Daily Life Therapy® Guidelines Book.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

- a. Notice to parents or guardians. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will immediately notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- b. Notice to Another School or District. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

- c. **Notice to Law Enforcement.** At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

- C. **Investigation.** The Director of Quality Assurance will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the Director of Quality Assurance will interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as needed. The Director will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

As in all school investigations the Director of Quality Assurance will at times use members from the BHS Child Safety Committee to assist with the investigation (Investigation Team). To the extent practicable, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigative process. The Director will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation are consistent with the established and approved BHS policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the BHS will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

- D. **Determinations.** The BHS Investigation Team will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. At the conclusion of the investigation if bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Investigation Team will make recommendations to the Principal/CEO and take reasonable steps calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The Investigation Team, along with the Principal/CEO will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action are necessary. (Please see page 19, Section B.1)

Depending upon the circumstances, the Principal may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or the BHS Director of Clinical Services, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have

contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The Principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation such as developing a safety plan, additional staff supervision or by providing a social skills group. 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 principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

E. **Responses to Bullying**

1. **Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building**

Upon the Boston Higashi School 's determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the BHS use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the school may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with the BHS Clinical Department and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting 3 P behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

2. **Taking Disciplinary Action**

If the Principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's range of disciplinary practices in accordance with policies and procedures in the Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book (Attachment G).

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the Principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of

bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The Principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. As part of the schools standard operating procedures, **all BHS students are directly supervised by school/residential staff at all times.**

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

## VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

The Boston Higashi School will engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of the school to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. The law requires the school Plan to include provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the BHS including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyber-bullying. Parents and guardians will be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Please see Section III of this Plan, Access to Resources and Services for referral information.

A. Parent education and resources. The BHS will offer the following educational program for parents and guardians that are focused on the anti-bullying curricula. The BHS Parents Collaboration Meetings are scheduled for the following dates in 2011: January 5, April 25, June 15 and September 12. This parent education program will be presented during these meetings.

### **PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM**

As part of the Boston Higashi School's Anti-Bullying Program, this Parent Education Program is designed facilitate the open lines of communication and reciprocal flow of information between home and school that are essential to mutual understanding and a successful program for students. By letting parents know what we are doing and how we are doing it, and inviting them to join us in our efforts, we create an effective process, open to on-going revision that remains responsive to the needs of our total community.

The following description provides a brief outline of the program.

- **Introduction to BHS Policy:** The Introduction will provide an overview of the structure of responsibility for oversight of BHS Policy for Anti-Bullying, including the administrative structure, the personnel involved, the way the needs of students and the resources available have been assessed and the Plan developed to date as well as planned for in the future.
- **Definitions:** The various common terms used in the discussions will be defined, and the scope of the discussion will be presented. Included in the discussion are the areas of physical, emotional, and verbal bullying as well as cyber-bullying using both the Internet and cell phones.
- **Curriculum:** This will include some history/review of the selection criteria for the curriculum, based on the characteristics of our school population and their perceived needs and how the available curriculums on the market can best be used/modified with our students. Some examples will be shown throughout the age span.
- **Staff Training:** Staff training is a key component of the anti-bullying partnership. From the natural aspects of Daily Life Therapy to the specific language and components of the

Anti-Bullying Program, the ways in which staff training contributes to student safety and freedom from bullying will be discussed.

- **Resources to be Accessed:** A list of additional educational and community resources for interested parents to access will be included, such as agencies, books, programs, and web-based resources.

B. Notification requirements. Each year the Boston Higashi School will notify parents/guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used (see Section IV page 15). This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, the special characteristics of our student population that renders them vulnerable to bullying, the proactive characteristic of the BHS program to prevent bullying as well as cyber-bullying and online safety. The BHS will send parents a written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's internet safety policy. This required information will be published in the BHS Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book that each parent receives at the beginning of every school year. The information will also be posted on the BHS website and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians.

## **VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

*The following statement will be published in the school's Daily Life Therapy Guidelines Book each school year. All parents receive a copy of this Guidelines book annually. It will also be published on the BHS Personnel Policy Handbook for all staff and put on the BHS Website.*

*The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(b), and describes the law's requirements for the prohibition of bullying.*

Acts of bullying, which include cyber bullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- (ii) 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 a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

## VIII. DEFINITIONS

*Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as noted below.*  
Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyber bullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyber bullying.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

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.

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## **IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a private school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school policies.

Nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

## **Attachment A: Student Internet/Social Media Use Guidelines**

The Boston Higashi School. offers Internet access for our students. All uses of the Boston Higashi School's Internet access (like all other uses of our computer facilities) must be in support of and consistent with educational objectives. All students who use the Boston Higashi School's Internet access are expected to read these Guidelines and/or to take part in a discussion of the Guidelines with a teacher. Adherence to the Guidelines is a condition for a student's privilege of Internet access.

### **The Internet**

The Internet is a vast, global network, linking computers at universities, schools, laboratories, and other sites. Through the Internet one can communicate with people all over the world through discussion forums and electronic mail. In addition, many educationally valuable files may be downloaded from the Internet. Because of its enormous size and resources, the Internet's educational potential is boundless. Because of its broad reach the Internet also contains the potential for abuse. These Guidelines are intended to help insure that students use this valuable resource in a safe and appropriate manner.

### **Student's Individual Responsibility**

All student use of the Internet is to be conducted under staff supervision. Staff members are not expected to monitor student use at every moment. Every student is expected to take individual responsibility for his/her appropriate use of the Internet.

### **Levels of Student Access**

#### **1. Internet and World Wide Web**

While at Boston Higashi School the students will have access to the Internet with teacher supervision in classrooms, computer rooms, and at the residence. Social Media sites are currently blocked until further notice. No individual account agreement is required. Before a student may access the Internet he or she must be familiar with these Guidelines.

#### **2. Individual Email Accounts**

When the BHS determines that a student is ready to use an Email account with password, the student will develop his/her individual Email account with his/her teacher. Before an account will be provided, the guidelines statement below will be completed and signed by the student and the student's parent or guardian.

### **Internet Access Is a Privilege**

The Internet access through the Boston Higashi School is a privilege. School officials may cancel a student's access to the Internet if this privilege is abused. Inappropriate conduct on the Boston Higashi School's Internet access will also be subject to disciplinary action, in conformity with the Boston Higashi School's. Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **Attachment B: Administrators' Access To Student Files**

All student email files and other Internet files and records may be accessed and examined by BHS administrators for educational and administrative purposes, including the need to ensure that these Internet Guidelines are being adhered to. Administrators will also cooperate in providing access to student email and Internet files and records to law enforcement authorities as part of any investigation in accordance with the school's anti-bullying prevention and intervention plan (Plan). Students should not assume that use of the Boston Higashi School's Internet access is private.

### **Personal Safety**

The Internet is accessible to the public. Unfortunately, this includes people who want to make contact with students for inappropriate purposes or under false pretenses. The Boston Higashi School cannot screen the Internet for such inappropriate uses. Therefore, students must be cautious and prudent about supplying personal information and arranging personal meetings. In particular, students should never arrange a personal meeting with a person who was met on-line or should they send photos of themselves without their parents' or guardians' knowledge or approval. Students should promptly inform their teacher or school administrator of any on-line communication that the student feels is threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate. They should keep their password private from everyone except their parents and BHS staff.

### **System Security and Resource Limits**

With teacher's supervision, Boston Higashi School students are expected to follow procedures and guidelines that are issued in order to ensure the security of the Boston Higashi School's computer system and to respect its resource limits. These include any downloading guidelines and virus protection procedures that may be issued.

### **Network Etiquette**

Students are expected to learn and to abide by generally accepted rules of Internet network etiquette, as well as the rules of school decorum. These include common courtesy, politeness, and the avoidance of vulgar language.

### **Unacceptable Uses**

The following uses of the Boston Higashi School's Internet access are prohibited:

1. Posting private or personal information about another person.
2. Attempting to log in through another person's account or to access another person's files.
3. Accessing or transmitting obscene or pornographic material.
4. Posting chain letters or engaging in "spamming". (Spamming means sending annoying or unnecessary messages to large numbers of people.)
5. Engaging in any type of harassment.
6. Participating in any communications that facilitates criminal activity; that threaten, intimidate, or harasses any other person; or that violate any other laws.
7. Plagiarism. "Plagiarism" means the taking of material created by others and presenting it as it were one's own.

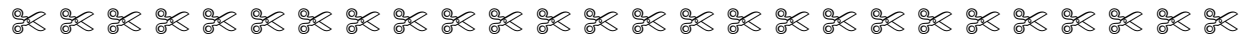
8. Copyright infringement occurs when a person inappropriately reproduces or transmits material that is protected by copyright. For example, most software is protected by copyright and may not be copied without permission of the copyright owner.
9. Participating in commercial activities that are not directly related to the educational purposes of the Boston Higashi School

**Disclaimer of Liability**

The Boston Higashi School disclaims all liability for the content of material that a student may access on the Internet, for any damages suffered in the course of or as a result of the student's Internet use, and for any other consequences of a student's Internet use.

**Changes in the Guidelines**

The Boston Higashi School reserves the right to change these Guidelines at any time.



Student Internet Acceptable Use Guidelines: I/we have read the Boston Higashi School's Internet Acceptable Use Policy and agree that the student user(s) identified below will abide by its provisions. I/We also:

- Understand that violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action.
- Understand that the Boston Higashi School has installed special content filtering software but that no filter is perfect and, in rare instances, there may be unintentional access to inappropriate material, and
- Agree to hold harmless the Boston Higashi School and its representatives for materials acquired through the Boston Higashi School Internet service and for the way the student user chooses to use the access to the Internet.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Signature, if applicable)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment C:

**BOSTON HIGASHI SCHOOL  
BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

**1. Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

**2. Check whether you are the:**      **Target of the behavior**       **Reporter (not the target)**

**3. Check whether you are a:**     **Student**       **Staff member (specify role)**  
    **Parent**       **Administrator**       **Other (specify)**

**Your contact information/telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Information about the Incident:**

**Name of Target (of behavior)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Aggressor** (Person who engaged in the behavior): \_\_\_\_\_

**Date(s) of Incident(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time When Incident(s) Occurred:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Incident(s)** (Be as specific as possible): \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  Student  Staff  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.**

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

**7. Signature of Person Filing this Report:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

**8. Form Given to:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date Received:** \_\_\_\_\_

