



POLICY: 4.5

PREPARED BY: Operations Committee

DATE ISSUED: April 21, 2016

INCLUDED IN PERSONNEL MANUAL: Y

INCLUDED IN CRISIS MANUAL: N

INCLUDED ON SCHOOL WEBSITE: Y

SUBJECT: Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment

APPROVED BY: Board of Directors

DATE REVISED: September 24, 2025

DATE REVIEWED/APPROVED: October 13, 2025

INCLUDED IN PARENT HANDBOOK: Y

INCLUDED IN BY-LAWS: N

BULLYING, INTIMIDATION AND HARASSMENT

At Brickton Montessori School, we take a proactive stance on bullying, intimidation and harassment. As a community, we work to create a learning environment where students are prepared to clearly articulate their concerns, speak honestly, appreciate individual differences and feel empowered to advocate for themselves and others. As a Montessori school, education for peace is an integral part of our curriculum, with our ground rules of respect for the individual and the environment, as the central guide to appropriate conduct for students. Through peace education, we work with students at each level to see the cause and effect of their behavior in ways that are developmentally appropriate.

The school ground rules, posted in each classroom as a reference for the students, are introduced to the classrooms by the teachers and are consistent throughout the day. Expectations for behavior vary based on the development of the students at each program level. Based on Montessori pedagogy, our policy is to assist children in developing self-discipline and skills to control their behavior, incorporating conflict resolution skills to address disagreements in a peaceful manner. In the Toddler and Children's House programs the teachers may, as needed, remind the children of the written rules. In the Elementary and Middle School programs, the students create and sign the ground rules, using them to facilitate independent conflict resolution discussions. Adults step in when a student asks for assistance, or if the adult feels that the situation warrants support or intervention from an adult.

This policy prohibits bullying, intimidation and/or harassment of students on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, military status, unfavorable discharge from military service, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status, homelessness, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic. Bullying is contrary to Illinois state law as well as the policy of Brickton Montessori School. This is not intended to infringe upon the right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religious views protected under the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

A. Definitions:

Bullying

"Bullying", including "cyberbullying," is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to:



1. Place the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Cause a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfere with the student's or students' academic performance; and/or
4. Substantially interfere with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation: pushing, hitting, threatening, stalking, name-calling, or other physical or verbal conduct of an aggressive, belittling or browbeating nature; sexual harassment; sexual violence; public humiliation; threatened or actual destruction of property; using derogatory slurs; wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice against individuals based on one or more of the distinguishing characteristics listed in the third paragraph of this policy; or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Cyber-bullying

"Cyber-bullying" relates to bullying using 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, photoelectronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes 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. "Cyber-bullying" 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.

Restorative Measures

A continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school, and (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

School Personnel

Persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in the school, including without limitation school administrators, teachers, school support personnel, or teaching vendors.

B. Bullying Report Process:

Students, parents, and school personnel are encouraged to immediately report bullying to any administrator within Brickton Montessori School. Alternatively, reports may be made orally or in writing to the bullying report manager:



Erica Lane
Head of School
773-714-0646
Erica.lane@brickton.org
8622 W Catalpa Ave
Chicago, IL 60656

Anonymous reports are accepted by calling the contact listed above and specifically indicating that you would like to remain anonymous. However, formal disciplinary action cannot be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

C. Response to Bullying Reports:

Upon receipt of a report of bullying, Brickton Montessori School will investigate whether such reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of its jurisdiction.

Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the parents or guardians of all students involved in the 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 administrator 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.

Further, the administrator will promptly investigate and address the report of bullying by doing the following:

1. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within ten school days after the date of report of the incident of bullying was received, taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
2. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
3. Consistent with federal and states laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing the parents and guardians of the students who are parties to meet with the principal, school administrator, or his/her designee to discuss the investigation, its findings, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The principal, administrator, or his/her designee may implement interventions to address reports of bullying. This includes, but is not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services. Additionally, Brickton Montessori School shall provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the district and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. Such reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bully for the purpose of determining appropriate consequences. No person will be subject to consequences for making a good-faith report of bullying. However, making a false accusation of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying is



prohibited and will be treated as bullying for the purpose of determining appropriate consequences.

D. Policy Evaluation:

This policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians. Furthermore, the policy is consistent with the other policies of Brickton Montessori School.

This policy will be posted on Brickton Montessori School's existing, publicly accessible internet website. Additionally, it will be included in the student handbook and where applicable, posted where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted in the school. The policy will be provided periodically throughout the school year to students and faculty and will be distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

Brickton Montessori School shall conduct a review and re-evaluation of this policy every two years to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of this policy and shall make any necessary and appropriate revisions. As part of this process, Brickton Montessori School shall review various factors including, but not limited to:

1. The frequency of victimization
2. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at school
3. The types of bullying utilized
4. Bystander intervention or participation

Brickton Montessori School may use relevant data and information it already collects for other purposes in the policy evaluation. The information developed as a result of the policy evaluation must be made available on the internet website of Brickton Montessori School.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION

If you have a question or concern about your child or your child's program, please contact your child's lead teacher. It is usually best to write your concern down in a note or email to share with your child's lead teacher. If deemed necessary, the parent and lead teacher will map out a course of action and time frame to obtain a meaningful resolution. If the problem continues, then the Head of School will meet with the parent and lead teacher to further refine the action plan and time schedule.

If after reasonable attempts, the parent is still dissatisfied, the parent may submit a written statement to the Board. The Board will consider such statements in a closed meeting and advise the parent of its disposition of the statement.

This policy is regularly reviewed by the administration based on recent data and the needs of the student body. The Board of Directors reviews all school policies at regular intervals for alignment to the school mission.