



MICHIGAN
VIRTUAL CHARTER ACADEMYSM

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Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy

It is the policy of MVCA to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all students. Appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying are expected of students, administrators, staff, visitors, third-party contractors/vendors, and volunteers. Bullying and Cyberbullying are Prohibited Bullying and cyberbullying of a student, whether by other students, staff, visitors, Academy board members, parents, guests, third-party contractors/vendors, and volunteers, is prohibited. All students are protected under this policy, and bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus. Definitions “Bullying” means any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- Substantially interfering with education opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students.
- Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the Academy's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health.
- Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school. “Cyberbullying” means any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:
 - Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students.
 - Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the Academy's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
 - Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health.
 - Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the Academy.

Since “bullying” also includes “cyberbullying,” any reference in this Policy to “bullying” shall also be deemed to refer to “cyberbullying.”

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited at school, during the Academy Educational Program and process including, but not limited to, the On-Line Learning System (“OLS”), Class Connects, email, telephone, in person or virtual conferences with ESP employees and staff and third-party contractor/vendors, on any premises or equipment owned, leased or used by the Academy, in a motor

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vehicle owned or leased by the Academy, or being used for a school-related purpose or at any Academy-related event, activity or function; traveling by any means to or from school or a school-related event, activity, or function; and in any location where the conduct has a sufficient connection to or with the Academy, ESP employees/staff, staff provided by third-party contractors/vendors, Academy students or Academy property that adversely and significantly affects, interferes with or endangers the good order of the educational program or environment at school, the proper functioning of the educational process; or non-school locations which are used for purposes of the educational program, Academy-related event, activity or function. Bullying and cyberbullying that does not occur “at school,” as defined above, but that causes substantial disruption to the educational environment, may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with this Policy and applicable law.

Reporting and Investigating Reports of Bullying

Every student is encouraged to promptly report any situation that he or she believes to be bullying behavior directed toward himself/herself or another student to an administrator, teacher, counselor, social worker, Student Support Team Program member, or the Head of School. Staff members shall report any reports made by students or situations that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to the Head of School. Complaints against the Head of School shall be reported to the Regional Director of the ESP/EMO and the Academy Board President.

A student may report a complaint of bullying and/or cyberbullying to the Academy’s Anti- Harassment Coordinators:

Jan Collier
Student Resource Coordinator (SRC)
jcollier@k12.com
616-309-1600 5910
Tahoe Drive S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546

David Krause
Student Resource Coordinator (SRC)
dkrause@k12.com
616-309-1600
5910 Tahoe Drive S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 48546

Under State law, a school employee, school volunteer, student, or Parent/Guardian/Learning Coach who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in this

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Policy and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in this Policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. This immunity does not apply to a school official responsible for implementing this Policy or for remedying the bullying when acting in that capacity.

Retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with information about an act of bullying is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as suspected bullying behavior. Making intentionally false accusations of bullying is likewise prohibited. Retaliation and making intentionally false accusations of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

All complaints about bullying that may violate this Policy shall be promptly investigated and documented. The Head of School or designee is responsible for the investigation; however, the Academy Board may engage an independent third party to investigate the bullying complaint.

If the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, it shall result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students, removal of ESP/EMO employees and staff members assigned to work at or on behalf of the Academy and to and including exclusion from school property for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors/vendors. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

If the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, the parent or guardian of the victim of bullying and the parent or guardian of a perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified promptly in writing. In addition, the ESP/EMO employee(s) or staff or other third party designated by the Academy Board to investigate the alleged bullying may notify the parents of the victim or perpetrator of bullying sooner than the conclusion of the investigation if circumstances dictate such earlier notification.

The Academy shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and shall document all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including the required notification of parents or guardians and any discipline and referrals. The Head of School is the school official responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented.

Confidentiality

The Academy shall comply with all applicable laws regarding the confidentiality of personally identifiable information from education records. In addition, the identity of an individual who reports an act of bullying or cyberbullying shall be and remain confidential to the extent provided by law. The Head of School or designee shall ensure that the name of an individual who reports an act of bullying or cyberbullying is withheld from the alleged perpetrator and the perpetrator's parent(s), guardian(s) and

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representative(s) and is redacted from any report of bullying or cyberbullying that is publicly disclosed to the extent provided by law.

Notification

This policy will be circulated to parents and students annually and posted on the Academy website.

Reporting

As required by State statute, the Academy, through the ESP/EMO Head of School or designee, shall provide a report of all verified incidents of bullying and other required information to the Michigan Department of Education on an annual basis, according to the form and procedures established by the Department. As required by State statute, the Academy's procedures with respect to bullying are contained within this policy, and thus, no administrative guidelines accompany this policy.

Student Behavior: Governing Principles - In support of providing educational opportunities, the Academy strives to create a school environment that cultivates the development of knowledgeable, responsible, and caring citizens. To create and maintain such an environment, respect for the rights of others, consideration of their privileges, and cooperative citizenship are expected of all members of the school community. When a student infringes upon others' education, it becomes the duty of the Academy to discipline the student and restore the conditions that promote learning for all students. In disciplining students and regulating their conduct, the Academy strives to assure that guidelines and consequences are appropriate and proportionate in nature, consistent with federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations, constructive and limited to that reasonably necessary in the judgment of the Administration to promote the Academy's educational objectives.