

# **BULLYING**

The INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SAGINAW believes that a safe and secure educational environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve. It is the INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SAGINAW's highest priority to provide an environment that is safe, secure and conducive to learning. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of students, administrators, parents, faculty, staff, visitors, and volunteers.

## **BULLYING IS PROHIBITED**

Bullying of a pupil, whether by other students, staff, visitors, parents, guests, contractors, or volunteers, is prohibited. All students are protected under this policy, and bullying is prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

## **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is defined as any written, verbal, or physical act, intentional gesture, or any electronic communication, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils.
2. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the International Academy of Saginaw's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health.
4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited at school. "At school" is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, at school-sponsored activities or events, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or using a telecommunications access device or a telecommunications service provider if the telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider is owned by or under the control of the INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SAGINAW's "Telecommunications access device" and "telecommunications service provider" mean those terms as defined in Section 219a of the Michigan Penal Code (MCL § 750.219a).

Bullying that does not occur "at school," as defined above, including bullying that occurs over the internet (cyber-bullying), that causes a 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 report any act of bullying to a staff member, including a teacher, a counselor, the principal, or other staff member. Staff members shall report any reports of acts

of bullying to the School Director. Complaints against the School Director shall be reported to the Board of Directors.

Retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with reliable 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 about bullying is prohibited. Retaliation and making intentionally false accusations about bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

All reports of a violation of this policy or a related complaint shall be promptly investigated. The School Director or the School Director's designee is responsible for the investigation. If the investigation results in a finding that an instance of bullying has occurred, it shall result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students, up to and including discharge for employees, up to and including exclusion for parents, visitors, volunteers, and contractors. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

Where the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, notification will be provided to the parent or legal guardian of a victim of bullying and the parent or legal guardian of a perpetrator of the bullying.

The INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SAGINAW shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and shall document all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals. The School Director shall provide a report of all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals, to the Board of Directors on an annual basis.

The School Director is the school official responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SAGINAW will provide annual training on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying to administrators, school employees, and volunteers who have significant contact with pupils.

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SAGINAW will provide **annual** educational programming for pupils and parents on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying and cyber-bullying.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SAGINAW will comply with all applicable laws regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information from education records.

## **NOTIFICATION**

This policy will be annually circulated to parents and students, and will be posted on the INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF SAGINAW website.

The School Director or the School Director's designee is directed to develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy.

Reference: Matt's Safe School Law, Public Act 241 of 2011 (MCL § 380.1310b).