



Bullying Prohibited

Galapagos Rockford Charter School strives to ensure a learning environment that is physically and emotionally safe for all scholars. The Galapagos mission is to ensure that all scholars become responsible, college-educated adults capable of adapting and prospering in a changing global economy. Bullying challenges the school's ability to fulfill this mission and creates an environment in which some scholars may feel unsafe. As a result, Galapagos Rockford Charter School prohibits acts of bullying. Bullying is contrary to school policy as well as contrary to state law.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a scholar or scholars that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- places a scholar or scholars in reasonable fear of harm to the scholar's or scholars' person or property;
- causes a substantially detrimental effect on the scholar's or scholars' physical or mental health;
- interferes substantially with the scholar's or scholars' academic performance; or
- interferes substantially with the scholar's or scholars' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a Galapagos Rockford Charter School.

Bullying may take various forms, including, without limitation, one of more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, public humiliations, destruction of property, theft or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication. It includes, without limitation, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, social media communications or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated above.

Coverage of this Policy

Any bullying, including cyber bullying, is covered under this policy if the incident results in a substantial disruption of the school learning environment or the orderly day-to-day operations of Galapagos or any Galapagos program.



Cyber bullying is covered whether it is initiated from school devices or devices that are accessed at a non-school related location, activity, function or program.

Reporting and Investigations

Any act of bullying should be immediately reported to an administrator (Dean of Academics or Dean of School Culture). The scholar or parent may also report an act of bullying to an instructor or counselor, who must then notify the Dean of School Culture. Complaints against an administrator should be reported to the Head of School. Complaints against the Head of School should be reported to the CEO. Complaints against the CEO should be reported to the President of the Galapagos Rockford Charter School Board.

The Head of School or the Head of School's designee shall promptly investigate any reported act of bullying. Galapagos shall take all reasonable efforts to conclude the investigation within ten days. Following the investigation, Head of School or the designee shall determine whether a verified act of bullying occurred and will document all verified acts of bullying. The Head of School or designee shall also promptly notify the parent or legal guardian of the victim of a verified act of bullying. If the perpetrator of the bullying is a minor, the Head of School or designee shall also promptly notify the minor's parent or legal guardian. A verified act of bullying will result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary action as is written in the Galapagos Rockford Parent/Scholar Handbook. This may include discipline up to and including expulsion for a scholar; discipline up to and including termination for an employee, prohibition to enter the school's premises for a parent, guest, or volunteer. Under certain circumstances an individual may also be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Retaliation

Retaliation or false accusations against anyone who is a target of bullying, a witness to bullying, or who has reported reliable information about an act of bullying is strictly prohibited. Suspected retaliation or false accusations should be reported in the same manner as bullying. Retaliation or false accusations may result in disciplinary action.

False Accusations

An individual who falsely accuses another individual of bullying as an attempt to bully or as an attempt to retaliate shall be reported to the administration and appropriate an investigation shall ensue.



Interventions

As appropriate, Galapagos shall use a variety of interventions to address bullying. These interventions may include, but are not limited to counseling, social work services, social-emotional skill building, psychological services and community based services.

Assessment

Galapagos shall evaluate its bullying policy by collecting and analyzing the frequency and nature of bully activities throughout the school year.

Notifications

Galapagos Rockford Charter School will make this policy available through its website and will post it in conspicuous places on both campuses. This Policy will also be incorporated into instructor, scholar, and parent/guardian handbooks and codes of conduct. The Director or the Director's designee must annually report to the Galapagos Rockford Charter School Board all verified incidents of bullying and any resulting consequences, discipline, or referrals. The CEO shall be responsible for implementing this policy's provisions and procedures and shall develop administrative guidelines as necessary.