

Rio del Mar Elementary School  
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Each year parents or guardians of enrolled students will be provided with information about the anti-bullying curricula. Rio del Mar Elementary will post the Plan and related information on the Rio del Mar website.

What is Bullying?

1. A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.
2. It involves an imbalance of power or aggression, and negative action that is often repeated.

Student, Parents and Staff can assist by:

**A. Students**

- Treating each other respectfully
- Refusing to bully others
- Refusing to let others be bullied
- Refusing to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied
- Trying to include others in play, especially those who are left out
- Reporting bullying to an adult

**B. Parents**

- Encouraging your child not to engage in harmful teasing
- Listening to your child if he/she reports being bullied
- Reporting signs of being bullied to your school teacher as a first step
- Encouraging your child not to exclude others or spread rumors or gossip
- Supporting the school if your child is identified as having engaged in bullying behavior
- Helping your child to understand how hurtful it feels to be excluded, bullied, or harassed

**C. Staff**

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including but not limited to students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline
- Using positive behavioral supports
- Encourage positive relationships with students
- Modeling, teaching, and encouraging pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors

## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

### **Reporting Bullying or Retaliation**

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others and maybe oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member may be recorded in writing. If an incident cannot be resolved by a staff member, a school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee about the incident of bullying or retaliation and any witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members may be made anonymously to the principal. The school or district will make a reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, a Critical Incident Reporting / Complaint Form available in the main office. Additionally, members of the school community may also contact the principal by phone or school email.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying, or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited. Retaliation is defined as 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. Behavior that is interpreted as retaliatory in response to a bullying complaint being filed is in violation of this policy and subject to the same reporting and investigative procedures as the initial complaint. Filing of false reports is also in violation of this policy. Persons found to be filing false reports or accusations of bullying or harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will be consistent with this Plan and the Behavior/Discipline located in our Family Handbook.

### **Complaint Resolution**

All incidents of bullying must be documented and reported directly to the site principal who will have the primary responsibility for resolving complaints.

If at any time during this process the school official is made aware of behavior which may constitute a criminal offense, he/she is obligated by law to report such actions to the legal authorities.

In addition, any behavior which is identified as being so harmful as to suggest a personal threat or so, will receive immediate disciplinary consequences according to the discipline code, and will result in an immediate suspension or possible expulsion.

All reports and complaints of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation will receive prompt action to end that behavior and restore the targets of safety. This commitment will be supported in all aspects of our school community, including curriculum, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

Members of certain student groups 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 all populations in the school community and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing, by implementing Positive Discipline, Mind Up Curriculum, Buddy Benches, Conflict Managers, 21 Days of Kindness, and No Bullying Power Point Presentations.

PLEASE NOTE: As the following steps go forward, it is important that the child being bullied and/or the recipient of retaliation be given support from appropriate school staff including counseling intervention as needed. Research has clearly shown that it is ineffective to bring a student who is being bullied and/or retaliated against, together with the student who is doing the bullying for the purpose of mediating the dispute. However, each case is unique and should be addressed with sensitivity to the safety and welfare of the students involved.

### **I. First Incident**

If a teacher or other staff person observes or receives a report from a student regarding behavior of a relatively minor nature, such as mild teasing, name-calling, or excluding student from group activities, etc. the student or students involved will be warned that such behavior is not allowed. The student should be told that if this behavior occurs again the student would be sent to the principal for their actions.

***When bullying is reported to a staff member, it is important to ask whether or not this behavior has happened previously. If there has been a history of chronic bullying behavior, the staff member will skip Step One and consult with the principal.***

***When a warning is given, the staff member should document that says warning has taken place. A teacher reporting bullying to the office should use the Critical Incident Reporting/ Complaint Form, completing the identifying information.***

### **II. Second Incident**

The principal will review school expectations and rules with a student, and a problem solving conference is held. The parents of the student will be called and notified. The student and parents are told that any subsequent referrals for bullying or any retaliation against those who brought the matter to the attention of the staff will be followed by disciplinary consequences. If the bullying behavior is judged to be severe, the principal always has the option to dispense a disciplinary consequence, even upon the initial referral to the office\*

### **III. Third Incident**

The principal will contact the parents to set up a parental conference. The student will receive a disciplinary consequence which could range from detention to out-of-school suspension, depending on the severity of the behavior. At the parental conference, bullying will be addressed and a remedial plan may be formulated. Appropriate community-based interventions or counseling will also be considered\*

### **IV. Fourth Incident: Sent to the Principal**

Following a comprehensive investigation the student will be immediately suspended. A parental conference will be arranged to create/review a remedial plan. Additional alternatives, such as referral for expulsion, could be considered. \*

### **Report and Record Keeping**

The principal will keep a written record of any and all children referred to the office for bullying behavior utilizing the Rio del Mar School's Critical Incident Form. (See attached)

\*In cases where disciplinary action becomes necessary, a due process investigation will precede any such action.

### **Principal's Contact with Parents**

Upon investigation and determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal shall promptly notify the parents of the target and the aggressor of the determination and the school District or school's procedures for responding to the bullying or retaliation. The principal shall inform the targets parents of actions that the school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation.

### **Confidentiality with Regard to Record / Information Release**

- 1.** A Principal may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent unless the information is about the parent's own child.
- 2.** A Principal may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency without the consent of a student or his/her parents. The principal shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses, and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances.
- 3.** If the reported incident involved students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal will notify the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action.

A Principal may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. The Principal must document the disclosures and the reasons that the principal determined that a health or safety emergency exists.