

Two Rivers Public Charter School Bullying Prevention Policy

I. Mission and Purpose Statement

The mission of Two Rivers Public Charter School is to nurture a diverse group of students to become lifelong, active participants in their own education, develop a sense of self and community, and become responsible and compassionate members of society.

Two Rivers is committed to fostering a safe and supportive learning environment free from bullying, intimidation, and harassment. This policy outlines procedures and expectations for preventing, reporting, investigating, and responding to incidents of bullying and retaliation.

II. Definition of Bullying

In accordance with D.C. Code § 2–1535.03(b)(1), **Two Rivers Public Charter School** defines **bullying** as any severe, pervasive, or persistent act or conduct, whether physical, electronic, or verbal that:

1. May be based on a youth's actual or perceived:
 - race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual ability, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, place of residence or business, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or
 - association with a person or group with one or more of the above characteristics; **and**
2. Can reasonably be predicted to:
 - Place the youth in reasonable fear of physical harm to their person or property;
 - Cause a substantial detrimental effect on the youth's physical or mental health;
 - Substantially interfere with the youth's academic performance or attendance;
 - Substantially interfere with the youth's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying may include a single incident or a pattern of behavior and includes cyberbullying.

III. Prohibition of Bullying and Retaliation

Bullying, including **cyberbullying**, is **prohibited**:

1. On or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at school-sponsored or related events, on any school transportation vehicle, or at any transit stop used by students.

2. Off school grounds through the use of personal or school-issued electronic devices if the behavior creates a hostile environment at school, infringes on the rights of others, or **materially and substantially disrupts the school's orderly operation**.

Retaliation against anyone who reports bullying, provides information, or witnesses an incident is **strictly prohibited**.

IV. Code of Conduct

Two Rivers expects all students to:

- Treat peers, staff, and community members with respect;
- Respect school property and the personal belongings of others;
- Follow directions and school-wide expectations;
- Resolve conflicts peacefully without physical or verbal aggression.

Staff and students are responsible for creating a school climate that supports safety, inclusion, and learning for all.

V. Reporting Incidents

All staff are required to report any bullying or retaliation they witness or learn about to the designated school administrator. Youth, families, and community members are encouraged to report bullying to the designated school contacts below:

4th Street
McKenzie Baecker, Principal
Marcus Brown, Assistant Principal

Young Elementary
Megan DeRitter, Principal
Tyrone Ferrell, Assistant Principal

Young Middle
Ashley Stone, Principal
Derrick Miles, Assistant Principal

Bullying Prevention Coordinator
Chief Academic Officer (CAO) or Executive Director/designee

Reports can be made verbally, in writing, or anonymously (though anonymous reports will not result in disciplinary action unless substantiated through investigation). All reports will be documented in writing and stored in the school's incident database. Reporting materials will be available in multiple languages and accessible formats.

Investigation Procedures

Investigations will begin within **2 business days** of a report being received. Investigators will:

- Document the complaint and assess immediate safety needs;
- Notify involved parties (including parents/guardians if under 18), unless doing so would risk the youth's well-being;
- Conduct interviews and gather evidence;
- Maintain confidentiality to the greatest extent possible;
- Take into account whether the individuals involved have disabilities and whether there are resulting protections or considerations that must be included in the investigation;
- Complete investigations within **30 calendar days** of the initial report.

Law enforcement will be contacted when criminal activity or imminent danger is suspected.

Sanctions and Interventions

If bullying is confirmed, **corrective and remedial actions** will be implemented, such as:

- Reprimand or loss of privileges
- Restorative conversations or circles
- Counseling or behavioral support
- Temporary removal from school events or spaces
- In-school or out-of-school suspension (in severe or repeated cases)

Consequences are:

- Tailored to the developmental level of the youth,
Based on the nature of the offense and past history, and
- Designed to prevent recurrence and retaliation.

Two Rivers avoids “zero tolerance” practices and instead focuses on supportive, educational interventions.

Appeals Process

Any party dissatisfied with the outcome of a bullying investigation may submit a **written appeal** to the **Chief Academic Officer (CAO)** or Executive Director Designee within **30 calendar days** of the determination. The CAO/designee will:

- Conduct a **secondary investigation within 30 days** of receiving the appeal;
- Extend the investigation by **up to 15 additional days** with written justification;
- Notify the appellant of their rights under the **DC Human Rights Act**.

Questions or Support

For any questions or support related to bullying prevention, investigation, or reporting, please contact your school administrator or the Bullying Prevention Coordinator.