

# Superintendency Union 31 & Silver Lake Regional School District

## BULLYING PROTOCOL

### I. GOALS

The Superintendency Union 31 and Silver Lake Regional School District Public Schools are committed to providing our students equal educational opportunities, and a safe learning environment free from bullying. This will be possible when all members of the school communities treat each other with respect, appreciating the individual differences in our schools. This protocol is an integral part of Superintendency Union 31's and Silver Lake Regional School District's comprehensive efforts to promote learning and eliminate all forms of violent, harmful and disruptive behavior. All students require this support to reach their personal and academic potential.

The Superintendency Union 31 and Silver Lake Regional School District will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including bullying, in our schools or during school-related activities. Such reports of bullying will be promptly investigated.

As stated in the Massachusetts Anti-bullying Law, **Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying. "Cyber-bullying", bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.**

The Superintendency Union 31 and Silver Lake Regional School District responses to bullying actions will include, when appropriate, referral to a law enforcement agency. The Superintendency Union 31 and Silver Lake Regional School District will support this protocol in all aspects of their activities, including their curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities and parental involvement.

### II. RATIONALE

The Superintendent Union 31 and Silver Lake Regional School District prohibit all forms of harassment, discrimination and hate crimes based on race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability. The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law. The protection of those rights is of utmost importance and priority to our school district. The Superintendent Union 31 and Silver Lake Regional School District also prohibit bullying of school community members for reasons unrelated to their race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability. Further, Superintendent Union 31 and Silver Lake Regional School District will also not tolerate retaliation against persons who take action consistent with this protocol.

### **III. APPLICATION**

This protocol applies to all sites and activities under the supervision and control of Superintendent Union 31 & Silver Lake Regional School District, or where they have jurisdiction under the law. The protocol applies to all students and staff on school premises or in school-related activities, including school-related transportation. Nothing in this protocol is designed or intended to limit the District's authority to discipline or take remedial action under General Laws Chapter 71, §37H, or in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this protocol covers the conduct.

### **IV. DISCIPLINARY AND CORRECTIVE ACTION**

Violation of this protocol is a serious offense. Violators may be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action to stop the conduct and prevent its reoccurrence. The District is committed to protecting the complainant, and all students, from bullying. Procedural manuals containing responsibilities of staff and students, reporting procedures, complaint process, resolution, and protection against retaliation shall be in place at each level. All disciplinary incidents will be reported using the school disciplinary action process.