

Bullying Prevention Policies and Procedures

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Academia Moderna is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment; we will not tolerate bullying or any behavior that infringes on the safety or well-being of students, employees, or any other person within the school's jurisdiction; and will not tolerate retaliation in any form when bullying has been reported. This includes while in school, at school-related events, and traveling to and from school, LAUSD policy continues to require all schools and all personnel to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance among students and staff. "All students and staff of public primary, elementary, junior high and senior high have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure and peaceful." [Article 1, Section 28(c) of the California State Constitution]

Bullying is defined as aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of real or perceived physical or psychological power among those involved. Typically, the behavior is repeated over time and includes the use of hurtful words and/or acts. Bullying behaviors may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Verbal: Hurtful name-calling, teasing, gossiping, making threats, making rude noises, or spreading hurtful rumors
- Nonverbal: Posturing, making gang signs, leering, staring, stalking, destroying property, using graffiti or graphic images, or exhibiting in appropriate and/or threatening gestures or actions
- Physical: Hitting, punching, pushing, shoving, poking, kicking, tripping, strangling, hair pulling, fighting, beating, biting, spitting, or destroying property
- Emotional (Psychological): Rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, intimidating, humiliating, blackmailing, manipulating friendships, isolating, ostracizing, using peer pressure, or rating or ranking personal characteristics
- Cyber bullying: Sending insulting or threatening messages by phone, e-mail, web sites or any other electronic or written communication

Administrators and staff are responsible for creating an environment where the school community understands that bullying behavior is inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

Students must also take responsibility for helping to create a safe environment:

- Treat everyone with respect. Be sensitive as to how others might perceive your actions or words
- Do not engage in or contribute to bullying behaviors, actions, or words
- Report bullying behavior to a trusted adult
- Never engage in retaliatory behavior or ask, encourage, or consent to anyone's taking retaliatory actions on your behalf

For assistance with issues related to bullying, contact the principal

BULLYING

The District Board recognizes the harmful effects of bullying on student learning and school attendance and desires to provide safe school environments that protect students from physical and emotional harm. The District Superintendent will establish student safety as a high priority and will not tolerate bullying of any student.

No student or group of students shall, through physical, written, verbal, or other means, harass, sexually harass, threaten, intimidate, cyberbully, cause bodily injury to, or commit hate violence against any other student or school personnel.

Cyberbullying is an act of bullying committed through the transmission of a message, text, sound, or image by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer or pager. *Cyberbullying* includes the transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Strategies for bullying prevention and intervention shall be developed with involvement of key stakeholders in accordance with law, District Board policy, and administrative regulation governing the development of comprehensive safety plans and shall be incorporated into such plans.

Bullying Prevention

To the extent possible, Alta Public Schools and school strategies shall focus on prevention of bullying by establishing clear rules for student conduct and strategies to establish a positive, collaborative school climate. Students shall be informed, through student handbooks and other appropriate means, of Alta Public Schools and school rules related to bullying, mechanisms available for reporting incidents or threats, and the consequences for perpetrators of bullying.

Alta Public Schools will provide students with instruction in the classroom or other educational settings that promotes effective communication and conflict resolution skills, social skills, character/values education, respect for cultural and individual differences, self-esteem development, assertiveness skills, and appropriate online behavior.

School staff will receive related professional development, including information about early warning signs of harassing/intimidating behaviors and effective prevention and intervention strategies.

Based on an assessment of bullying incidents at school, the District Superintendent or designee may increase supervision and security in areas where bullying most often occurs, such as classrooms, playgrounds, hallways, restrooms, cafeterias.

Intervention

Students are encouraged to notify school staff when they are being bullied or suspect that another student is being victimized. In addition, the District Superintendent or designee will develop means for students to report threats or incidents confidentially and anonymously.

School staff who witness bullying shall immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so. (Education Code 234.1)

As appropriate, the District Superintendent or designee will notify the parents/guardians of victims and perpetrators. The District Superintendent or designee also may involve school counselors, mental health counselors, and/or law enforcement.

Complaints and Investigation

Students may submit to a teacher or administrator a verbal or written complaint of conduct they consider to be bullying. Complaints of bullying shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with site-level grievance procedures specified in AR 5145.7 – Sexual Harassment.

When a student is reported to be engaging in bullying off campus, the District Superintendent or designee will investigate and document the activity and will identify specific facts or circumstances that explain the impact or potential impact on school activity, school attendance, or the targeted student's educational performance.

When the circumstances involve cyber-bullying, individuals with information about the activity shall be encouraged to save and print any electronic or digital messages sent to them that they feel constitute cyberbullying and to notify a teacher, the principal, or other employee so that the matter may be investigated.

If the student is using a social networking site or service that has terms of use that prohibit posting of harmful material, the District Superintendent or designee also may file a complaint with the Internet site or service to have the material removed.

Any student who engages in bullying on school premises, or off campus in a manner that causes or is likely to cause a substantial disruption of a school activity or school attendance, shall be subject to discipline, which may include suspension or involuntary transfer back to the district of residence, in accordance with Alta Public Schools policies and regulations.

When a student is suspected of or reported to be using electronic or digital communications to engage in cyberbullying against other students or staff, or to threaten Alta Public Schools property, the investigation shall include documentation of the activity, identification of the source, and specific facts or circumstances that explain the impact or potential impact on school activities, school attendance, or the targeted student's educational performance.

Students shall be encouraged to save and print any messages sent to them that they feel constitute cyber-bullying and to notify a teacher, the principal, or other employee so that the matter may be investigated.

Any student who engages in cyber-bullying on school premises, or off campus in a manner that causes or is likely to cause a substantial disruption of a school activity or school attendance, shall be subject to discipline in accordance with Alta Public Schools policies and regulations. If the student is using a social networking site or service that has terms of use that prohibit posting of harmful material, the District Superintendent or designee also may file a complaint with the Internet site or service to have the material removed.

School Climate Bill of Rights

Academia Moderna Charter School (AMCS) is committed to providing a positive and safe school environment that supports all students in every aspect of their well-being. AMCS students, staff and parents/caring adults value consistent guidelines for implementing and developing a culture of care based on positive behavior interventions and away from punitive disciplinary approaches that interfere with instructional goals. AMCS is committed to providing students with a balanced education that promotes opportunities to select college or career paths that will lead them to becoming productive members of the world.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)

Interventions that reduce suspensions, increase attendance, improve academic performance and have support from all stakeholders. This school-wide PBIS program includes incentives (both tangible and intangible) for students to become motivated to display good behavior as well as multi-tiered support for students with different needs.

The PBIS Team shall include a team of teachers, administrators, and parent representatives to monitor the implementation of the school wide PBIS program. The PBIS team attends training and conducts ongoing weekly training for teachers and staff members.

Alternatives to suspension and positive behavior interventions and supports

Alternatives to suspension strategies will be used for all students in a consistent and age-appropriate manner prior to suspending, except those limited offenses where suspension is required under California Education Code §48915(c). As of 2013, no student shall be suspended or expelled for a “willful defiance” (48900(k) offense).

Restorative Practices that resolve interpersonal conflict

AMCS uses Restorative Practices as an alternative to traditional school discipline and suspensions, when appropriate, as an intervention consistent with the School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support strategies.