



MAP ACADEMY

Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan

Map Academy Charter School
2026–2027

Introduction

Map Academy (“District” or “school”) is committed to creating and sustaining a safe learning environment. Map Academy believes strongly in the education of the whole student, including promoting healthy social development. To this end, Map Academy is committed to providing all students and staff an environment that is free from bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (“Plan”) is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The Plan applies to all students and all school staff members, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, and paraprofessionals. The Co-Directors (“Co-Directors”), or their designee, is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and its implementing regulation at 603 C.M.R. 49.02:

Aggressor – perpetrator of bullying or retaliation as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, §37O.

Bullying – the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional 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.

Charter School – pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §37O, means a Commonwealth charter school or Horace Mann charter school established pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 89.

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.

Hostile environment – a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Perpetrator – a student or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages in bullying or retaliation.

Co-Director – the administrative leader of a public school, charter school, collaborative school, or approved private day or residential school, or his or her designee for the purposes of implementing the school's bullying prevention and intervention plan.

Retaliation – any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation about bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

School - an approved private day or residential school, collaborative school, or charter school.

School grounds – property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school, or collaborative school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

Target – a student victim of bullying or retaliation as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

Victim – a student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Leadership

Leadership at all levels will play a critical role in developing and implementing the Plan in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote positive school climate. Leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference.

Plan Development

Map Academy will, develop, adhere to, and biennially update the Plan in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, volunteers, administrators, community representatives, law enforcement, students, parents, and guardians. Such consultation will include, but not be limited to, notice and a public comment period.

Data Collection

Map Academy will annually report bullying incident data to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (“DESE”) in the form and manner established by DESE. Reported data will include: the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation, the number and nature of substantiated incidents, the number of students disciplined, and any other information required by DESE. The Co-Director(s) or their designee will be responsible for overseeing the collection, maintenance, and reporting of such data. Additionally, at least once every four years, the District will administer the DESE student survey. The Co-Director(s) or designee will be

responsible for verifying completion of the DESE student survey and will forward completed surveys to the DESE.

Planning and Oversight

The Co-Directors, as the building leaders, or their designee, are responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

Bullying and retaliation are prohibited. For the purpose of this BPIP, references to bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

1. on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; and
2. at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

Nothing in this BPIP requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

We understand that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including; race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Accordingly, in an effort to support vulnerable students and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment, the Co-Director(s), or their designee, will consider whether the following actions are required: (1) if the alleged target or the alleged aggressor is on an IEP or 504 Plan, the Co-Director(s) or designee will notify the Special Education Administrator; (2) if the alleged conduct is on the basis of a protected class (i.e. race, gender, disability, etc.), the Co-Director(s) or designee will need to follow the District's Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures, as well.

Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

Reports of suspected bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, to the Co-Director(s) or designee, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school staff member is required to report immediately to the Co-Director(s) or designee any instance of suspected bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses, including reports made by students, parents/guardians, or other staff to them.

If the allegation involves a Co-Director, or his/her designee, as the alleged aggressor, staff, students, parents/guardians, or others shall report it immediately to the other Co-Director and/or directly to the Board of Trustees.

The District expects students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student as the target to report it to the Co-Director(s) or designee.

The requirement to report to the Co-Director(s) or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school staff members, may be made anonymously. Any report made anonymously will be thoroughly investigated, however, a student will not be disciplined on the basis of an anonymous report.

The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a phone number, a mailing address, and an email address.

Use of any specific reporting form, including but not limited to the Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school will:

1. Include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians;
2. Make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the Co-Director(s) or designee, and
3. Post it on the school website.

The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the names and contact information of the Co-Directors, and the Board of Trustees when a Co-Director is the alleged aggressor, and information about the Plan, will be incorporated in student and staff

handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the BPIP that is made available to parents or guardians.

Nothing in this BPIP shall be construed to limit an individual's ability to call 911 where a threat to safety of a student and/or other individuals is present. If there is concern about anyone's immediate safety, please call 911 first, then notify an administrator. Nothing in this BPIP prevents an individual from reporting to the police a crime. Nothing in this BPIP prohibits an individual from exercising their responsibilities as a mandated reporter under M.G.L. c. 119, sec. 51A and nothing in this BPIP shall be used to deter an individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation Allegations of Bullying by a Student

After receiving a report of bullying, the District may dismiss the allegation of bullying if, after considering all of the allegations as true, the allegations do not constitute bullying under Massachusetts law.

Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Co-Director(s) or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents.

Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the alleged target and/or the alleged aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the alleged target; and altering the alleged aggressor's schedule and access to the alleged target. Other steps to promote safety may be taken, as appropriate, if the alleged aggressor is a staff member. The Co-Director(s) or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Co-Director(s) or designee will implement appropriate strategies, which may include the safety strategies listed above, for protecting from bullying or retaliation, a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Investigation

After making a preliminary determination that the facts as alleged, if true, would meet the statutory definition of bullying or retaliation, the Co-Director(s) or designee will promptly commence an investigation. The Co-Director(s) or designee will gather evidence, including, if necessary, interviewing students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and/or others. During any interviews, the Co-Director(s) or designee will inform the alleged aggressor, alleged target, witnesses, and any other individual involved in the investigation, that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. The Co-Director(s) or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigation to the extent practicable, and in accordance with state and federal law regarding the privacy of student records and mandated reporting.

Interviews may be conducted by the Co-Director(s) or designee, other staff members as determined by the Co-Director(s) Learning or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. The Co-Director(s) or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Co-Director(s) or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

Determinations

The Co-Director(s) or designee will decide as to whether the preponderance of the evidence supports a finding that bullying occurred, and if so, what remedial action is required including any necessary responsive and/or disciplinary action. If, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Co-Director(s) or designee will take reasonable steps to restore a sense of safety to the target, prevent recurrence, and ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or school activities.

Depending upon the circumstances, the Co-Director(s) or designee may consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

If the report of bullying is substantiated

Notice to Parent/Guardian

Upon the determination that bullying or retaliation occurred, the Co-Director(s) or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor. In the event that an allegation of bullying or retaliation by a staff member is substantiated, the Co-Director(s) or designee will promptly notify the staff member. The Co-Director(s) or designee may, but is not required to, contact parents or guardians prior to a determination.

Notice shall be in the primary language of the home. Notice shall include the following information: determination, procedures for responding, and actions taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notices to parents must comply with applicable state and federal law regarding the confidentiality of student records, and other privacy laws and regulations. To this end, the Co-Director(s) or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken against the aggressor, unless the information is directly related to the victim (e.g. a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations). Notice for the victim's parents/guardians shall include the following information about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program's (DESE's) Problem Resolution System and the process for seeking assistance or filing a PRS claim: *Any parent/guardian wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700.*

Responses to Bullying

Upon the Co-Director(s) or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the school will use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The Co-Director(s) or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the Co-Director(s) or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Skill-building and other individualized interventions

The Co-Director(s) or designee may consider the following skill-building and other individualized interventions to remediate or prevent further bullying and retaliation. These may include but are not limited to:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula,
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel,
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals,
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home,
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills,
- making a referral for evaluation, and/or
- providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors and targets, and for appropriate family members of said students, regardless of their status under the law.

Taking Disciplinary Action

If the Co-Director(s) or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined based on the facts and findings of the investigation, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the BPIP and with the District's Code of Character & Conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which should be read in conjunction with state laws regarding student discipline.

Discipline procedures for staff members will be referred to the Human Resources Department consistent with applicable policies and procedures.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The Co-Director(s) or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the Co-Director(s) or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Co-Director(s) or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If there is evidence to support a recurrence, supportive measures will be implemented immediately.

If the report of bullying is unsubstantiated

If the Co-Director(s) or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student shall be subject to disciplinary action.

The Co-Director(s) or designee may consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance safety. One strategy that the Co-Director(s) or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur. If appropriate, the Co-Director(s) or designee may consider skill-building approaches and other individualized interventions.

Obligations to Notify Others

Notice to Another School or District

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Co-Director(s) or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

Notice to Law Enforcement

Prior to the first day of school, the Co-Director(s) or designee shall communicate with the police chief or designee regarding notices of bullying.

If after receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, or after substantiating a report of bullying or retaliation, the Co-Director(s) has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued, the Co-Director(s) shall immediately notify law enforcement and document her/his reasons.

Notice shall be compliant with any established agreements between the District and law enforcement and consistent with DESE regulations, including that the Co-Director(s) may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to law enforcement without consent of a student or their parent. The Co-Director(s) shall communicate with law enforcement in a manner

that protects the privacy of the victim, the aggressor, and any student witnesses to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

The Co-Director(s) are not required to report allegations or determinations of bullying or retaliation to law enforcement if such situations can be handled appropriately within the school. In deciding whether to notify law enforcement, the Co-Director(s) may consult with the school's resource officer and any other individual deemed appropriate by the Co-Director(s). If an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Co-Director(s) or designee shall immediately contact the local law enforcement agency if the Co-Director(s) has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Notice to Other Parties Regarding Health and Safety of Student

The Co-Director(s) may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties, including law enforcement, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individual. This is limited to instances in which the Co-Director(s) have determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individual(s) and is limited to the period of the emergency. Any of these disclosures must be documented by the Co-Director(s), including the reasons that the Co-Director(s) determined that a health or safety emergency existed.

Training and Professional Development

Annual Staff Training on the Plan

All school staff will receive annual training on the Plan. Staff members hired after the start of the school year will be required to complete training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last year.

Ongoing Professional Development

Ongoing professional development will be provided for all staff including but not limited to: educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to co/extra-curricular activities and paraprofessionals. The goal of professional development is to establish a common, foundational understanding of tools necessary for the staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civility, and respect for differences, so as to provide students with skills, knowledge, and strategies to identify, prevent, respond to and/or report bullying, harassment or teasing. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to identify, prevent, and respond to and/or report bullying and cyber-bullying.

This on-going professional development will occur during school-wide professional development days and/or through school-based faculty meeting sessions. The content will include, but not be limited to, information on:

- Developmentally-appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents;

- Developmentally-appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- Research findings on bullying, including information about students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

Written Notice to Staff

The District will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including relevant sections for staff in the school or employee handbook, and the code of conduct. The Plan will also be made available on the school's website.

Access to Resources and Services

Identifying Resources

Map Academy currently provides counseling and support to students through key staff members including licensed school social workers. Map Academy determines the appropriateness of services based on individual need as assessed through the Tiered System of Support intervention model.

Counseling and Other Services

There are mental health and counseling professionals employed by Map Academy to provide in-school, short-term counseling support. Licensed Counselors, a School Nurse, a School Psychologist, and School Social Workers are essential members of each school's Student Support Team. These team members are available to advocate for and provide individual support for students. Counseling opportunities are available to all students.

Referral to Outside Services

Students and families will be provided with referrals to outside resources when needed. The regional Family Resource Center will also be utilized, as needed, to connect students and their families with community-based services. Outside counseling services and arrangements are made between the parent/guardian of a student and/or by the student directly for a student aged 18 or older with the outside agency. The District does not cover the cost of these services. Counseling and referral opportunities, whether in-district or outside of the District, are available to all students, regardless of their status under the law.

Academic and Non-Academic Activities

- A. Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches:** Age-appropriate bullying prevention curricula for each grade will be evidence-based and include the following approaches

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills,
- empowering students to act by knowing what to do when they witness other students or school staff engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance,
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance,
- emphasizing cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies,
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications, and
- engaging students in a safe and supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Plan. The Plan will be presented and reviewed with students within each of their respective school buildings and/or classrooms, and relevant student-related sections of the Plan will be included within the student handbook in age-appropriate terms and the languages most prevalent in the District. The Plan will also be posted on the District website.

B. General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts: The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- ensuring that every student has at least one trusted adult that they can access in their school,
- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines,
- creating safe and supportive school and classroom environments for all students, including students with actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, disabilities, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics,
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline,
- using positive behavioral supports,
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students,
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors,

- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development,
- using the Internet and social media safely, and
- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

Collaboration With Families

The school will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, PTA, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

Notification requirements

Each year the school will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used, including but not limited to, how parents and guardian can reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school and the Plan, and information about the dynamics of bullying, cyberbullying, and online safety. The school will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians, and students, will be in hard copy and electronic formats, will be age-appropriate, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent in the school. The school will post the Plan and related information on its website.

Relationship with Other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of Map Academy, Map Academy does not discriminate or harass, or tolerate discrimination against or harassment of, students, parents, employees, or the general public on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, ethnic background, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, age, academic status, gender identity or expression, pregnancy or parenting status, genetic information, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or disability, or by any category protected by state or federal law, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Nothing in the Plan prevents Map Academy from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies. If the alleged conduct is on the basis of a protected class (i.e., race, gender, disability, etc.), the alleged conduct should be addressed in a manner consistent with the District's Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H½, or M.G.L. c. 37H ¾, or other applicable laws, or school or District policies.