

**Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Prohibited**

Heritage Academy prohibits bullying, as well as retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process.

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on Heritage Academy property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by Heritage Academy that:

1. Has the effect or will have the effect of physical harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

The conduct is considered bullying if it:

1. Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
2. Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts Heritage Academy operations.

Heritage Academy also prohibits cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of any electronic communication device to engage in bullying or intimidation.

**Retaliation**

Heritage Academy prohibits retaliation by a student or Heritage Academy employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying or cyber-bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

**Reporting Procedures**

Reports of bullying and/or cyber-bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. Failure to immediately report may impair Heritage Academy's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

Any Heritage Academy employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying and/or cyber-bullying shall immediately notify the Principal or designee.

A report may be made orally or in writing. The Principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.

**False Claim**

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a Heritage Academy investigation regarding bullying and/or cyber-bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

**Investigation of Report**

The Principal shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited discrimination and/or harassment, and if so proceed under Board Policy PG-3.4.1 (Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation) instead.

The Principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report, and shall take prompt interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of the investigation, if appropriate.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten Heritage Academy business days from the date of the initial report. However, the Principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

Following completion of the investigation, the Principal or designee will prepare a written decision regarding the complaint. If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying and/or cyber-bullying occurred, Heritage Academy shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Heritage Academy may take action based on the results of an investigation, even if Heritage Academy concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying and/or cyber-bullying as defined in this policy.

**Confidentiality**

To the greatest extent possible, Heritage Academy shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

**Appeal**

A parent or student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal under Board Policy PG-3.35 (Parent and Student Complaints and Grievances).

**Heritage Academy BOARD POLICY MANUAL**  
**POLICY GROUP 3 – STUDENTS**  
**FREEDOM FROM BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING**

PG-3.4.2

**Access to Policy**

Information regarding this policy shall be distributed annually to Heritage Academy employees and included in the Student Handbook. Copies of the policy shall be readily available at each campus and the Heritage Academy administrative offices.