



Myrtle Beach Middle School

Bullying Intervention Plan 2023-2024

State law requires each school district in South Carolina to adopt a policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying at school. Furthermore, HCS policy provides that each school within the district is expected to have in place, and be ready to articulate and defend, an effective bullying intervention system. In this regard, Myrtle Beach Middle School hereby adopts the following policy.

I. Bullying Statement:

Myrtle Beach Middle School prohibits any act of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Myrtle Beach Middle School has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, qualifies as conduct that disrupts a student's ability to learn and hampers a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Since students learn by example; school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers are expected to demonstrate model behavior by treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Myrtle Beach Middle School is committed to its Bullying Intervention Plan and will demonstrate this commitment through administrative leadership in the following ways:

- The School Improvement Council (SIC) will research, develop and recommend any changes or updates to the current bullying plan. The committee will be comprised of a diverse sampling of the student population, parents, teachers, and other school personnel.
- MBM will continue to utilize anti-bullying literature such as posters, logos, and signs by displaying them throughout the school campus. Our school-wide motto of *Character, Community, Scholarship* will continue to support an anti-bully environment.
- Staff members will teach lessons during advisory to promote social, emotional, and academic success.

- At designated times, staff and students will wear similar colors to observe the anti-bullying campaign. When the staff unites in this manner it shows a united anti-bully commitment throughout the school and community.
- Reminders of wearing similar colors on designated days will be included in daily announcements, in the newsletters and through social media.
- The school newsletter will include occasional articles on bullying that define the behavior, illustrate “warning signs” of victims, and outline the proper procedures for reporting bullying.
- The SRO, school administrators, and counselors are available to conduct classroom visits and sessions as needed for teachers or support staff reporting aggressive behavior of students.
- Students identified as needing extra support for emotional development will be assigned to work with a behavior interventionist.
- Providing literature for students placed around the school and the assistant principal’s offices to educate them on strategies for addressing bullying.

II. Prohibited Behavior Defined:

Myrtle Beach Middle School acknowledges that “harassment, intimidation or bullying” may include/consist of repeated gestures, electronic communications, or written, verbal, physical, or sexual acts that take place on school property, at any school-sponsored function where the school is responsible for the child or on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop. Further, bullying behaviors related to face masks is prohibited.

Students who feel they have experienced bullying should report this immediately to parents, teachers, guidance counselors, bus drivers, and/or administrators. Students who witness bullying, should act as an upstander - all of us must work together to stop bullying. Bullying complaint forms are available from teachers, guidance counselors, and the main office. Anonymous reports may be made online or through the use of the bully boxes located in the Learning Commons.

All reports of bullying that occur during school hours or on school property should be passed to the grade level administrator, who will maintain a record of all such reports. Due process will be applied to all reports of bullying, parents will be notified of all reports of bullying, and proper interventions/supports/assistance will be provided as deemed necessary by parents, students, and school administrators. Records will be maintained concerning both the accused and the reporter.

Bullying outside of school hours may be reported to local law enforcement or to school officials when school opens.

III. Appropriate Behavior Defined:

Myrtle Beach Middle School expects students to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the district’s standard for student behavior. A proper regard shall be shown towards the rights and

welfare of other students, school staff, as well as the educational purpose underlying all school-related activities. Furthermore, due care shall be given to school facilities and equipment.

Myrtle Beach Middle School believes that standards for student behavior is best achieved cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents and guardians, staff and community members of the school district; thereby producing an atmosphere that encourages students to exercise appropriate levels of self-discipline. The development of this environment requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff and community members.

Myrtle Beach Middle School believes that the best discipline is self-imposed in nature, and that it is the responsibility of staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities for helping students learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and understand the consequences of engaging in prohibited behaviors. Staff members who interact with students shall apply suitable protocols which are designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage growth in each student's ability to exercise self-discipline and behave appropriately.

Faculty and Staff of Myrtle Beach Middle School will model appropriate behavior by participation in all Anti-Bully campaigns and initiatives, including but not limited to, class meetings, assemblies, and parent conferences with both bullies and victims.

IV. Consequences and Remedial Measures:

Myrtle Beach Middle School accepts responsibility for the development and implementation of procedures that ensure appropriate consequences and remedial responses to students or staff members who commit any act of harassment, intimidation or bullying, including harassing, intimidating, or otherwise bullying a student in relation to the wearing of a face mask. The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by school administrators in the development of the procedures for determining appropriate consequences and remedial measures for each incident.

Factors for Determining Consequences

- Age, developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved;
- Degrees of harm;
- Situational circumstances;
- Nature and severity of the behaviors;
- Incidences of past or continuing patterns of behavior;
- Relationships between the parties involved; and
- Context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Factors for Determining Remedial Measures

Personal

- Life skill deficiencies;
- Social relationships;
- Strengths;
- Talents;
- Traits;
- Interests;

- Hobbies;
- Extra-curricular activities;
- Classroom participation; and
- Academic performance.

Environmental

- School culture;
- School climate;
- Student-staff relationships and staff behavior toward the student;
- General staff management of classrooms or other educational environments;
- Staff's ability to prevent and manage difficult or inflammatory situations;
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports;
- Social relationships;
- Community activities;
- Community environment; and
- Family situation.

Consequences and Remedial Measures:

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for students or staff members who commit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension, expulsion, or adverse employment action. Consequences for a student who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be varied and graded according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance. Consequences must be consistent with the district's approved code of student conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the problem; and protect the victim of the act. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

Examples of Consequences

- Admonishment;
- Temporary removal from the classroom;
- Deprivation of privileges;
- Classroom or administrative detention;
- Referral to disciplinary proceedings;
- In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend;
- Out-of-school suspension;
- Legal action; and
- Expulsion.

Examples of Remedial Measures

Personal

- Restitution and restoration;
- Mediation;
- Peer support group;
- Referral to a student behavior or ethics council;
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience;
- Supportive student interventions;
- Behavioral assessment or other evaluation as deemed appropriate;

- Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored;
- Assignment of leadership responsibilities (e.g., hallway or bus monitor);
- Involvement of school disciplinarian or interventionist;
- Student counseling;
- Parent conferences;
- Student treatment; or
- Student therapy.

Environmental (Classroom, School Building or School District)

- School and community surveys for determining the conditions contributing to harassment, intimidation or bullying;
- School culture change;
- School climate improvement;
- Adoption of research-based, systemic bullying prevention programs;
- School policy and procedures revisions;
- Modifications of schedules;
- Adjustments in hallway traffic;
- Modifications in student routes or patterns traveling to and from school;
- Targeted use of monitors (e.g., hallway, cafeteria, bus);
- Small or large group presentations for fully addressing the behaviors and the responses to the behaviors;
- General professional development programs for certificated and non-certificated staff;
- Professional development plans for involved staff;
- Disciplinary action for school staff who contributed to the problem;
- Supportive institutional interventions;
- Parent conferences;
- Family counseling;
- Involvement of parent-teacher organizations;
- Involvement of community-based organizations;
- Development of a general bullying response plan;
- Recommendations of a student behavior or ethics council;
- Peer support groups; and
- Law enforcement (e.g., school resource officer, juvenile officer) involvement

Myrtle Beach Middle School may also involve staff from RBHS (Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services), Waccamaw Mental Health, or other appropriate agencies.

V. Reporting Procedures:

Horry County Schools requires the principal, or the principal's designee(s), at each school to be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal's designee(s). All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. While written statements are not required, the reporting party should be encouraged to submit one. Oral statements shall be also considered as an official notification; however the principal or the principal's designee(s) should document the oral statement.

Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action must not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report that cannot be corroborated. If requested, the identity of the victim will be protected to the extent allowed by law.

Myrtle Beach Middle School Administrative Team will work collaboratively to receive and document all reports/complaints of bully behavior. In addition, the School Resource Officer may serve as a reporting contact for the school and community as needed. The Safe Schools box is maintained by the SRO and is checked daily. Reports of bullying may be documented on the Bullying Complaint form and placed in disciplinary records if bullying behavior is confirmed.

School-wide procedures and best practices are posted on grade level hall bulletin boards and in classrooms to provide students with concrete procedures for how bully complaints are handled (see attached).

VI. Investigative Protocol:

Horry County Schools requires the principal and/or the principal's designee(s) to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. All complaints of this nature will be taken seriously. In doing so, the principal and/or the principal's designee(s) shall conduct a prompt, thorough and complete investigation of each alleged incident. All investigations shall be sufficiently documented and the results of said investigation shall be retained by the school's administration regardless if the allegation is sustained or not. Those incidents which meet policy defined criteria must be reported to the District Office through the appropriate channels.

VII. Prohibition Against Retaliation and Reprisals:

Myrtle Beach Middle School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The administrator shall determine the consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, in accordance with applicable laws, policies and procedures.

In most cases, acts of retaliation will be prosecuted to the highest extent, including expulsion and involvement of law enforcement, due to the fact that the perpetrator has received ample warning and opportunities for correction of the bullying behavior.

VIII. False Reporting and Accusations:

Myrtle Beach Middle School prohibits any person from making false accusations as a means to harass, intimidate or bully another person. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another, as a means to harass, intimidate or bully another person shall be disciplined in accordance with district policies and procedures.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have falsely accused another as a means to harass, intimidate or bully another person shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials when appropriate.

IX. Student Discussions:

The principal understands the requirement to develop an annual process for discussing the school's policy on harassment, intimidation and bullying with students, which may include, but is not limited to, student assemblies, guidance counselor or school resource officer group sessions.

Myrtle Beach Middle School has the following processes in place to meet the aforementioned requirement:

- Administrators will discuss the bullying plan during grade-level meetings.
- Administrators will provide Second Steps lessons to teachers for use during Goals and Preps.
- Administrators will discuss bullying the plan during building leadership team meetings.
- Guidance counselors will meet with individuals and groups.
- Guidance counselors will work with administration as the need arises.

- X. On an annual basis, prior to the beginning of each school year, the principal will review this plan and amend it when deemed necessary. Furthermore, this plan shall be available to all school staff, students and parents. In addition to providing access to this plan, the administration at Myrtle Beach Middle School will make it clear that all HCS Bullying Intervention Plans are applicable to all acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop or at any other program or function where the school is responsible for the child.

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Myrtle Beach Middle School Bullying Intervention Representatives:

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Submitted: 08/21/2023