



Horry County Schools

Aynor Middle School

Bullying Intervention Plan

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, Aynor Middle School hereby adopts the following policy.

Section I: Statement:

Aynor Middle School prohibits any act of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Aynor 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.

Aynor Middle School is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment where students can physically, emotionally, and academically grow during the middle school years. Therefore, the school is committed to creating a school-wide culture focused on character education where all students and adults are treated with respect.

Section II: What defines prohibited and appropriate behavior:

Prohibited behavior is defined as: Aynor Middle School acknowledges that "harassment, intimidation or bullying means a gesture, an electronic communication, or a written, verbal, physical, or sexual act that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function where the school is responsible for the child or on a school bus, at an official school bus stop that:

- A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a student, physically or emotionally, or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to their person or damage to their property
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student, or group of students, in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or in substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school
- Behavior that includes cyberbullying through using the internet, cell phones, video game systems, or other technology to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person.

Aynor Middle School considers the following as examples of prohibited behaviors:

- Making unwanted physical contact with another student with the intent to harm the other students. Physical contact includes kicking, hitting, poking, slapping, spitting, or punching another person
- Taking personal items from a person and damaging them or refusing to return them

- Using words to taunt, demean, threaten, ridicule, or gossip with the intent to embarrass or hurt another student either through oral and/or written language or through the use of social media (cyber-bullying).
- Using peer pressure (cliques) to make another student feel isolated or frightened
- Bringing items to school which endanger or threaten the safety of the school environment

Appropriate Behavior is defined as: Aynor 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.

1. Aynor 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.
2. Aynor 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.
3. Taking matters into their own hands, or responding to the other student by threatening, criticizing, hitting, pushing, slapping, or shoving is not acceptable. Students must not retaliate but allow school officials to handle the matter. Students who have knowledge of potential inappropriate behavior should report it to school officials immediately. Students not following these procedures subject themselves to the same consequences as the students involved. However, students who walk away and follow procedures will not be punished.

Aynor Middle School considers the following as appropriate behaviors:

- Being respectful and courteous in all social interactions
- Acting with integrity and courage by doing the right thing
- Working cooperative with others to accomplish tasks
- Using problem solving and mediation skills when faced with conflict
- Being considerate of others
- Showing compassion and empathy for others
- Building positive relationships

Section III: Consequences and Remedial Measures:

Aynor 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. 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

Aynor Middle School has the following specific measures in place to deter inappropriate behaviors and support a positive school-wide climate:

- An Administrator has been assigned to each grade level and is in close proximity to hallways and classrooms within their grade level. The Administrators monitor the change of classes and handle discipline referrals, concerns, and any other issues concerning their students
- The school administrators and all staff members have been trained on bullying through the district’s Safe Schools on-line courses
- The School has cameras available throughout the campus to increase safety through increased supervision
- The school’s classrooms are all equipped with telephones and an emergency lines for when assistance is needed
- Metal detectors are used on a daily basis for random inspections to increase safety
- Aynor Middle School participants in Prevention Months such as Red Ribbon Week and Bully Prevention in which students learn the meaning behind each event and how to stand up to bullying by prompting, “**If you see something, say something**”. This, along with other slogans, are seen posted throughout the hallways and in our social media.
- Aynor Middle School provides a variety of activities, clubs and B-Team sports to engage students in positive activities. By offering and joining in these, students are given the opportunity to be part of a team and build collaborative relationships.
- Aynor Middle School provides behavior support and character building through its Guidance Department and Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services (RBHS)
- Character Building is delivered to all students once a week during their Jacket Time through the [Second Steps Curriculum](#). Topics include:

<u>6th Grade</u>	<u>7th Grade</u>	<u>8th Grade</u>
Returning to school	Returning to school	Returning to school
Making our school community better	Making our school community better	Making our school community better
Common types of bullying	What is harassment?	Understanding bullying
Recognizing bullying	What is sexual harassment?	Social factors that contribute to bullying
Responding to cyber-bullying	The effects of sexual harassment	Environmental factors that contribute to bullying
How to be an upstander	Gender-based harassment	Speak up and start a movement
Standing up and staying safe	Our rights and responsibilities	Be inclusive and change policies
Raising awareness about bullying	Preventing harassment	Stand up for change
How to grow your brain	Creating new pathways in	Who am I? My identity

	your brain	
Trying new strategies	Learning from mistakes and failure	My interest and strengths
How to make your goals specific	Identifying roadblocks	Harnessing my strengths
Breaking down your goals	Overcoming roadblocks Part I	Pursuing my interests
Monitoring your progress	Overcoming roadblocks Part II	My future self
Putting it all together	Advice on roadblocks	My path forward

- Students will be required to read and sign an Anti-Bully Contract. This will be delivered through the Students Jacket Time. A copy of the contract may be accessed [here](#).
- Online resources are offered through [Counselor Website](#) to help stand up to bullying.

Section IV: 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.

Aynor Middle School has two Assistant Principals who work collaboratively to receive and investigate reports concerning incidences of bullying. Incidents may also be reported to our Guidance Department or to the Principal.

[Horry County Schools has an anonymous tip line](#) which is posted on the school and district’s webpage and Facebook page.

Bullying incidents that are confirmed are documented in students’ discipline records via Powerschool along with appropriate sanctions.

Reminder: We will not know that bullying is happening if it is not reported.

Section V: 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.

1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal 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 target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies 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

2. Obligations to Notify Others

A. Notice to parents or guardians.

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations.

B. 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 principal 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.

C. Notice to Law Enforcement.

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

3. Investigation

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying and/ or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary, and view camera surveillance. For incidents that occur on buses, video and audio surveillance will be investigated. Investigation includes administration searching school-owned devices, and school accounts. Investigation may include involvement from law enforcement in searching personal devices and property as deemed necessary by authorities. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

4. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary. Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or 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. The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

- **Prohibition Against Retaliation and Reprisals.**

Aynor 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.

- **False Reporting and Accusations:**

Aynor 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.

Section VI: 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.

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

- The School's policy on harassment, intimidation, and bullying is addressed in the school's handbook which is given to each student and taught in classes during the first week of school
- Students will review and sign a "No-Bullying" contract which will be taught through---
- Students involved in bullying incidents will have the option to receive counseling through the following resources: the school's Guidance Department, RBHS, and/or other outside agencies in cooperation with the school.
- 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 Aynor 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.

Aynor Middle School Principal:

Aynor Middle School Bullying Intervention Representative:

Date: