

AAI Bullying Prevention and Response Plan

Introduction:

The American Academy of Innovation (AAI) is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and hazing of students and/or employees by students and/or employees will not be tolerated in school. School officials have the authority to discipline students for off-campus speech that causes or threatens a substantial disruption on campus or school activities, including violent altercations, or significant interference with a student's educational performance and involvement in school activities.

I. Definitions:

1. **Bullying:** Behavior that is repeated over time, intended to cause distress or harm, exists in a relationship where there is a perceived imbalance of power or strength.
2. **Cyberbullying:** Any electronic communication sent via internet, cell phone or other electronic device with the intent to bully, harass, intimidate, or threaten another person.
3. **Harassment:** Repeated communication or conduct directed at another individual in an objectively demeaning or disparaging manner that contribute to a hostile learning or work environment. Also, any unwelcome conduct or communication that targets an individual based on their race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or other protected characteristic, creating a hostile learning or work environment.
4. **Hazing:** Any ritual, behavior, or action expected of an individual as a condition for joining a group that may cause harm, humiliation, or emotional distress.

II. Prevention:

1. **Awareness:**
 - Through Capstone and applicable group/workshops/intensives AAI has implemented group/team-oriented character/project education programs. These programs include anti-bullying and anti-harassment topics that promote empathy and inclusion.
 - AAI provides annual training for faculty and staff. This training is a part of preservice training for all staff.
 - AAI provides parents and students this plan and encourages parents to learn about the signs and symptoms of bullying, harassment, and hazing.
 - AAI focuses its training on recognizing and preventing bullying, hazing, and harassment.
2. **Reporting Mechanisms:**
 - AAI has established an anonymous tip system for the reporting of bullying, harassment, hazing, or other policy violation.
 - AAI also has established procedural norms for the sharing of possible bullying, harassment, and hazing instances that may be reported to our counseling team, teachers, or staff.
 - AAI has established a structure of supervisor and supervisee to identify who may receive staff and faculty complaints about bullying, harassment, or hazing.

III. Response:

1. **Investigations:**
 - AAI will promptly investigate all reported incidents following established policy.
 - AAI adheres to a preponderance of evidence as our evidentiary standard in investigating all bullying, harassment, and hazing complaints.
 - AAI adheres to the federal requirements for all Title IX related complaints.
 - AAI maintains a reasonable expectation of confidentiality to the extent possible while conducting investigations.

2. **No-Contact Orders:**

- When appropriate, AAI shall issue no-contact orders to prevent contact between the individuals involved in a bullying or harassment incident.
- No-contact orders may be formal or informal but will have consequences attached when appropriate.
- No-contact orders may be mutual or exclusive in nature depending on the nature of the offence.

3. **Verbal and Written Notice:**

- AAI shall notify parents/guardians of all involved parties about reported incidents and the actions taken.
- AAI shall outline the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved. Should the report be deemed to fall under Title IX, as evaluated by the Title IX coordinator, then AAI shall provide written notice to all parties involved regarding procedure, rights, and responsibilities.

IV. Consequences:

Consequences for bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and hazing will be based on the severity and frequency of the offenses; therefore, if an initial offence is egregious in severity or frequency, AAI may skip the sequence of consequences and implement more severe consequences:

1. **Initial Offense, Minor Severity:**

- Educational intervention, including counseling or conflict resolution.
- Parent/guardian notification.

2. **Subsequent Offense, Minor Severity:**

- Parent/guardian conference.
- Behavior contract outlining expected behavior and consequences for future violations.

3. **Initial Offense, Major Severity:**

- School-based disciplinary action, such as detention or in-school suspension.
- Additional counseling or support services.
- No-contact order.

4. **Subsequent Offense, Major Severity:**

- Consideration of more serious disciplinary actions, up to and including suspension or expulsion.
- Referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies when applicable.
- Modification of schedule to promote safe school environment.

Support:

1. AAI shall provide support and resources for both the Complainant and the Respondent to address the underlying causes and prevent further incidents.
2. AAI shall engage in restorative justice practices to facilitate communication and understanding between parties involved.
3. AAI shall follow-up with both the Complainant and Respondent until the parties both agree that the environment is safe and secure.

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation:

AAI shall assess the effectiveness of this plan through incident reports, surveys, and feedback from students, parents, and staff. AAI shall adjust the plan as necessary to improve prevention and response efforts.

