



FURLOW CHARTER SCHOOL

March 31, 2021

Notice of Updated Bullying Policy to Parents/School Community

Update Effective February 16, 2021

BULLYING

Furlow prohibits bullying or intimidation at all times. It is very important that information in all situations be weighed and evaluated, but bullying has become an issue in schools that severely compromises the well-being of the people involved. In the event a person has been accused of or committed the offense of bullying or has been the victim of bullying, the school will notify the parent(s), guardian(s), or other person(s) having control or charge of such person.

We are including below information in this section on bullying, taken from the Georgia Department of Education. It is important for all of us to know and understand just what bullying is as well as the consequences for this act. In every setting – school, work and life in general – people do things to one another that might be construed as bullying. Thus, we believe that by educating everyone regarding Georgia Law concerning bullying, we will all be better informed.

What Is Bullying? (Information taken from GADOE website)

“Bullying” can occur in various forms.

- If a scholar tries or threatens to injure another scholar, and he has the apparent present ability to do so, that is bullying.
- If a scholar purposely shows force in a way that gives another scholar reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm, that is bullying.
- If a scholar intentionally uses words (written or spoken) or a physical act that a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, those words or physical act are considered bullying if:
 - They cause another scholar to experience substantial or visible physical harm;
 - They substantially interfere with a scholar’s education;
 - They are so severe, persistent, or pervasive that they create an intimidating or threatening school environment;
 - They substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.

Typically, bullying behaviors need to be repeated in order to distinguish bullying behavior from a scholar being mean.

When Can My Child Be Disciplined for Bullying?

Bullying is not limited to acts that occur on school grounds. Your child may be disciplined for bullying that occurs on school transportation (if available), on transportation made available for school purposes, and at school-related functions or activities. With the advent of technology, your

child may also be disciplined for “cyber-bullying” that takes place through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a school system.

Discipline and Punishment

Upon confirming that bullying has occurred, the accused scholar will be charged with bullying and given an age-appropriate consequence which shall include, at minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling as appropriate under the circumstances. Scholars in grades six through twelve found to have committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year shall be assigned to an alternative education program or alternative school that meets the requirements set forth in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-154.1(d), through appropriate due process by disciplinary hearing officers, panels, or tribunals. Furlow Charter School will clearly communicate to all parties that retaliation following a report of bullying is strictly prohibited and may result in strong disciplinary action.

How Can I Help My Child?

The consequences to bullying are serious. You can help your child by reviewing your school’s code of conduct to understand what is considered bullying and what is at stake in terms of disciplinary action. Talk to your child to discuss how to avoid engaging in bullying behavior.

You can read more about the Georgia Department of Education’s rules on Bullying by going to <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Bullying-Prevention-Toolkit.aspx>

You can also help us by reporting behaviors that you feel are of a bullying nature to your child’s advisor immediately. It is important to remember that some behaviors are age-related. Children do tend to pick on one another at various times in the developmental process. Our job as adults is to both teach children who are picking on others how to interact more positively as well as to teach children how to cope with negative situations while at the same time, being able to recognize negative behaviors that have an impact on a child’s well-being. In the end, if as a parent, you feel your child is at risk as either a person who treats others negatively or who is treated in a negative fashion, please make us aware of the situation so that we can monitor it here at school.

When should I report bullying?

Repeated instances of bullying behavior should be reported to the scholar’s advisor and to the executive director or counselor. Bullying incident reports are available online on our website and are available around the school building. Written reports can be submitted through a Bully Box or be given to a trusted adult in the building. Each report will be investigated.

FURLOW will adopt the 4 Step Approach

1st incident: Give the person the benefit of the doubt. Ignore them and walk away.

2nd incident: Firmly say, “Stop it. I don’t like it.” Then walk away.

3rd incident: Say, “Stop it or I will go to (Dr. Collier/Anderson or Mrs. Downs)” Then walk away.

4th incident: Make a report.

These steps should not be used for physical aggression or more serious incidents, which should be immediately reported to Furlow staff.

Scholars who are not the intended victim of the bullying behavior should intervene and may report as well. When bullying behavior is observed, scholars are encouraged to approach the offender and say something like, “We don’t treat people that way at Furlow.”