

## ***PHILADELPHIA ELECTRICAL & TECHNOLOGY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL***

### **BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY**

#### **Policy Statement**

Philadelphia Electrical & Technology Charter High School prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptions or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment; and since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.

#### **Definition**

Bullying is any hurtful or aggressive act toward an individual or group that is intentional and repeated. There is typically a real or perceived imbalance of physical power, a social network or verbal skills that favor the perpetrator(s).

Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any gesture, written or physical act that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on the way to and from school and that:

1. Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or
2. By any other distinguishing characteristic; and
3. A reasonable person should know under the circumstances, that the acts will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or his/her property; or
4. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.
5. They can bully in direct ways, such as:
  - a. hitting, tripping, shoving, pinching, excessive touching
  - b. verbal threats, name-calling, racial slurs, insults
  - c. demanding money, property, service and
  - d. stabbing, choking, etc
6. They can also bully in indirect ways, such as:
  - a. Rejecting, excluding, isolating;
  - b. Ranking or rating, humiliating;
  - c. Manipulating friends and relationships;
  - d. Writing hurtful or threatening emails and postings on web sites and
  - e. Blackmailing, terrorizing and proposing dangerous dares

7. Other things to know about bullying:

- a. Some students are bullies; others are targets of bullying;
- b. A student can be both a target and a bully at the same time;
- c. Some students are bystanders; bystanders can be either passive or active;
- d. Some acts of bullying at school can result in suspension and/or expulsion;
- e. Bullying breaks the laws when it becomes stealing, assault and battery, extortion, sexual harassment, hate crimes and other criminal acts;
- f. Administrators, teachers, staff, students and parents must accept responsibility to recognize and report and/or intervene with bullying when it occurs.

8. School bullying affects the safety and social well being of the entire school community.

**Expected Behavior**

Philadelphia Electrical and Technology Charter High School expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

Philadelphia Electrical & Technology believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents, or legal guardians, staff and community members, producing an atmosphere that encourages pupils to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for staff and others as well as for school property on the part of students, staff and community members.

The school believes the best discipline is self-imposed and it is the responsibility of the school staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities to help students learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequence of their behavior. Staff members who interact with pupils shall apply the best practices to prevent discipline problems and encourage student's abilities to grow in self discipline.

General guidelines for pupil conduct have been developed by the CEO, in conjunction with the school staff and approved by the Board of Trustees. These guidelines have been developed based on accepted core ethical values from broad community involvement with input from school employees, pupils and administrators. This policy requires all students to adhere to these rules and guidelines and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of these rules and guidelines.

Philadelphia Electrical & Technology Charter High School prohibits active and passive support for harassment, intimidation or bullying. Students are encouraged to support other students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them and report these acts to the administrators of the school.

The administration will provide annually to pupils and their parents or legal guardian(s) the rules of the school regarding pupil conduct, pupil's due process and other rights. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) are asked to read the handbook and sign the Code of Conduct contract saying they have read and understand the rules and regulations of the school.

### **Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Action**

The following factors will be considered in determining the appropriate response to pupils who commit one (1) or more acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying:

1. The development and maturity levels of parties involved
2. The level of harm;
3. The surrounding circumstances;
4. The nature of the behavior(s);
5. Past incidence or continuing patterns of behavior;
6. The relationship between the parties involved; and
7. The context in which the alleged incident occurred.

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances.

An appropriate consequence will be determined after meaningful consideration of these factors. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for pupils who commit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. The appropriate consequence will be consistent with federal and state statutes, and school policies and regulations.

### **Possible Appropriate Action**

1. Meeting with student, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the Disciplinarian regarding the behavior being exhibited and the remediation of such behavior.
2. Regular meetings with the school counselor regarding such behaviors
3. Meeting of the Discipline Committee of the school to determine the extent of remediation necessary for the behavior being exhibited.
4. Blatant or continuing acts of bullying can result in suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Reporting Procedure**

Any student who feels he or she is being bullied, harassed, discriminated against, or who is aware of bullying, harassment or discrimination should report it immediately to the administrator, a guidance counselor, teacher or any staff person. Any student who is found to have engaged in behavior that is related to bullying, harassment, and/or discrimination will be subject to immediate and severe disciplinary action. Actions may include but are not limited to detention, suspension and/or expulsion from the school. In the event of suspension/expulsion guidelines will be followed in accordance with the school's policy.

If harassment and/or discrimination is found to have occurred, prompt and appropriate remedial action will be taken in addition to discipline of the offender.

In all cases, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be advised of the incident and the action to be taken.

No student or employee will be retaliated against for reporting bullying, harassment or discrimination or participating in an investigation concerning these issues.

### **Consequences for False Accusation**

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a pupil found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying range from positive behavioral intervention 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 of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with the school policies and procedures.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Unwanted or unwelcome contact of a sexual nature directed toward another individual is prohibited, regardless of whether the contact is by word, gesture; or other sexual conduct. Students are expected to treat other students and staff with courtesy and respect, and avoid any behavior, action, or activity that is offensive and disrespectful. All staff members are expected to be diligent in seeing that the school environment is free from sexual harassment and/or harassment in general. PE&T will not tolerate harassment on the part of any student or staff member. Any staff member or student who witnesses or is the victim of sexual harassment should report it immediately to the Assistant Principal for Student Services.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is using e-mail, chat rooms, websites and other forms of *electric communication* to send mean-spirited messages, make cruel and harmful remarks about individuals, post unflattering or derogatory photos, make direct threats or encourage acts of violence, or sexually harass. Cyberbullying is the repeated misuse of these technologies to harass, intimidate, bully, or terrorize another person. Cyberbullies can typically be **individuals or cliques**.

All PE&T students are given training on recognizing and avoiding cyberbullying. Students are urged to protect themselves online by talking about bullying in general with friends, teachers and family; discussing what personal information is appropriate to tell others, and what is not; visiting some popular teen sites with parents, teachers, or friends and discussing what is there and what could be a danger, learning to develop realistic expectations for both personal and on-line relationships; keeping passwords, pictures and secrets to oneself; and saving the evidence - on ones computer or print out if cyberbullying occurs.

If a student determines that cyberbullying is actually going on, they are taught to save the evidence, identify the sender and contact their ISP (Internet Service Provider) if necessary. Threats, extortion, sexual harassment should be reported to the police (if warranted, an attorney should be contacted).