

# Amego, INC

## Bullying Prevention and Intervention

### **PURPOSE**

To implement a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to provide clear actions required to our staff and stakeholders. Amego, Inc.'s (Amego's) plan parallels the Model Bullying and Intervention Plan (The Plan) provided by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **POLICY**

Amego's School Leadership Team has played, and will continue to play a critical role in developing and implementing The Plan in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote a positive school climate. Educators have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. The School Leadership Team will be responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying.

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### **DEFINITIONS**

**Aggressor** is a student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation toward another student.

**Bullying**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Cyber-bullying**, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyber-bullying.

**Hostile environment**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or

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witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**School Staff** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### **The Amego School Leadership Team:**

President & CEO  
Chief Operating Officer  
V.P. of Children's Services  
Director of Children's Clinical Services  
Director of Social Services – Children's Division  
Vice President of Social Services - Agency  
Director of Children's Residential Services  
Director of Student Services  
Educational Director  
Director of Health Care Services  
Chief Human Resources Officer  
Human Rights Officer  
Head Teachers

#### **A. Public Involvement in Plan Development**

The Plan was developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, students, parents, and guardians. All interested parties have been provided notice and a public comment period for parents of Amego's students was provided before this Plan was adopted by Amego's Board of Directors. The Plan will be posted on Amego's website.

#### **B. Assessing Needs and Resources**

This Plan is the school's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of this planning process, Amego's school leaders, with the input from teachers, staff and families will review current policies and procedures and available data on bullying and behavioral incidents. Available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services will also be assessed to revise and develop policies

As a residential school and private day school for students with autism and significant behavioral needs, much data already exists that can be analyzed initially and periodically regarding bullying. Daily student and residential logs provide data that informs the faculty about a student's condition on a daily basis.

Documented conversations with staff and parents provide additional data

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regarding concerns. Amego's School Leadership Team will conduct assessments as needed related to bullying, including school climate, day and residential issues, issues related to transportation, and individual needs. These will be used to help identify patterns of behaviors, areas of concern or programmatic issues, which will be reported to Amego's School Leadership Team. The Leadership Team will make recommendations to assist in developing preventative strategies including age-appropriate curricula, professional development, training, and in-school support services. The students at Amego are always in the presence of staff that can quickly intervene in a bullying situation. In addition, student behavior data is collected, graphed and analyzed on a monthly schedule in order to recognize patterns and implement program changes as needed.

Amego's Director of Children's Clinical Services or Amego's School Leadership Team members will recommend other needs assessments as warranted throughout the school year. All assessments will be reviewed by The Leadership Team.

### **C. Planning and Oversight**

School leaders are responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

1. Receiving reports on bullying: Educational Director (In their absence, reports will be submitted to Amego's V.P. of Children's Services, C.O.O., and/or Director of Children's Clinical Services)
2. Collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes: Educational Directors, Head Teachers.
3. Creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors; V.P. of Children's Services, Director of Children's Clinical Services, Educational Directors.
4. Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law: Chief Human Resources Officer, V.P. of children's Services, Educational Directors.
5. Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors: V.P. of Children's Services, Director of Children's Clinical Services.
6. Choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use: Educational Director and Teachers.
7. Developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them: Director of Social Services, Vice President of Social Services.
8. Amending student handbooks: Director of Social Services, Vice President of Social Services.
9. Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials: Director of Social Services, Vice President of Social Services.
10. Reviewing and updating the Plan each year, or more frequently – Leadership Team

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### **D. Priority Statement**

Amego expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

Amego is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We (Leadership Team) understand that members of certain student groups may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics (i.e. race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identify or expression, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics). Given Amego's population, staff are required to use their observational skills primarily as ways to assess bullying behavior because of the functioning level and high-occurrence of lack of verbal language in our students.

Amego will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, residential facilities, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying, and Amego is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The Vice President of Children's Services or designee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

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### **TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Annual staff training on the Plan**

Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the Vice President of Children's Services will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school. Annual training began during the monthly trainings in 2011 and have been provided annually thereafter.

As staff members are hired they are required to participate in a two week Orientation and Training Program (O&T). Beginning with the first O&T after January 1, 2011 the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan has been included in the training for new staff in the school. The training includes staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the Vice President of Children's Services will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula offered at all grades throughout the school.

#### **Ongoing professional development**

Amego's goal for professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

1. developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
2. developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
3. information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
4. research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
5. information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying;
6. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying; and
7. How to identify these issues in Amego's student population.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). As Amego is a school for students with autism spectrum disorders we will have a particular focus on the needs of students with autism and students whose disability affects social skills development.

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Additional areas identified by the school for professional development include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

### **Written notice to staff**

Amego. will provide all staff with an annual written notice of The Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties and ensuring that each staff person receives a copy of this document during required training.

## **ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

### **Identifying Resources**

Resources at Amego.:

The first resource in Amego's capacity to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families are the teachers who directly work with the students. Students at Amego are always under the supervision of teachers and teaching assistants. In their roles as teachers and assistants, Amego's staff are constantly in the mindset of creating and supporting a positive school environment that focuses on immediate intervention when any student's safety is at risk.

The second level of support in ensuring a positive school environment is the Leadership Team. The expertise of each of these members individually or the collective group is available to review situations as presented by staff and assist in developing a plan of intervention that is appropriate for the incident as well as to the individual needs of the student(s) involved. This may include adopting new curricula, reorganizing staff, a clinical team review and identifying other agencies that can provide services.

### **Counseling and Other Services**

Amego provides education to students who are limited in communication and social skills. Amego employs Board Certified Behavior Analysts as well as several teachers who are in the midst of an ABA program that leads to certification. Our leadership

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team and teachers are highly trained in behavioral intervention plans and leading social skills groups. In a situation where students have been targets of bullying or retaliation our V.P of Children's Services would facilitate an appropriate intervention with the teachers and other leaders.

Other resources directly available to Amego include a Psychiatrist who consults monthly and reviews cases with members of the leadership team. In addition, Amego has developed linkages with area clinicians who specialize in working with children with cognitive and social skills limitations.

### **Students with Disabilities**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

All of Amego's students are on IEPs and are individuals that may be vulnerable to bullying, harassment and/or teasing because of their disabilities. In response to the need to develop a bullying and intervention plan, Amego addresses this topic during the IEP meeting. The Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

### **Referral to Outside Services**

Amego has developed linkages with area clinicians who specialize in working with children with limitations. Amego. will make the opportunity to access these services available to students and their families

## **ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

### **Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches**

Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:\*

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including the underlying power imbalance;

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- emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications;
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference;
- using social stories as a teaching methodology to develop skills.

*\*As is appropriate based upon Amego's student population.*

The Plan will be reviewed annually with students in groups or individually, according to each student's ability to cognitively understand, and participate in a discussion and in ways that will have meaning to the students.

#### **General Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts.**

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, GLBT students, homeless students, et cetera;
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely; and
- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

#### **Collaboration with Families**

##### Parent Education and Resources

Amego will offer access to education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the Parent Advisory Council (PAC).

#### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO**

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**BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

**Reporting Bullying or Retaliation**

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school staff member is required to report immediately to the V.P. of Children's Services or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school staff members, may be made anonymously; provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The school will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, the agency voicemail box (508-455-6200), the school mailing address, and by email to the V.P. of Children's Services.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the V.P. of Children's Services and 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the V.P. of Children's Services, will be incorporated in student handbooks, on the school website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

**1. Reporting by Staff**

A staff member will report immediately to the V.P. of Children's Services or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the V.P. of Children's Services or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management.

**2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others**

The school expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the V.P. of Children's Services or her designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but

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no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the V.P. of Children's Services or designee.

### **Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation**

#### 1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the V.P. of Children's Services will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target, assess the target's needs for protection, 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 V.P. of Children's Services will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The V.P. of Children's Services 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. The Vice President of Children's Services will convene the clinical / educational team assigned to the student and develop an appropriate student safety plan for the student. That plan will be incorporated within one week to the student's Behavior Support Plan. Immediate temporary supports will be identified until the Behavior Support Plan is finalized.

#### 2. Obligations to Notify Others

##### a. **Notice to Parents or Guardians.**

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the V.P. of Children's Services 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 V.P. of Children's Services or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

##### 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 V.P. of

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Children's Services or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the school district liaison for each of the students involved in the incident. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

c. **Notice to Law Enforcement**

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the V.P. of Children's Services or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the V.P. of Children's Services will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with 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 V.P. of Children's Services 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 V.P. of Children's Services 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 V.P. of Children's Services or designee deems appropriate.

### **Investigation**

The V.P. of Children's Services or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying 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 V.P. of Children's Services or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The V.P. of Children's Services 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 V.P. of Children's Services or designee, other staff members as determined by the V.P. of Children's Services or designee, and in consultation with the Director of Social Services, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the V.P. of Children's Services or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The V.P. of Children's Services 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, V.P. of

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Children's Services or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

### **Determinations**

The V.P. of Children's Services or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the V.P. of Children's Services 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 V.P. of Children's Services 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 V.P. of Children's Services or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or Director of Social Services, 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. All efforts will be made to provide counseling or referral to appropriate services for the aggressor and/or targets and for appropriate family members.

The V.P. of Children's Services 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 V.P. of Children's Services 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.

### **Responses to Bullying**

#### 1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the V.P. of Children's Services or designee determination that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the V.P. of Children's Services or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with counselors and other appropriate school personnel;

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- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

### 2. Taking Disciplinary Action

Amego serves a student population diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), neurological disorders and accompanying behavioral challenges. A significant portion of our population is non-verbal and a significant percentage of the remaining population has limited language skills. Most students who attend Amego have significant social skill deficits and moderate to severe intellectual disabilities. Given that profile, many of our students would require a manifestation determination prior to the implementation of any disciplinary proceedings. Should an investigation determine that an incident was clearly an act of bullying, then discipline may be imposed on the aggressor after the assessment of their disability issues. These disciplinary actions will be determined based on the student's skill set and level of understanding. They may include movement away from the target and loss of preferred activities (as based on their IEP and behavior support plan). In the event none of these interventions work, we would move to our student suspensions and termination of placements policy.

If the VP of Children's Services or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the VP of Children's Services or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with The Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the V.P. of Children's Services or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

### 3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The V.P. of Children's Services or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the V.P. of Children's Services or designee may

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use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the V.P. of Children's Services or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the V.P. of Children's Services or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

### **PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION.**

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at an Amego. residence, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by the school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the school, and
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires Amego. to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs, however, students of Amego are always accompanied by staff due to their level of need to be successful in community activities.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS**

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or

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37H½, other applicable laws, or school policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.