

## **Keystone Montessori**

### **Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Policy**

In keeping with our vision statement, Keystone Montessori is committed to providing an educational environment that is free from bullying, harassment, and intimidation. Students, parents, and staff should report incidents of bullying to the Head of School, Associate Head of School, or any teacher when they believe that bullying, harassment, or intimidation may have occurred. Reports should be made within thirty (30) days of the last incident.

*Bullying* is a repeated act or acts over time, which may occur when a student or group of students engages in any form of behavior or aggression that includes acts of intimidation or harassment that:

- Have the effect of physically harming an individual, damaging an individual's property, or placing an individual in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property;
- are sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that the action, behavior, aggression, or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile or abusive environment in the form of physical or emotional or psychological harm or distress;
- behavior, aggression or threat occurs repeatedly over time;
- occur when there is a real or perceived imbalance of physical, emotional or psychological power or strength; or
- may constitute a violation of law.

*Harassment* is behavior by an individual or group that consists of systematic and/or continued unwanted and annoying actions, including threats and demands. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling (e.g., bullying); graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones, social-media or the Internet (e.g., cyberbullying); or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school. Allegations of sexual harassment are addressed through a separate Sexual Harassment Policy.

*Cyberbullying* may include, but is not limited to, any act of bullying or harassment committed by use of electronic technology or electronic communication devices, including telephonic devices, social networking and other Internet communications, on school computers, networks, forums and mailing lists, or other School-owned property, and by means of an individual's personal electronic media and equipment.

*Intimidation* is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that places another student or group of students in fear of harm of person or property. Intimidation can be manifested emotionally or physically, either directly or indirectly, and by use of social media.

### **Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Harassment**

Students and others should report any incidents of bullying to a teacher, school administrator or any other school employee (i.e., educational assistant, receptionist, etc.). It is mandatory that school employees report any incidents of bullying in writing to school administration. Students who cannot immediately file a report should do so within thirty (30) calendar days of the last incident.

The school employee receiving the report/complaint who believes a student has been subjected to bullying or personally witnesses bullying shall:

- Determine whether an outside agency needs to be contacted (i.e., Department of Child Safety or law enforcement).
- Have the student complete an Incident Form.
- At a minimum, the report/complaint shall be put in writing containing the identifying information on the complainant and such specificity of names, places and times so as to permit an investigation.
- When a school employee receives the information, the employee will give the information verbally and in writing to the Head of School no later than the next school day following the day of the report/complaint. Failure to do so will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

If an investigation substantiates that bullying, harassment, or intimidation has occurred, a student may be disciplined in accordance with the School's discipline policy and as appropriate to the age and circumstances of the student. Any student who intentionally files a false report or has retaliated against another person who has participated in any manner in an investigation, proceedings or hearing conducted in response to an investigation of bullying, will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

### **Procedures for Investigation of the Report/Complaint**

The Head of School or his/her designee will investigate the complaint within fifteen (15) instructional days. For good cause (such as availability of witnesses), the time for investigation may be extended. All violations of this policy will be treated in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

The complainant and the person accused of bullying, harassment, or intimidation shall receive a written notice of determination at the completion of the investigation.

### **Support Services**

The following support services may be available for a student who has experienced bullying, harassment, or intimidation:

- Intervention strategies
- Referrals to outside counseling services
- For students with disabilities, an IEP team or 504 team meeting may be convened

For additional resources, please see the Arizona Department of Education's webpage at <https://www.azed.gov/wellness/other-programs-resources>.