

Gaming & Technology Academy of Saginaw

Anti-Bullying, Cyberbullying & Aggressive Behavior Policy



PURPOSE

The Gaming & Technology Academy of Saginaw (“GATA” or “the Academy”) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful, and technology-responsible educational environment for all students. Bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, hazing, harassment, retaliation, and other aggressive behavior are strictly prohibited.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Gaming & Technology Academy of Saginaw to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all students. Bullying, cyberbullying, hazing, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, threats, or aggressive behavior by students, staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, parents, or third parties is strictly prohibited.

EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

All members of the school community are expected to treat others with dignity and respect, demonstrate responsible digital citizenship, report bullying or unsafe behavior, support students who may be victims, help maintain a positive school culture, and refrain from retaliation.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to school property, transportation, school-sponsored events, esports competitions, online learning environments, gaming platforms, school-issued devices, and digital communication that substantially disrupts the educational environment.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying means any written, verbal, physical, electronic, or digital act that substantially interferes with educational opportunities, creates a hostile environment, causes emotional distress, or disrupts school operations.

Cyberbullying includes bullying through text messages, social media, gaming chats, streaming platforms, Discord servers, messaging apps, AI-generated content, or online impersonation.

Aggressive behavior includes intimidation, hazing, threats, stalking, menacing behavior, coercion, physical aggression, and persistent harassment.

HAZING

Hazing is prohibited. Hazing includes any initiation activity or behavior that causes humiliation, embarrassment, emotional distress, physical harm, or endangers student safety. Consent does not excuse hazing behavior.

RETALIATION PROHIBITED

Retaliation against any individual who reports bullying, participates in an investigation, assists another student, or serves as a witness is strictly prohibited. False accusations made intentionally and maliciously may result in disciplinary action.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

Students are encouraged to report bullying immediately to teachers, counselors, administrators, the Superintendent, or any trusted staff member. Parents may submit reports in writing, by phone, by email, or through school reporting systems.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

The Academy shall promptly investigate all complaints, document findings, interview relevant parties, protect confidentiality when possible, take immediate steps to ensure student safety, and notify parents or guardians appropriately.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Confirmed bullying behavior may result in verbal warning, parent conference, restorative practices, counseling referral, detention, suspension, expulsion, removal from esports participation, technology restrictions, or law enforcement referral when appropriate.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Whenever appropriate, the Academy may utilize restorative circles, mediation, conflict resolution, SEL interventions, behavioral supports, and reflection activities.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP & ONLINE CONDUCT

GATA integrates technology and gaming into learning. Students are expected to engage respectfully online, demonstrate ethical gaming behavior, avoid toxic conduct, protect personal information, follow acceptable use policies, and use AI responsibly.

SUPPORTS FOR TARGETED STUDENTS

The Academy may provide counseling support, safety planning, SEL interventions, academic supports, and mental health referrals for affected students.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff members must intervene when safe, report suspected bullying, document incidents, support affected students, and model respectful conduct.

TRAINING & PREVENTION

The Academy will provide student bullying prevention education, digital citizenship instruction, SEL programming, staff training, parent resources, cyberbullying awareness, and gaming conduct expectations.

POLICY DISTRIBUTION

This policy shall be published annually, included in student/parent handbooks, posted on the Academy website, and reviewed with students and staff.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Academy prohibits bullying and harassment in accordance with Title IX, Section 504, IDEA, Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, and Michigan anti-bullying laws.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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