



## **Keshet Education Bullying Prevention Policy**

### **Purpose:**

Keshet is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment that is free from bullying, intimidation and harassment. This policy defines expectations and outlines procedures for prevention, reporting and response to ensure compliance with 105 ILCS 5/22-110 and Illinois Racism-Free Schools Law (105 ILCS 5/22-95).

This policy is also not intended to impair or otherwise diminish the right of employees under federal law, State law, or a collective bargaining agreement, if applicable.

Refer to Keshet's Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy for additional details on reporting, definitions, investigation procedures, retaliation, resolution outside of Keshet.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to all students, staff and individuals engaged in school-related activities.

### **Definitions:**

#### **Bullying**

Includes "cyber-bullying" and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property.
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or student's physical or mental health.
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance.
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, posting or distributing sexually explicit images, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

## **Cyber-bullying**

Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photo optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, pursuant to Section 22-110 of the Illinois School Code, cyberbullying also includes the posting or distribution of an unauthorized digital replica by electronic means if the posting or distribution creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying per this policy.

## **Discrimination**

Conduct that may be considered discrimination if on the basis of race, color, or national origin include, but is not limited to: denying access to specific opportunities for academic or job-related advancement; disciplining a student or employee more harshly or more often for the same misconduct; or, denying language services to students who are English language learners.

## **Harassment**

Harassment may be a form of prohibited discrimination. Conduct that may be considered harassment if on the basis of race, color, or national origin include, but is not limited to: the use of racial, ethnic or ancestral slurs or stereotypes; humiliating comments about a person's actual or perceived race, color, or national origin; the display of symbols of racial or ethnic violence; and, hostile or intimidating comments, threats, or physical attacks that are motivated by race, color, or national origin.

## **Policy Statement:**

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the non-sectarian nonpublic school and is consistent with subsection (a-5) of 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7. Nothing in this Section is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

Discrimination and harassment based on race, color, national origin and retaliation is prohibited.

Bullying is not acceptable and strictly prohibited. No student shall be subjected to bullying:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the bus, or at school-sponsored or school sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a nonschool-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This item (4) applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require a district or school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

### **Bullying Report Process:**

Students, parents, and school personnel are encouraged to immediately report bullying, including complaints of discrimination and harassment, to the Director of Education. While this is preferred, reports can also be made to any school personnel, whether a supervisor, teacher, staff member, or therapist, who will respond to a student/parent report.

#### Contact information

Samantha Rodriguez, Director of Education  
[srodriguez@keshet.org](mailto:srodriguez@keshet.org)  
(224) 998-4519

Brenda DeMattio, Chief Program Officer  
[bdemattio@keshet.org](mailto:bdemattio@keshet.org)  
(847) 500-1470

Reports will be kept confidential, to the extent possible, given the need to investigate. Keshet prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying, including complaints of discrimination and harassment, and the consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation. Additionally, consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person found to have falsely accused another of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying.

### **Response to Reports of Bullying:**

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the parents or guardians of all students involved in an alleged incident of bullying, including complaints of discrimination and harassment, will be notified of such, along with threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, **within 24 hours** after Keshet's administration is made aware of the student's involvement in the incident of bullying. As appropriate, Keshet's administration will also discuss the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. Diligent efforts to notify a parent or legal guardian, will be made utilizing all contact information available.

Additional procedures include:

1. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation **within 10 school days** after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
2. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
3. Notifying Keshet's school administrator or designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
4. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The student's placing school district may also be informed of a student's involvement in any such incident and an IEP meeting may be convened to discuss appropriate supports, services and placement.

If after an investigation, a third party, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc., is determined to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy, Keshet will address the violation on a case-by-case basis and pursuant to any other applicable school policies.

Interventions that can be taken to address bullying, which may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.

"Restorative measures" means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that:

- are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community,
- contribute to maintaining school safety,
- protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate,
- teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society,
- serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and
- reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.
- increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying, including complaints of discrimination and harassment is prohibited.

Such reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for the purpose of determining appropriate consequences. No person will be subject to consequences for making a good-faith report of bullying. However, making a false accusation of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying is prohibited and will be treated as bullying for the purpose of determining appropriate consequences.

Students committing or involved in the act of bullying or harassment are subject to disciplinary action ranging from conferring with an administrator to termination from Keshet Therapeutic educational programs. Continued infractions will have a cumulative effect in terms of disciplinary action.

#### **Prevention and Response at the classroom level:**

- A curriculum that promotes kindness, communication, cooperation, and friendship and includes lessons and activities stressing empathy, anger management, and conflict resolution skills.
- Class rules against bullying. Rules should be brief and clear. We will be kind to each other, we will keep our hands to ourselves, and we will help our friends.
- Immediate consequences for aggressive behavior is determined per each student's IEP. The multidisciplinary team will reconvene to discuss student behavior and possible interventions.
- Ongoing discussions with students to clearly and consistently enforce expectations and to engage them as resources in preventing bullying behavior.
- Ongoing communication with parents.

#### **Prevention and Response at the individual level:**

- Serious talks with students
- Serious talks with the parents of bullies and victims
- Role playing of non-aggressive behavior with bullies
- Role playing of assertive behavior with victims

#### **Complaints to Federal and State Agencies:**

If there is a failure to take necessary corrective action in response to severe or pervasive harassment based on race, color, or national origin, further relief and legal recourse may be available through state and federal agencies:

Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR)

<https://dhr.illinois.gov/about-us/contact-idhr.html>

(312) 814-6200 (Chicago)

(217) 785-5100 (Springfield)

U.S. Department of Education - Office for Civil Rights

<https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/civil-rights-laws/file-complaint>

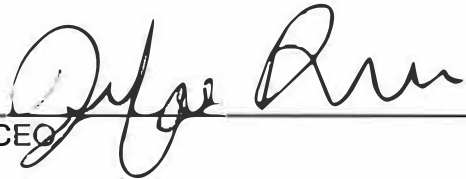
**Policy Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed at least on an annual basis or more often if needed, based on engagement from a range of stakeholders including students, parents, staff, administration, and board members.


As part of the process of reviewing and re-evaluating the policy, Keshet will assess the outcomes and effectiveness of this policy that includes, but is not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. Keshet education programs will use relevant data and information collected for purposes in the policy evaluation. The information developed as a result of the policy evaluation will be made available on the school's website and be provided to school administrators, school board members, school personnel, parents, guardians, and students.

Updated 3/10/2023, 10/9/2023, 1/8/2024, 7/23/2024, 9/29/2025, 6/2026

**Approved by:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CEO

06/19/2026  
Date

  
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Board of Directors, Board Chair

6/24/24  
Date