

## **Safe Place to Learn Act**

1. [Suicide Prevention Policy](#)
2. [Definition of discrimination and harassment based on sex](#)
3. [Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, and Bullying Policy](#)
4. [Title IX Information \(from CDE website\)](#)
5. [Employee Interaction with Pupil Policy](#)
6. [GPS Anti-discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy](#)
7. [Anti- cyberbullying procedures](#)
8. [Social Media Policy](#)
9. [Statewide resources to support students](#)

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY**

The Board of Directors (the “Board”) of the Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “Charter School”) recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Board has developed prevention strategies and intervention procedures.

The policy has been developed in consultation with GPS and community stakeholders, GPS-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts and shall, at a minimum, address procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, GPS shall appoint an individual (or team) to serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for GPS. This policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least annually in conjunction with the previously mentioned community stakeholders.

### **Prevention and Instruction**

Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students’ feelings of connectedness with GPS and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.

GPS’s instructional and student support program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students including, but not limited to, the development of problem-solving skills, coping skills, and resilience.

The Principal or designee may offer parents/guardians education or information which describes the severity of the youth suicide problem, GPS’s suicide prevention efforts, risk factors and warning signs of suicide, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, reducing the stigma of mental illness, and/or GPS and community resources that can help youth in crisis.

GPS’s instructional curriculum may include information about suicide prevention, as appropriate or needed, taking into consideration the grade level and age of the students. If offered or included in GPS’s instructional curriculum, suicide prevention instruction shall be designed to help students:

1. Identify and analyze signs of depression and self-destructive behaviors and understand how feelings of depression, loss, isolation, inadequacy, and anxiety can lead to thoughts of suicide.
2. Identify alternatives to suicide and develop coping and resiliency skills.
3. Learn to listen, be honest, share feelings, and get help when communicating with friends who show signs of suicidal intent.
4. Identify trusted adults, GPS resources, and/or community crisis intervention resources where youth, including those at high risk, such as youth bereaved by suicide; youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders; youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings such as foster care; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth can get help and recognize that there is no stigma associated with seeking mental health, substance abuse, gender identity, or other support services.

## **Staff Development**

Suicide prevention training for staff will be provided and be designed to help staff identify and find help for students at risk of suicide. The training may be offered under the discretion of the Principal and/or Board and/or in cooperation with one or more community mental health agencies and may include information on:

1. Research identifying risk factors, such as previous suicide attempt(s), history of depression or mental illness, substance abuse problems, family history of suicide or violence, feelings of isolation, interpersonal conflicts, a recent severe stressor or loss, family instability, and other factors.
2. Warning signs that may indicate suicidal intentions, including changes in students' appearance, personality, or behavior.
3. Research-based instructional strategies for teaching the suicide prevention curriculum and promoting mental and emotional health.
4. GPS and community resources and services for students and families in crisis and ways to access them.
5. GPS procedures for intervening when a student attempts, threatens, or discloses the desire to die by suicide.
6. Materials approved by GPS for training shall include how to identify appropriate mental health services, both at the GPS site and within the larger community, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services.
7. Materials approved for training may also include programs that can be completed through self-review or suitable suicide prevention materials.

## **Intervention and Emergency Procedures**

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, he/she shall promptly notify the Principal or designee. The Principal or designee shall then notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible and may also refer the student to mental health resources at GPS or in the community.

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported, the Principal or designee shall, at a minimum:

1. Ensure the student's physical safety by one of the following, as appropriate:
  - a. Securing immediate medical treatment if a suicide attempt has occurred;
  - b. Securing law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened;
  - c. Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene.
2. Designate specific individuals to be promptly contacted, for example the GPS counselor, psychologist, nurse, Principal, and/or the student's parent/guardian, and, as necessary, local law enforcement or mental health agencies.
3. Document the incident in writing as soon as feasible.

4. Follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed.
5. Provide access to counselors or other appropriate personnel to listen to and support students and staff who are directly or indirectly involved with the incident at GPS.
6. Provide an opportunity for all who respond to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted on the GPS campus, the Principal or designee shall follow the crisis intervention procedures contained in the GPS safety plan. After consultation with the Principal or designee and the student's parent/guardian about facts that may be divulged in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the Principal or designee may provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. GPS staff may receive assistance from GPS counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

Students shall be encouraged through the education program and in GPS activities to notify a teacher, Principal, another GPS administrator, psychologist, GPS counselor, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions.

#### **GPS Employees Acting Within Scope**

GPS shall ensure that employees act only within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging a GPS employee to diagnose or treat mental illness unless the employee is specifically licensed and employed to do so.

## **Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination and Bullying Policy**

Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “School”) believes all students have the right to a safe and civil learning environment and thus, this policy is hereby adopted. Discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are all disruptive behaviors which interfere with students’ ability to learn, negatively affect student engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. As such, GPS prohibits any acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying altogether. This policy is inclusive of instances that occur on any area of the school campus, at school-sponsored events and activities, regardless of location, through school-owned technology, and through other electronic means.

As used in this policy, “discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying” describe the intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, written communication, or cyberbullying, including cyber sexual bullying, that is based on the actual or perceived characteristics of disability, pregnancy, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, ancestry, race or ethnicity, immigration status, religion, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, age, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. In addition, bullying encompasses any conduct described in the definitions set forth in this policy. Hereafter, such actions are referred to as “misconduct prohibited by this Policy.”

To the extent possible, GPS will make reasonable efforts to prevent students from being discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, and/or bullied, and will take action to investigate, respond to, and address any reports of such behaviors in a timely manner. GPS staff who witness acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy will take immediate steps to intervene, so long as it is safe to do so.

Moreover, GPS will not condone or tolerate misconduct prohibited by this Policy by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which GPS does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This Policy applies to all employee, student, or volunteer actions and relationships, regardless of position or gender. GPS will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of such misconduct prohibited by this Policy and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.

### **Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination and Bullying Coordinator (“Coordinator”):**

Growth Public Schools  
Audria Johnson, Executive Director  
9320 Tech Center Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95826

## **Legal Definitions**

### **Prohibited Unlawful Harassment**

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments or slurs
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with school because of sex, race or any other protected basis
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment
- Deferential or preferential treatment based on any of the protected classes above

### **Prohibited Unlawful Harassment under Title IX**

Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et. seq; 34 C.F.R. § 106.1 et. seq) and California state law prohibit harassment on the basis of sex. In accordance with these existing laws, discrimination on the basis of sex in education institutions is prohibited. All persons, regardless of sex, are afforded equal rights and opportunities and freedom from

unlawful discrimination in education programs or activities conducted by GPS.

GPS is committed to providing an educational environment free of sexual harassment and considers such harassment to be a major offense, which may result in disciplinary action.

Sexual harassment consists of sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual's education, academic status, or progress; (b) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of educational or academic decisions affecting the individual; (c) the conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; and/or (d) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the educational institution.

It is also unlawful to retaliate in any way against an individual who has articulated a good faith concern about sexual harassment against him/her or against another individual.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as:
  - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults and
  - Intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, or poking another's body
  
- Unwanted sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments, such as:
  - Sexually oriented gestures, notices, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience
  - Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an individual for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any individual to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or deferential treatment for rejecting sexual conduct
  - Subjecting or threats of subjecting a student to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making the student's academic performance more difficult because of the student's sex
  
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the educational environment, such as:
  - Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic or bringing or possessing any such material to read, display or view in the educational environment
  - Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the educational environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic, and
  - Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an individual by sex in an area of the educational environment (other than restrooms or similar rooms)

The illustrations of harassment and sexual harassment above are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of prohibited acts under this Policy.

### **Prohibited Bullying**

**“Bullying”** means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which may be deemed as sexual harassment, hate violence or creates an intimidating and/or hostile

educational environment, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
2. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
3. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
4. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by GPS.

Bullying may be, but is not limited to:

- a. *physical* (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing)
- b. *verbal* (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, threatening)
- c. *emotional* (spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, extorting, or intimidating).  
Bullying can occur face-to-face or in the online world
- d. *Cyberbullying* (see below)
- e. *An "electronic act"* (see below)

**“Cyberbullying”** is an electronic act that includes the transmission of harassing communication, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

**“Electronic Act”** means the creation and transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

1. A message, text, sound, video or image.
2. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
  - a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A “burn page” means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in the definition of “bullying,” above.
  - b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of “bullying,” above. “Credible impersonation” means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
  - c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of “bullying,” above. “False profile” means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile

using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.

3. An act of “Cyber sexual bullying” including, but not limited to:
  - a. The dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in definition of “bullying,” above. A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
  - b. “Cyber sexual bullying” does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
4. Notwithstanding the definitions of “bullying” and “electronic act” above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

## **Grievance Procedures**

### **Reporting**

All faculty and staff are expected to provide appropriate supervision to enforce standards of conduct and, if they observe or become aware of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, to intervene as soon as it is safe to do so, call for assistance, and report such incidents. The Board requires staff to follow the procedures in this Policy for reporting alleged acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

All other members of the school community, including parents/guardians, volunteers, visitors, who have witnessed such prohibited misconduct and students who have witnessed such prohibited misconduct or believe they have been subject to misconduct prohibited by this Policy are encouraged to immediately report any act that may be a violation of this policy to the Coordinator:

Growth Public Schools  
Audria Johnson, Executive Director  
9320 Tech Center Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95826  
[ajohnson@growthps.org](mailto:ajohnson@growthps.org)  
916-394-5007

Complaints regarding such misconduct may also be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

While submission of a written report is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to use the report form available at the front desk. However, oral reports shall also be considered official reports. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on anonymous information.

Students are expected to report all incidents of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, or other verbal or physical abuse. Any student who feels she/he is a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher,

counselor, principal, the Coordinator, or staff person so that she/he can get assistance in resolving the issue consistent with this Policy.

GPS acknowledges and respects every individual's rights to privacy. To that end, consistent with legal requirements, all reports shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process to the greatest extent possible. This includes keeping the identity of the reporter confidential, as appropriate, except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation and/or to resolve the issue, as determined by the Coordinator or administrative designee on a case-by-case basis.

GPS prohibits any form of retaliation against any reporter in the reporting process, including but not limited to a reporter's filing of a complaint or the reporting of instances of misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Such participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades or work assignments of the reporter.

All staff will receive sexual harassment training and/or instruction concerning sexual harassment as required by law.

### **Investigation**

Upon receipt of a report of misconduct prohibited by this Policy from a student, staff member, parent, volunteer, visitor, or affiliate of GPS, the Coordinator or designee will promptly initiate an investigation. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Coordinator or designee will notify the complainant of the outcome of the investigation. However, in no case may the Coordinator or designee reveal confidential information related to other students or employees, including the type and extent of discipline issued against such students or employees. Complaints shall be investigated and resolved within thirty (30) school days, unless circumstances reasonably require additional time. If the Coordinator, or designee determines that an investigation will take longer, he or she will inform the complainant and any other relevant parties and provide an approximate date when the investigation will be complete.

All records related to any investigation of complaints under this Policy will remain in a secure location in the front office of GPS.

In those instances when the complaint filed under this Policy also requires investigation under the Uniform Complaint Procedures, such investigation will be undertaken concurrently.

### **Appeal**

Should the Complainant find the Coordinator or designee's resolution unsatisfactory, she/he may within five (5) school days of the date of resolution, file an appeal with the Designated Appeals Committee. In such cases, at least three (3) certificated School employees who are unfamiliar with the case and who have been previously designated and trained for this purpose shall be assembled to conduct a confidential review of the Complainant's appeal and render a final disposition.

### **Consequences**

Students who engage in misconduct prohibited by this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, as outlined in the Student Discipline Policy of GPS.

**GPS CHARTER SCHOOL**

**TITLE IX, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, DISCRIMINATION & BULLYING COMPLAINT  
FORM**

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Alleged Incident(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: \_\_\_\_\_

List any witnesses that were present: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did the incident(s) occur? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e. specific statements; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements; what did you do to avoid the situation, etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I hereby authorize GPS to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I further understand providing false information in this regard could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

**To be completed by the Charter School:**

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Professional Boundaries: Staff/Student Interaction Policy**

GPS recognizes its responsibility to make and enforce all rules and regulations governing student and employee behavior to bring about the safest and most learning-conducive environment possible.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student.

For purposes of this policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to property.

For clarification purposes, the following examples are offered for direction and guidance of School personnel:

#### **A. Examples of PERMITTED actions (NOT corporal punishment)**

1. Stopping a student from fighting with another student;
2. Preventing a pupil from committing an act of vandalism;
3. Defending yourself from physical injury or assault by a student;
4. Forcing a pupil to give up a weapon or dangerous object;
5. Requiring an athletic team to participate in strenuous physical training activities designed to strengthen or condition team members or improve their coordination, agility, or physical skills;
6. Engaging in group calisthenics, team drills, or other physical education or voluntary recreational activities.

#### **B. Examples of PROHIBITED actions (corporal punishment)**

1. Hitting, shoving, pushing, or physically restraining a student as a means of control;
2. Making unruly students do push-ups, run laps, or perform other physical acts that cause pain or discomfort as a form of punishment;
3. Paddling, swatting, slapping, grabbing, pinching, kicking, or otherwise causing physical pain.

### **Acceptable and Unacceptable Staff/Student Behavior**

This policy is intended to guide all School faculty and staff in conducting themselves in a way that reflects the high standards of behavior and professionalism required of school employees and to specify the boundaries between students and staff.

Although this policy gives specific, clear direction, it is each staff member's obligation to avoid situations that could prompt suspicion by parents, students, colleagues, or school leaders. One viable standard that can be quickly applied, when you are unsure if certain conduct is acceptable, is to ask yourself, "Would I be engaged in this conduct if my family or colleagues were standing next to me?" For the purposes of this policy, the term "boundaries" is defined as acceptable professional behavior by staff members while interacting with a student. Trespassing the boundaries of a student/teacher relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust. Some activities may seem innocent from a staff member's perspective, but can be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from a student or parent point of view. The objective of the following lists of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between staff and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to, or may be perceived as, sexual misconduct. Staff must understand their own responsibility for ensuring that they do not cross the boundaries as written in this policy. Disagreeing with the wording or intent of the established boundaries will be considered irrelevant for

disciplinary purposes. Thus, it is crucial that all employees learn this policy thoroughly and apply the lists of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors to their daily activities.

Although sincere, competent interaction with students certainly fosters learning, student/staff interactions must have boundaries surrounding potential activities, locations and intentions.

### **Duty to Report Suspected Misconduct**

When any employee reasonably suspects or believes that another staff member may have crossed the boundaries specified in this policy, he or she must immediately report the matter to a school administrator. All reports shall be as confidential as possible under the circumstances. It is the duty of the administrator to investigate and thoroughly report the situation. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness or concern of student behavior that crosses boundaries or where a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse.

### **Examples of Specific Behaviors**

The following examples are not an exhaustive list:

#### *Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors (Violations of this Policy):*

- (a) Giving gifts to an individual student that are of a personal and intimate nature.
- (b) Kissing of any kind.
- (c) Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a private situation.
- (d) Intentionally being alone with a student away from the school.
- (e) Making or participating in sexually inappropriate comments.
- (f) Sexual jokes.
- (g) Seeking emotional involvement with a student for your benefit.
- (h) Listening to or telling stories that are sexually oriented.
- (i) Discussing inappropriate personal troubles or intimate issues with a student in an attempt to gain their support and understanding.
- (j) Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior.

#### *Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors without Parent and Supervisor Permission*

**(These behaviors should only be exercised when a staff member has parent and supervisor permission.)**

- (a) Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities.
- (b) Being alone in a room with a student at school with the door closed.
- (c) Allowing students in your home.

#### *Cautionary Staff/Student Behaviors*

**(These behaviors should only be exercised when a reasonable and prudent person, acting as an educator, is prevented from using better practice or behavior. Staff members should inform their supervisor of the circumstance and occurrence prior to or immediately after the occurrence)**

- (a) Remarks about the physical attributes or development of anyone.
- (b) Excessive attention toward a particular student.
- (c) Sending emails, text messages or letters to students if the content is not about school activities.

#### *Acceptable and Recommended Staff/Student Behaviors*

- (a) Getting parents' written consent for any after-school activity.
- (b) Obtaining formal approval to take students off school property for activities such as field trips or competitions.

- (c) Emails, text, phone and instant messages to students must be very professional and pertaining to school activities or classes (Communication should be limited to school technology).
- (d) Keeping the door open when alone with a student.
- (e) Keeping reasonable space between you and your students.
- (f) Stopping and correcting students if they cross your own personal boundaries.
- (g) Keeping parents informed when a significant issue develops about a student.
- (h) Keeping after-class discussions with a student professional and brief.
- (i) Asking for advice from fellow staff or administrators if you find yourself in a difficult situation related to boundaries.
- (j) Involving your supervisor if conflict arises with the student.
- (k) Informing the Principal about situations that have the potential to become more severe.
- (l) Making detailed notes about an incident that could evolve into a more serious situation later.
- (m) Recognizing the responsibility to stop unacceptable behavior of students or coworkers.
- (n) Asking another staff member to be present if you will be alone with any type of special needs student.
- (o) Asking another staff member to be present when you must be alone with a student after regular school hours.
- (p) Giving students praise and recognition without touching them.
- (q) Pats on the back, high fives and handshakes are acceptable.
- (r) Keeping your professional conduct a high priority.
- (s) Asking yourself if your actions are worth your job and career.

## **POLICY PROHIBITING UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, AND RETALIATION**

GPS is committed to providing a work and educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. GPS's policy prohibits unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation based upon: race, (which includes historically associated traits, such as hair styles and protective hair styles, e.g., braids, locks, and twists), color; gender (including gender identity and gender expression); sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and related medical conditions); religious creed (including religious dress and grooming practices); marital/registered domestic partner status; age (forty (40) and over); national origin or ancestry (including native language spoken); physical or mental disability (including HIV and AIDS); medical condition (including cancer and genetic characteristics); taking a leave of absence authorized by law; genetic information; sexual orientation; military and veteran status; or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws.

Employees, volunteers, unpaid interns, individuals in apprenticeship programs, and independent contractors shall not be harassed, or discriminated or retaliated against, based upon the characteristics noted above.

In addition, we prohibit abusive conduct/workplace bullying in the work environment. It is our mission to provide a professional work and learning environment free of harassment, discrimination and/or workplace bullying and that maintains equality, dignity, and respect for all. This policy protects all employees of the School as well as interns, volunteers, and potential employees (applicants). All employees of the School are required to abide by this policy, regardless of position or status, including supervisors, administration, and co-workers. In addition, this policy prohibits unlawful harassment by third parties, including students, parents, vendors or other third parties, who have workplace contact with our employees.

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business or field trips, meetings and business or school-related social events.

GPS does not condone and will not tolerate unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation on the part of any employee (including supervisors and managers) or third party (including independent contractors or other person with which the School does business). Supervisors and managers are to report any complaints of unlawful harassment to the Principal or designee.

When GPS receives allegations of unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, the Board (if a complaint is about the Principal) or the Principal or designee will conduct a fair, timely and thorough investigation that provides all parties an appropriate process and reaches reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected. The investigation will be handled in as confidential a manner as possible, although complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Complainants and witnesses shall not be subject to retaliation for making complaints in good faith or participating in an investigation. GPS is committed to remediating any instances where investigation findings demonstrate unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation has occurred.

### ***Prohibited Unlawful Harassment***

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments or slurs;
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement, or interfering with work because of sex, race or any other protected basis;
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment; or
- Disparate treatment based on any of the protected classes above.

### ***What is abusive conduct/workplace bullying?***

Conduct of an employee in the workplace that a reasonable person would find hostile, threatening, intimidating, humiliating and unrelated to an employer's legitimate business interests. Examples may include:

Use of derogatory remarks, insults and/or epithets

Verbal or physical conduct that sabotages or undermines a person's work performance that is threatening, humiliating or intimidating.

Bullying, gossip, profanity, abusive conduct and negative comments are destructive to our School culture, create false rumors, disrupt school operations and interfere with the privacy of others.

### ***What is Retaliation?***

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment, discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of such conduct is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

As used in this policy, "retaliation" means taking any adverse employment action against an employee because the employee engaged in protected activity pursuant to this policy. Protected activity may include, but is not necessarily limited to, reporting or assisting in reporting suspected violations of this policy, cooperating or participating in investigations or proceedings arising out of a violation of this policy, or engaging in any other activity protected by applicable law.

As used in this policy, an "adverse employment action" means conduct or an action that materially affects the terms and conditions of the employee's employment status or is reasonably likely to deter the employee from engaging in further protected activity. Adverse employment actions may include, but are not limited to, the following: demotion; suspension; reduction in pay; denial of a merit salary increase; failure to hire or consider for hire; refusing to promote or consider for promotion because of reporting a violation of this policy; harassing another employee for filing a complaint; denying employment opportunities because of making a complaint or for cooperating in an investigation; changing an employee's work assignments for identifying harassment or other forms of discrimination in the workplace; treating an employee differently such as denying an accommodation; not talking to an employee (the "cold shoulder") when otherwise required by job duties; or otherwise excluding the employee from job-related activities because of engagement in activities protected under this policy.

Any retaliatory adverse action because of a protected activity will not be tolerated. If an employee believes he/she has been subjected to, has witnessed, or has knowledge of retaliation in violation of this policy, please follow the complaint procedure outlined below.

### ***Prohibited Unlawful Sexual Harassment***

GPS is committed to providing a workplace free of sexual harassment and considers such harassment to be a major offense, which may result in disciplinary action, up to, and including dismissal, of the offending employee.

Sexual harassment consists of sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, regardless of whether or not the conduct is motivated by sexual desire, when: (1) submission to the conduct is either made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) an employment decision is based upon an individual's acceptance or rejection of that conduct; and/or (3) that conduct interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

It is also unlawful to retaliate in any way against an employee who has articulated a good faith concern about sexual harassment against him or her or against another individual.

All supervisors of staff will receive sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation training within six (6) months of their assumption of a supervisory position and will receive further training once every two (2) years thereafter. Such training will address all legally required topics, including information about the negative effects that abusive conduct has on both the victim of the conduct and others in the workplace, as well as methods to prevent abusive conduct undertaken with malice a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to an employer's legitimate business interests. Abusive conduct includes but is not limited to repeated infliction of verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults, and epithets, verbal or physical conduct that a reasonable person would find threatening, intimidating, or humiliating, or the gratuitous sabotage or undermining of a person's work performance. Supervisors shall also be trained on how to appropriately respond when the supervisor becomes aware that an employee is the target of unlawful harassment. Other staff will receive sexual harassment training and/or instruction concerning sexual harassment in the workplace as required by law.

Each employee has the responsibility to maintain a workplace free from any form of sexual harassment. Consequently, should any individual, in particular those with supervisory responsibilities, become aware of any conduct that may constitute sexual harassment or other prohibited behavior, immediate action should be taken to address such conduct. Any employee who believes they have been sexually harassed or has witnessed sexual harassment is encouraged to immediately report such harassment to the Principal. See Appendix A for the "Harassment/Discrimination/Retaliation Complaint Form." See Appendix B for the general "Internal Complaint Form."

***Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:***

Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as:

- Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults and
- Intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, or poking another's body.

Unwanted sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments, such as:

- Sexually oriented gestures, notices, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or disparate treatment for rejecting sexual conduct.
- Subjecting or threats of subjecting an employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making performance of the employee's job more difficult because of the employee's sex.

Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere at the workplace by employees, such as:

- Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic or bringing to work or possessing any such material to read, display or view at work;
- Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the work environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic; and
- Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an employee by sex in an area of the workplace (other than restrooms or similar rooms).

The illustrations of harassment and sexual harassment above are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of prohibited acts under this policy. Moreover, please note that while in most situations a personal relationship is a private matter, these relationships are not appropriate in a professional setting, particularly where one of the parties has management or supervisory responsibilities. As such, consensual relationships in the workplace may violate GPS policy.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

In light of the explosive growth and popularity of social media technology in today's society, GPSI has developed the following policy to establish rules and guidelines regarding the appropriate use of social media and internet use by students on school owned equipment, networks, and/or social media sites. This policy applies to situations when you: (1) make a post to a social media platform that is related to the School; (2) engage in social media activities during school hours; (3) use GPS equipment or resources while engaging in social media activities; (4) use your GPS e-mail address to make a post to a social media platform; (5) post in a manner that reveals your affiliation with the school; or (6) interact with other school students or school employees on the internet and/or on social media sites.

For the purposes of this policy, the phrases

“Social media” refers to the use of a website or other electronic application to connect with other people, including; but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Snap Chat, as well as related web-based media, such as blogs, wikis, and any other form of user-generated media or web-based discussion forums.

“Network” refers to two or more computer systems linked to allow communication. GPS’s network connects staff and students to provide data communications, such as e-mail, file sharing, and internet access.

“Internet” refers to a global computer network.

This policy is intended to supplement, not replace, GPS’s other policies, rules, and standards of conduct. For example, GPS policies on confidentiality, use of school equipment, harassment, and bullying.

You are required to comply with all school policies whenever your social media activities may involve or implicate GPS in any way, including, but not limited to, the policies contained in the Student/Parent handbook.

### **Standards of Conduct**

Students and parents are required to comply with the following rules and guidelines when participating in the use of school owned equipment, network resources and/or social media activities that are governed by this policy:

- Do not post any information or engage in any social media activity that may violate applicable local, state, or federal laws or regulations.
- Do not engage in any discriminatory, harassing, bullying or retaliatory behavior in violation of school policy.
- Respect copyright, fair use, and financial disclosure rules and regulations.
- Identify all copyrighted or borrowed material with proper citations and/or links.
- Do not post confidential information (as defined in the school handbook) about GPS, its employees, its parents or its students on school social media. Remember that most student information is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, including any and all information that might identify the

student. Publicizing student work and accomplishments is permitted only if appropriate consents are obtained.

- Students may not engage in social media activities during school hours unless it is part of a classroom activity or assignment and authorized by a teacher or school administration.
- Do not use your school-authorized e-mail address to register on social media websites, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal use.
- When posting about fellow students, parents, or other people who work on behalf of GPS, avoid posting statements, photographs, video, or audio that could be reasonably viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, intimidating, harassment and/or bullying.
- Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it immediately. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about the school employees, fellow students, parents, vendors, customers, suppliers, and people working on behalf of the School or its competitors.
- Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for GPS (unless authorized to do so). If you publish social media content that may be related to your work or subjects associated with GPS, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of GPS and that your views do not represent those of the school employees, fellow students, parents, vendors, customers, suppliers, or other people working on behalf of GPS. It is best to use a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of GPS."
- You may not engage in advertisement, solicitations, commercial ventures, or political lobbying.

School Administration reserves the right to monitor school related social media accounts, internet/intranet, e-mail, and networked application usage. No student or parent should have any expectation of privacy when using school owned equipment, network resources and/or participating in social media activities. School Administration reserves the right to inspect any and all files on school computers or school servers connected to school networks and to take custody and possession of those files and computers.

### **Creating and Using School Social Media**

Students and parents are only permitted to communicate and connect with school employees regarding school-related matters on social media that has been set-up and/or operated by GPS. All other communications with school employees regarding school-related matters on non-school or personal social media may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

Students and parents are strictly prohibited from creating social media pages that use the school name, logo and/or any other copyright material without prior written consent from Growth Public School.

The School Administration and/or designee, are responsible for approving requests for GPS social media, monitoring GPS social media for inappropriate content, and maintaining the social media account information (including, but not limited to, username and password). School Administration has final approval over all content and reserves the right to remove inappropriate or irrelevant post/comments/messages from its social

media pages or close the social media accounts, with or without notice. Any inappropriate communications shall result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or permanent removal of access from the page.

## **Electronic Email**

Users of school electronic mail systems should not consider electronic communication to be either private or secure; such communications are subject to review by authorized GPS personnel and may be subject to review by the public under the Public Records Act. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities must be reported to appropriate authorities. Other conditions for use include, but are not limited to:

- Individuals are to identify themselves accurately and honestly in e-mail communications.
- E-mail account names and/or addresses may not be altered to impersonate another individual or to create a false identity.
- GPS retains the copyright to any material deemed to be school data.

## **Access**

Students and parents are reminded that GPS's various electronic communications systems, including, but not limited to, its electronic devices, computers, telephones, email accounts, video conference, voice mail, facsimiles, internal and external networks, computers, cell phones, smart phones, iPads, tablets, and other similar devices, are the property of GPS. All communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are considered school records and are property of the school.

As a result, GPS may monitor its students' and parents' use of these electronic communication systems, including social media activities. GPS may monitor such activities randomly, periodically, and/or in situations when there is reason to believe that someone associated with the school has engaged in a violation of this, or any other, school policy. As a result, students and parents do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in their use of or access to GPS's various electronic communications systems.

## **Security**

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially in a system with many users. If any user identifies a security problem with school systems, he/she must notify an administrator either in person or in writing, or via the network. Users should not demonstrate the problem to other users. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied network access. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Illicitly gaining entry, or "hacking" into a computer system or obtaining account passwords.
- Intentionally creating or distributing a computer virus.
- Using GPS systems or equipment to knowingly disable or overload any computer system or network or to circumvent the security of a computer system.
- Knowingly bypassing a school "firewall" used for blocking inappropriate internet sites and for security screening.

## **Discipline**

Students who are in violation of this Social Media Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate suspension.

Parents who are in violation of this Social Media Policy may be prohibited from using school equipment or permanently removed from the School's social media network.

## **Retaliation Is Prohibited**

GPS prohibits retaliation against any student, school employee and/or parent for reporting a possible violation of this policy or for cooperating in an investigation of a potential violation of this policy. Any student or parent who retaliates against another student, parent and/or employee for reporting a possible violation of this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or criminal charges.

## **Questions**

In the event you have any questions about a particular social media activity that may involve or implicate GPS, or that may violate this policy, please contact School Administration. Social media is in a state of constant evolution, and the school recognizes that there will likely be events or issues that are not addressed in these guidelines. Thus, each student and parent is responsible for using good judgment and seeking clarification or authorization prior to engaging in social media activities that may implicate this policy.