



GPA Student Interaction Policy

GPA prohibits the following:

- Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, taunting, teasing, racial slurs, verbal harassment and threatening or obscene gestures
- Treating someone unkindly or aggressively.
- Getting someone else to act unkind or aggressive towards someone for you.
- Spreading rumors, deliberate exclusion, gossip with intent to cause harm or distress,
- Using technology to spread hurtful messages, posting comments, videos, pictures or images of others without their consent. Harassing or intimidating students via social media.
- Allowing someone to be treated unkindly or aggressively without taking any action. You are witness to these behaviors and do not report the incident or make an attempt to resolve the situation.

Whenever possible Restorative Practices will be used to create a dialogue leading to understanding and action to set things right and repair and restore relationships.

Students that violate the Student Interaction policy will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for appropriate action. This may include, but is not limited to mediation, participating in a behavioral learning lesson, counseling on the effects of unkind and aggressive behavior, and parent contact.

Actions ALL Parents Can Take to Promote Positive Student Interactions

Every individual has the right to a safe and healthy learning environment. The right to grow and learn without encountering harassment about race, gender, religion, or ethnicity. The right to be free from harassment about appearance, dress, learning style, interests, first language, or sexual preference. GPA promotes positive student interactions at all times.

The latest research shows that **more than half of all children are, at least on occasion, directly involved in bullying as a perpetrator, victim, or both.** And many of those who are not directly involved witness others being bullied on a regular basis. No child is immune - kids of every race, gender, grade and socio-economic sector are impacted. **But it doesn't have to be this way.** As parents you have the power to help GPA promote positive student interactions. Ten actions **you** can take to help address positive peer interactions are:

1. **Talk with and listen to your kids - everyday.** Research shows that parents are often the last to know when their child has bullied or been bullied. You can encourage your children to buck that trend by engaging in frequent conversations about their social lives. Spend a few minutes every day asking open ended questions about who they spend time with at school, online, and in the neighborhood, what they do in between classes and, who they have lunch with, or what happens on the way to and from school. If your children feel comfortable talking to you about their peers *before* they're involved in a bullying event, they'll be much more likely to get you involved *after*.
2. **Spend time at GPA.** Research shows that 67% of bullying happens when adults are not present. Visit your child's virtual classroom. Whether you can volunteer once a week or once a month, you can make a real difference just by being present.
3. **Be a good example of kindness and leadership.** Your kids learn a lot about power relationships from watching you. You have a great opportunity to model effective communication techniques.
4. **Learn the signs.** Most children don't tell anyone (especially adults) that they've been bullied. It is therefore important for parents and teachers to learn to recognize possible signs of being victimized such as frequent loss of personal belongings, complaints of headaches or stomach aches, avoiding school activities, getting to school very late or very early. If you suspect that your child is being bullied, contact the Office of Student Conduct at (619) 263-2171 ext. 3030, talk with the child's teacher, find ways to observe

their peer interactions to determine whether or not your suspicions might be correct. Talk directly to your child about the situation.

5. **Create healthy communication habits early.** Help develop anti-bullying and anti-victimization habits. Coach your children what *not* to do - hitting, pushing, teasing, being mean to others. Help your child to focus on how such actions might feel to the child on the receiving end (e.g., “How do you think you would feel if that happened to you?”). Such strategies can enhance empathy for others. Equally if not more important, teach your children what to *do* -- kindness, and empathy are critical skills for good peer relations.
6. **Establish household rules about how your child should interact with others.** Your children need to hear from you explicitly that it’s not acceptable, ok, or tolerable for them to bully, to be bullied, or to stand by and just watch other kids be bullied. Make sure they know that if they are bullied physically, verbally, or socially (at school, by a sibling, in your neighborhood, or online) it’s safe and important for them to tell you about it and that you will help.
7. **Teach your child how to be a good witness.** Research shows that kids who witness bullying feel powerless and seldom intervene. However, kids who take action can have a powerful and positive effect on the situation. Although it’s never a child’s responsibility to put him or herself in danger, children can help each other by providing support to the victim, not giving extra attention to the bully, and/or reporting what they witnessed to an adult.
8. **Teach your child about cyber bullying.** Children often do not realize what cyberbullying is. Cyber bullying is the use of technology to send mean, rude, vulgar, or threatening messages or images; posting sensitive private information about another person; creating and posting fake accounts to make someone look bad or spread rumors; and intentionally excluding someone from an online group. These acts are as harmful as physical violence and must not be tolerated. We know from research that the more time a teen spends online, the more likely they will be cyber bullied – so limit online time.
9. **Spread the word that bullying should not be an acceptable part of childhood.** Some adults hesitate to act when they observe or hear about bullying because they think of bullying as a typical phase of childhood that must be endured. It is important for all adults to understand that bullying does not have to be a “normal” part of childhood. All forms of bullying are harmful to the perpetrator, the victim, and to witnesses and the effects last well into adulthood (and can include depression, anxiety, substance abuse, family violence and criminal behavior). Efforts to effectively address bullying require the collaboration of school, home, and community.

10. **Help GPA address bullying effectively.** Whether your children have been bullied or not, you should know what our school is doing to address bullying.

- Social Skills Training
- Restorative Practices
- Student Interaction Policy with Graduated Interventions
- Call Me By Name
- Mediation, Conflict Resolution
- College Class
- Parent Meetings
- Tunnel of Bullying
- Eagle Hotline (619) 263-2171 ext. 2227
- eaglemail@gomperscharter.org

GPA has come a long way in creating a safe and healthy environment for all children. Together, we can go even further with our mission to create a college preparatory culture.