FY27 HATE-BIAS INCIDENTS

RESPONDING PROCEDURES

Founded on the principles of Board of Education Policy ACA: Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) considers a hate or bias motivated incident to be any disruptive conduct (oral, written, graphic, physical, or electronic communication) that includes INTENTIONAL DISCRIMINATORY BEHAVIOR based on personal characteristics; race, ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, immigration status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family/parental status, marital status, age, physical or mental disability, poverty and socioeconomic status, language, or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations

Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated. It hinders the school district's mission to serve all students and staff and to promote equity, inclusion, and diversity. The Board recognizes that equity involves more than legal compliance; it requires proactive efforts to address implicit biases and structural barriers that have led to exclusion. Our classrooms remain spaces where students will learn about diverse perspectives and viewpoints, aligning with our core values of inclusivity and acceptance. Any allegation of hate-bias is unique and will be addressed through the lens of intent and context.

MCPS investigates all allegations of hate-bias that: a) occur on school property (or bus), at a school- sponsored activity or event, or b) substantially disrupt the orderly operation of a school learning environment. Examples include, but not limited to, hate speech; using a racial, ethnic, or other slur; displaying hateful or racist symbols, flags, or drawings; mocking a disability; or telling offensive "jokes" about someone's identity.

STEPS FOR HATE-BIAS INCIDENTS:

☐ ***1.*** **INCIDENT / COMPLAINT:** Student, staff member, parent/guardian, or bystander makes verbal or written report to any staff member/administrator. Complete MCPS Form 226-5, Hate Bias Incident Reporting Form and submit to principal/designee. *(Staff members will assist student/parent/guardian if they cannot complete the form).*

☐ **2. INQUIRY / FACT-FINDING:** School principal/designee conducts an initial assessment of allegation/ incident to determine context; the degree (scope and scale) of intent, risk, threat, or targeted violence posed by an individual or group. Consultation with central support team is recommended to determine incident level (Red, Orange, Yellow). The Behavioral Threat Assessment Team may be implemented based on the situation.

Yellow

Harmful but not motivated by Hate-Bias

Consultation is recommended

Fact Finding: Incident is hurtful, unwelcoming, disruptive, inappropriate, but not motivated by hate or bias.

Parents Contacted of involved students

Safety Plan and Supportive Measures

Disciplinary Action align with Student Code of Conduct

Record Keeping: . School documents the incident in Synergy and uploads all supporting documents.

Orange

Hate-Bias, non-criminal

Consultation highly recommended

Fact Finding: Actions are motivated by hate-bias, but no criminal elements. The scope, impact, dictate a serious incident.

Not all Orange incidents are called into the police.

Call DSLI to report the serious incident

Parents Contacted of involved students

Safety Plan and Supportive Measures

Disciplinary Action align with Student Code of Conduct

Record Keeping: Upload Form 226-5 in Synergy with all supporting documents.

Red

Hate-Bias with possible criminal elements

Consultation is required

Fact Finding: It is determined that the actions are motivated by hate-bias and potentially criminal in nature. The incident has a **wide-ranging scope and impact.**

Police Report: Incidents that may constitute a crime, schools must report to the police.

Call DSLI to report the serious incident

BTAT when applicable

Parents Contacted of involved students

Safety Plan and Supportive Measures

Disciplinary Action align with Student Code of Conduct

Communication is determined in consult with central office.

Record Keeping: Upload Form 226-5 in Synergy with all supporting documents.

☐ 3. **MCPD POLICE CONTACTED:** Incidents determined to be hate-bias (Levels Red) must be reported to the **Emergency Communications Center (ECC) at 240-683-1600**. **Call 911 I imminent danger exists.**

☐ 4. **INCIDENT REPORTED TO DSLI:** Once the incident has been assessed and level determined, the principal/designee will call in all **Level Red** and **Level Orange** incidents to the Division of School Leadership and Improvement (DSLI).
Region 1&2: 240-740-5137, Region 3&4: 240-740-5138, Region 5&6: 240-740-5136.
DSLI will record the serious incident in Synergy per regulation COB-RA.
(*Only Level Red and Level Orange incidents of hate-bias will be recorded as serious incidents)*

☐ 5. **INVESTIGATION BY PRINCIPAL/DESIGNEE:** Within two days of a filed complaint the principal or designee must investigate. If police are involved, school admin should hold until the police portion of the investigation is complete, before finalizing the school investigation.

☐ 6. **SUPPORTIVE MEASURES PLAN:** As soon as students have been identified (alleged victims and/or offenders), a safety/well-being plan should be developed and implemented, and may include schedule changes, contact restrictions, counseling services, medical support, community resources, etc.

☐ 7. **PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT:** After consulting with *central support team*, the school principal/designee will determine next steps for outreach and potential notification.

The level of threat and risk of the incident will determine the need/type of communication.

a. If victim/offender is identified, the school principal and/or designee will contact the parents/guardians involved within 24 hours of completing the investigation.
b. PTA President, cluster feeder schools, and the community will be informed of all Level Red incidents, providing details in a timely, transparent manner, while maintaining confidentiality of those involved. Suggested resources will also be included when possible.
Level Orange incidents may also include a letter to the community as appropriate.
c. If/When offender(s) have been identified, disciplinary measures will be imposed per the Student Code of Conduct and a meeting will be scheduled with the student and parent/guardian to discuss future behavioral expectations.

☐ 8. **RECORD KEEPING: PRINCIPAL/DESIGNEE** will update and upload MCPS Form 226-5 in Synergy.

☐ 9. **HATE-BIAS RESPONSIVE, RESTORATIVE, & PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS**:
a. The Equity Unit will assist school leadership in determining next steps with staff and student professional development and training options.
b. The Office of Student Support and Attendance Services (SSAS) will assess the situation to determine support needed and the timeline for such supports.
(PPWs, Counselors, School Psychologists, Restorative Approaches Specialists, Social Workers).
c. MCPS Student Code of Conduct will assist school administration in determining student discipline measures.
d. Special interest and external support groups should be considered to assist in the planning of school and/or community education, response, reflection where appropriate.

THE SCHOOL CHECKLIST

- ☐ Upon receiving an allegation, conduct an inquiry/fact-finding process to determine hate-bias incident level, based on the tiered level of response. Consultation with the DSLI Director/Student Conduct and Appeals is required.
- ☐ **Yellow Incident:** Schools will create a Student Incident Report in Synergy and upload all supporting documents.
- ☐ **Orange Incident**: School calls DSLI. DSLI will create an incident number and document it as a serious incident. The school will upload all supporting documents and close out the incident.
- ☐ **Red Incidents:** School calls DSLI and Emergency Communications Center (MCPD) 240-683-1600. DSLI will create an incident number and document it as a serious incident. Schools will conduct an investigation, if/when MCPD is completed or not taking the case, and will upload all supporting documents and close out the incident.
- ☐ Develop and implement a Supportive Measures Plan for identifying those harmed and those committing harm (including parent involvement). Document Supportive Measure Plan in Synergy.
- ☐ Draft community letter (Level Red) **with** central support team for distribution.
- ☐ Implement disciplinary action in alignment with the Student Code of Conduct.
- ☐ Schedule and conduct meetings with students and parents/guardians to discuss implications and future expectations.
- ☐ Complete the "Hate-Bias Response Form" and upload MCPS Form 226-5 in Synergy under the Incident # (connected to the student offender).
- ☐ Begin Responsive/Healing Process, considering support from the Department of Systemwide Equity and external partners.

REFERENCES: MCPS Regulation JHF-RA, Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation; Board Policy ACA, Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency; MCPS Regulation JFA-RA, Student Rights and Responsibilities, MCPS Regulation COB-RA, Serious Incidents

Need Help? Contact ***Student Conduct and Appeals*** at **240-740-3215** or SWC@mcpsmd.org