

August 2015

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In compliance with the *Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005*, all school systems in Maryland are required to develop a system for reporting and investigating instances of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. School systems must provide an opportunity for students, staff, parents, or close adult relatives of students to report to the student's school an incident of bullying, harassment or intimidation. In 2008, the Maryland General Assembly directed the Maryland State Board of Education to develop and adopt a model policy prohibiting bullying, harassment, or intimidation in schools. This model policy has been completed and each local school system in the state has been directed to develop a Bullying Policy using the model policy as a guide.

The policy on bullying for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) can be found using the following link: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/policy/pdf/jhf.pdf>. To ensure compliance with the MCPS bullying policy and with the *Safe School Reporting Act of 2005* each school principal is required to send home the reporting procedures for instances of bullying, harassment, or intimidation along with the attached MCPS *Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Form*.

If a bullying, harassment or intimidation incident occurs, the following procedure will be implemented:

- The student notifies a teacher, counselor, staff member, principal, parent or close adult relative.
- The notified adult completes the *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form*, MCPS form 230-35.
- The principal or principal's designee will promptly investigate and address the incident.

At Germantown Elementary School we have school wide anti-bullying programs. Students are taught to identify bullying behaviors and how to deal with them whether they are a victim or see someone else being bullied. Programs we have in place include: Peacemakers (students trained in conflict resolution by Mrs. Butler to mediate during recess), Take a Stand Tuesday (for recognizing students who stand up for others who are being bullied), and classroom counseling lessons focused on friendship skills, conflict resolution and anti-bullying strategies. All staff have been trained on how to recognize and deal with bullying situations. Please see the attached report form which can be used if your child is a victim of bullying, harassment or intimidation or if you observe these behaviors occurring.

Please feel free to contact Ms. Bryant, Principal, or Mrs. Butler, School Counselor, if you have any questions or concerns at 301-353-8050.

Sincerely,

Amy D. Bryant
Principal

Jennifer Butler
Counselor