BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICIES

Every Highpoint Academy student and employee have the right right to a peaceful and non-threatening experience where they feel safe at all times. We have "ZERO-TOLERANCE" for any kind of bullying or harassment.

The term **"Harassment"** means any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gestures, destruction of school property, inappropriate use of data or computer software programs, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or employee that:

1. *Places any student or employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;*
2. *Has the effect of potentially interfering with a student's educational performance, emotional growth, psychological development, social development and/or opportunities or benefits;*
3. *Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.*

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic or other physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, creed, citizenship, age or disability. The term also includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, offensive touching, and other verbal, graphic or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Violation of this Policy by either an Employee or a student will subject them to disciplinary action that may include immediate discharge, expulsion or criminal charges where applicable.

The term **"Bullying"** means inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more student and may involve, but is not limited to: teasing, racial slurs, ridicule, social exclusion, threat intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, sexual, religious or racial harassment, public humiliation or destruction of property. Cyber-bullying or bullying/harassment that takes place outside school premises where the bullying/harassment affects a student enrolled at the school, will be treated in the same manner.

Bullying and Harassment also include all forms of hazing, retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. For example, reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.

Bullying and Harassment also include perpetuation of conduct by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass or cause physical harm to a student or employee by incitement or coercion; accessing or knowingly causing or providing access to data through a computer, computer system or computer network within the scope of the school, or; acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

Once a complaint is received where someone is identified as a harasser or bully, the following will take place:

- The incident will be documented in detail and a member of the Administration will be immediately informed.
- The incident will be investigated thoroughly. The alleged accuser, the alleged victim, and any identified witnesses, will be interviewed separately by a member of the Administration.
- Two or more members of the Administration will interview the person being accused of bullying/harassment and document their side of the story in writing. A grievance procedure will commence. Results of the inquiry will determine the disciplinary action(s) that are deemed appropriate, depending on whether the accused is an employee or a student.
- In accusations against students, depending on the severity of the accusation, Parents may be contacted. Parents are expected to cooperate fully with the investigation. All claims will be thoroughly investigated and documented accordingly. The Administration will have full authority to determine consequences.

Students are instructed to immediately report to a member of our school's Faculty or Administration any incidents of harassment, bullying or abuse of any kind. Highpoint's Faculty and Staff Members are required by law to report allegations of physical or sexual abuse to governmental authorities and to abide by all school policies and laws regarding Ethics of Professional Conduct.