



AMERICAN
FARM SCHOOL
Thessaloniki Greece

ANTI-BULLYING and HARASSMENT POLICY

General Policy Statement

The American Farm School (AFS) at all its levels—pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, primary school, secondary school, college, and staff—is committed to maintaining a community that benefits everyone. Bullying, as well as any other form of harassment, including sexual harassment, undermines community and is therefore unacceptable. This statement of anti-bullying / anti-harassment policy and procedures aims to define what bullying / harassment is and to specify how the institution will respond to infractions.

What Bullying Is

Bullying is a form of harassment. It consists of words or actions that are deliberately meant to cause physical, mental, or emotional harm.

Bullying may be verbal, written, photographic, physical, or a combination of these modes whether conveyed directly or via electronic means.

Examples of verbal bullying: name-calling, rude remarks, offensive jokes, offensive teasing, intimidation, spreading of rumors.

Examples of written and photographic bullying: hurtful notes handed around, graffiti, offensive photographs distributed without permission in order to create embarrassment.

Examples of physical bullying: hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, physical annoyances such as poking, pinching, hair pulling, damaging of personal property, throwing things in order to upset someone.

Sexual harassment

Another form of harassment with which this policy is concerned is sexual harassment, which may be verbal, written, photographic, and/or physical, as well. Sexual harassment takes sexuality and perverts it into an instrument of power rather than creativity and love, turning it into aggression and thereby undermining the peaceful community that is the School's goal.

Examples: touching or brushing against another in a sexual way, sexually oriented jokes, drawings of someone's body, using rude names, unwanted invitations of a sexual nature, asking intrusive questions, making sexual connotations, inappropriate staring meant to cause discomfort.

Taking measure to protect children and teenagers from sexual abuse

The sexual abuse and exploitation of children by adults is a widespread problem worldwide. Sexual abuse in childhood causes both short- and long-term harm to the victim and to society at large.

In addition to its academic units, AFS operates a working farm, a campus store open to the public, and it conducts adult education programs, holds summer camps for children, and it hosts a wide variety of public events. There are high school and college dormitories, as well as housing on campus for employees and their families.

Because of the above mentioned complexity, AFS takes extra steps to protect the children and teenagers in its care from would-be abusers, be they employees, adult students and trainees, visitors, or intruders.

Measures include awareness raising campaigns, various levels of security in different parts of the campus, thorough background checks of all employees, an easy-to-understand and follow procedure for reporting misconduct, and an immediate and effective response to all reports.

How the Institution Will Respond to Infractions

The American Farm School will investigate all allegations of bullying / harassment in a prompt and confidential manner, protecting the privacy and rights of both the accuser and the accused, and it will designate appropriate corrective action when warranted. Retaliation against a complainant is prohibited and may itself be the cause of corrective action. Although corrective action may be designated, the School's primary aim, responding to its hope to reduce future occurrences, will always be to enable everyone concerned to understand why bullying, as well as any form of harassment, is inappropriate for a community such as ours.

Once a case of misconduct is reported by the victim or by a third party who witnesses or learns about the incident, the recipient of the complaint immediately informs the highest ranking member of the relevant department. In the event the victim is a student or a faculty member of an academic unit, the incident is reported to the Principal or Dean of the School. In the event the victim is a non-academic staff member, the report should be made to the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer (CFAO). These officials serve as Compliance Officers and report the case to the President of the Institution. The Chair of the corresponding Trustee Committee (Higher or Secondary/Primary Education or Executive Committee) is copied. The President of the Institution forms an ad hoc Compliance Committee to investigate the reported incident and oversee the implementation of the policy. The Committee is comprised of at least three members: the Human Resources Officer, the Institution's Legal Counsel and the highest ranking officer (Principal or Dean) of the relevant Academic Department or, in the case that the victim is a non-academic staff member, the CFAO.

All reports are treated with confidentiality and investigated thoroughly. Investigations are prompt, sensitively handled, and fair to all parties. AFS will respond to the greatest extent possible to reports of harassment brought anonymously. Any member of the AFS community found to have engaged in misconduct will, in compliance with this policy, be subject to disciplinary action that may lead to dismissal or expulsion from the institution. Members of faculty or staff who fail to report a complaint will also be subject to disciplinary action. The policy also provides for the protection of those who report an incident of harassment or abuse, or who participate in a relevant investigation or resolution of an incident.

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