It is the policy of The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics that no member of the NCSSM community may engage in speech or conduct that is defined below as student harassment. All students are guaranteed the right to live and learn in an environment free from harassment and retaliation while enrolled at NCSSM.

NCSSM is committed to equality of opportunity and the maintenance of an environment free of any harassing conduct on the basis of race; color; age; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; gender-identity; socioeconomic status; academic status; sexual orientation; social, mental and physical ability; physical appearance; social, mental, psychological, physical, developmental or sensory disability; or other personal characteristics.

Any employee who knows of situations involving harassment has an obligation to report, and any student who knows of situations involving harassment is encouraged to report, those circumstances to the Vice Chancellor for Student Life. Any student engaging in such conduct will be appropriately disciplined, up to and including dismissal. Any reported cases will be reviewed for possible referral to appropriate legal authorities. A false accusation is considered misconduct and may result in appropriate disciplinary action.

This policy shall be placed in the NCSSM Student Handbook. The Vice Chancellor for Student Life, or designee, will inform new students of the policy during orientation.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this policy:

**Discrimination** is adverse treatment of a person on the basis of that person’s race; color; age; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; gender-identity; socioeconomic status; academic status; sexual orientation; social, mental and physical ability; physical appearance; social, mental, psychological, physical, developmental or sensory disability; or other personal characteristics.

**Harassment** occurs when discrimination unreasonably interferes with that individual’s academic or residential performance and/or creates a hostile educational or residential environment for that individual, including affecting his/her personal safety or participation in school activities. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

**Hostile Environment** is an environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, hostile or offensive.
**Sexual Harassment** is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include conduct such as touching of a sexual nature; making sexual comments, jokes, or gestures; writing graffiti or displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, or written materials; calling students sexually charged names; spreading sexual rumors; rating students on sexual activity or performance; or circulating, showing, or creating e-mails or Web sites of a sexual nature.

When the harassment is of a sexual nature it should be reported to the Vice Chancellor for Student Life or to the Assistant Director of Student Services, who serves as the Title IX Coordinator for the students at NCSSM.

**Hazing** refers to any activity expected of an individual joining a group (or seeking to maintain full status in a group) that subjects the person to humiliation, degradation or the risk of emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

**Bullying** is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, that places a student in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property, or creates a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. Bullying maybe discriminatory or harassing in nature.

**Cyber-bullying** is when a student is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another student using the Internet, mobile phones, or other interactive and digital technologies.

**Retaliation** is defined as adverse treatment taken against individuals exercising their rights under the harassment policy. Retaliation against an individual who in good faith utilizes the reporting procedures included in this policy and/or participates in any investigation related to an allegation of prohibited harassment, bullying, hazing, cyber-bullying or discrimination is expressly prohibited and will result in disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal.

**REPORTING**
Any employee who learns of situations involving student discrimination, harassment, hazing, bullying, cyber-bullying has an obligation to report those circumstances to the Vice Chancellor for Student Life or designee. Any employee who learns of situations involving allegations of sexual harassment must promptly report such allegations to the Vice Chancellor for Student Life or the Assistant Director of Student Services, who serves as the Title IX Coordinator for the students at NCSSM. Any student who knows of situations involving harassment is encouraged to report the incident to any adult member of the NCSSM community. Any person associated with NCSSM engaging in such conduct will be appropriately disciplined, which could result in dismissal for misconduct. Any reported cases will be reviewed for possible referral to the appropriate legal authorities. A false accusation is considered misconduct and may result in appropriate disciplinary action.

**VIOLATIONS**
Violations of this policy are defined as Level III offenses under the NCSSM Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
May 28, 1999
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