

## CASA ESPERANZA MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL

### HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

It is the priority of Casa Esperanza Montessori Charter School (“CEMCS”) to provide each and every student at CEMCS with a safe, orderly and caring learning environment. To this end, CEMCS specifically prohibits bullying and harassment under any circumstances. This policy is in addition to CEMCS’s Sexual Harassment policy.

Harassment means any offensive verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity. Prohibited conduct may include, *but is not limited to*, abusive jokes, insults, slurs, name-calling, threats, bullying, sexual harassment or intimidation.

Harassment of students is prohibited at all levels: between students, between employees and students, or between non-employees and students. Any student who believes that he or she has been harassed or bullied in violation of this policy should report such behavior immediately to a teacher, counselor or administrator at CEMCS. A school employee who is notified of or otherwise becomes aware of conduct which may violate this policy shall report the matter to the Head of School.

All complaints of harassment shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the Head of School and appropriate action shall be taken. The actions taken should be reasonably calculated to end any harassment or bullying, eliminate a hostile environment if one has been created, and prevent harassment from occurring again. Violations shall be deemed to be serious disciplinary infractions and may include long-term suspension or expulsion.

CEMCS specifically prohibits retaliation against any individual who makes a complaint or reports an incident of harassment or bullying or who participates in an investigation or grievance proceeding initiated under this policy. Such retaliation is against the law and is prohibited by this policy.

If at any time during the investigation the principal receives information alleging the harassment or bullying was based on sex or gender, the Head of School shall notify the Title IX Coordinator and any other appropriate person as required by law or by CEMCS policy.

Nothing in this policy precludes CEMCS or the school system from taking disciplinary action against a student, teacher, employee or non-employee where the evidence does not establish harassment but the conduct otherwise fails to satisfy CEMCS’s high expectations for appropriate conduct.

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ADOPTED:     October 25, 2005