



YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

I. PURPOSE

Utopian Academy for the Arts Network is committed to providing every student with a safe, supportive, respectful, and violence-free learning environment.

The purpose of this Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Plan is to establish a comprehensive network-wide framework for:

- Preventing youth violence before it occurs;
- Identifying students who may be at risk of harming themselves or others;
- Addressing bullying, fighting, threats, intimidation, harassment, and other aggressive behaviors;
- Providing students with appropriate intervention, support, and resources;
- Establishing clear reporting and response procedures;
- Promoting positive relationships between students, families, and school employees;
- Maintaining safe school environments; and
- Coordinating with parents/guardians, mental health professionals, law enforcement, and community partners when appropriate.

Utopian Academy for the Arts Network recognizes that youth violence is preventable and that effective prevention requires a coordinated effort involving students, families, educators, administrators, school safety personnel, and community partners.



II. POLICY STATEMENT

Utopian Academy for the Arts Network has **zero tolerance for acts of violence, threats of violence, intimidation, bullying, harassment, weapons violations, or behavior intended to cause physical or emotional harm** to another person.

At the same time, Utopian Academy recognizes that prevention is more effective than simply responding after an incident occurs. The Network will therefore use prevention, early identification, student support, behavioral intervention, threat assessment, restorative approaches when appropriate, and disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and applicable law.

Nothing in this plan limits the authority of school administrators to take immediate action when necessary to protect students, employees, or visitors.

III. SCOPE

This plan applies to behavior occurring:

- On school property;
- During the school day;
- During transportation to or from school;
- At school-sponsored activities and athletic events;
- During field trips and extracurricular activities;
- At school-sponsored events held off campus;
- In school parking areas and other school-controlled locations;



- Through electronic communication or social media when the conduct substantially affects the school environment or involves threats toward members of the school community; and
- In other circumstances permitted by applicable law and school policy.

IV. DEFINITION OF YOUTH VIOLENCE

For purposes of this plan, youth violence includes, but is not limited to:

1. Physical fighting;
2. Assault or attempted assault;
3. Threats to harm another person;
4. Intimidation;
5. Bullying or cyberbullying;
6. Harassment;
7. Hazing;
8. Gang-related activity;
9. Weapon possession or use;
10. Encouraging or organizing violence;
11. Making or sharing violent threats;
12. Targeting another student for retaliation;
13. Extortion or coercion;
14. Sexual violence;
15. Deliberate destruction of property intended to intimidate or harm;
16. Online threats directed toward students or employees; and
17. Any other behavior that creates a credible risk of violence or serious harm.



V. PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

Utopian Academy will use a multi-level prevention approach that addresses the individual student, peer relationships, school environment, family, and community.

A. Safe and Supportive School Climate

Each Utopian Academy school will promote:

- Respectful student-to-student interactions;
- Positive relationships between students and staff;
- Clear behavioral expectations;
- Consistent enforcement of school rules;
- Student belonging and school connectedness;
- Positive recognition of appropriate behavior;
- Opportunities for students to communicate concerns to trusted adults;
- Culturally responsive and age-appropriate student support;
- Safe reporting mechanisms; and
- A school environment in which students feel comfortable seeking help.

Research-based guidance identifies school connectedness and supportive relationships with adults as important protective factors for youth.

B. Social-Emotional and Conflict-Resolution Skills

Schools will provide age-appropriate opportunities for students to develop:

- Emotional regulation;
- Communication skills;
- Conflict-resolution skills;
- Problem-solving skills;
- Empathy;
- Decision-making skills;



- Anger-management strategies;
- Coping skills;
- Peer relationship skills; and
- Appropriate methods for seeking adult assistance.

Students will be taught that seeking help from a trusted adult is a responsible safety behavior and not "snitching."

C. Positive Youth Development

Schools should provide opportunities for students to participate in:

- Clubs;
- Athletics;
- Performing arts;
- Mentoring;
- Leadership programs;
- Community service;
- Academic enrichment;
- Career and technical opportunities;
- Student organizations; and
- Other structured extracurricular activities.

These opportunities can provide students with positive peer relationships, caring adult connections, leadership experiences, and constructive ways to spend time.

D. Family Engagement

Utopian Academy will encourage families to participate in violence-prevention efforts by:

- Communicating behavioral expectations;
- Providing information regarding available student support services;
- Encouraging parents/guardians to report safety concerns;
- Providing resources concerning bullying, conflict, and youth violence;



- Communicating with families when significant behavioral concerns arise; and
- Partnering with parents/guardians when developing appropriate intervention strategies.

VI. EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF WARNING SIGNS

Employees should remain alert to behaviors that may indicate that a student needs additional support.

Possible warning signs may include:

- Repeated threats or statements about harming others;
- Increasingly aggressive behavior;
- Repeated fights;
- Significant behavioral changes;
- Persistent intimidation of other students;
- Obsession with violent acts or threats;
- Statements indicating a desire for revenge;
- Targeted harassment;
- Repeated violations of safety rules;
- Significant social withdrawal combined with concerning behavior;
- Severe or escalating conflicts with peers;
- Bringing or attempting to obtain a weapon;
- Threatening communications through social media or electronic devices;
- Statements suggesting an intention to commit violence; or
- Other behavior that causes a reasonable concern for the safety of the student or others.



A warning sign does **not** automatically mean that a student will commit violence. Staff should report concerning behavior so that trained personnel can determine the appropriate response.

VII. REPORTING CONCERNS

Students, employees, parents/guardians, and visitors are encouraged to report concerns as soon as possible.

Reports may include:

- Actual violence;
- Threats;
- Bullying;
- Cyberbullying;
- Weapons concerns;
- Planned fights;
- Gang-related threats;
- Intimidation;
- Retaliation;
- Concerning social media posts;
- Rumors of planned violence; or
- Any behavior that creates a reasonable safety concern.

Reports may be made to:

- A teacher;
- School administrator;
- School counselor;



- School nurse;
- School safety personnel;
- School resource officer, when applicable;
- Trusted adult; or
- Designated reporting system established by the school.

Emergency Situations

If there is an immediate threat of serious injury or death, staff and students should follow the school's emergency procedures and contact emergency services when appropriate.

Students and employees should **not attempt to investigate, confront, or physically intervene in a potentially violent situation unless specifically trained and authorized to do so.**

VIII. NON-RETALIATION

Utopian Academy prohibits retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports a safety concern or participates in an investigation.

Retaliation may include:

- Threatening the reporting individual;
- Harassing the individual;
- Intimidation;
- Cyberbullying;
- Social exclusion intended as punishment;
- Physical aggression;
- Property damage; or
- Any other retaliatory conduct.



Retaliation may result in disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct or applicable employee policies.

IX. THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

When a report indicates that a student may pose a potential threat of violence, the school may initiate a behavioral threat assessment and management process.

The purpose of threat assessment is to:

1. Determine the nature and seriousness of the concern;
2. Identify factors contributing to the behavior;
3. Determine whether a threat is credible or presents a risk of harm;
4. Identify appropriate protective measures;
5. Connect the student with appropriate support services;
6. Develop a management plan when necessary; and
7. Reduce the likelihood of future violence.

Utopian Academy may convene a multidisciplinary team consisting of appropriate personnel, which may include:

- School administrator;
- School safety representative;
- School counselor;
- School psychologist or mental-health professional, when available;
- School nurse;
- Social worker;
- School resource officer or law enforcement representative, when appropriate;
- Special education personnel, when applicable;
- Other trained staff; and



- Appropriate outside professionals or agencies.

Georgia's Department of Education identifies behavioral threat assessment and management as a proactive school-safety process designed to identify concerning behavior early and coordinate support to prevent escalation.

Threat assessment is not intended to automatically result in discipline. The school's response will be based on the facts, severity, credibility, circumstances, and applicable school policies and laws.

X. INTERVENTION AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Depending upon the circumstances, interventions may include:

- Counseling;
- Check-in/check-out support;
- Mentoring;
- Conflict-resolution services;
- Restorative practices when appropriate;
- Behavior intervention plans;
- Social-emotional support;
- Parent/guardian conferences;
- Referral to community resources;
- Mental-health referrals;
- Increased adult supervision;
- Schedule or classroom adjustments;
- Safety plans;
- Individualized support plans;
- Mediation when appropriate and safe;
- Substance-use intervention when applicable;
- Academic support; and



- Other interventions determined appropriate by school personnel.

Interventions should be age-appropriate and proportionate to the circumstances.

XI. RESPONSE TO FIGHTS AND PHYSICAL ALTERCATIONS

When a physical altercation occurs, school personnel will:

1. Prioritize the immediate safety of students and staff;
2. Separate involved students when safe and appropriate;
3. Request medical assistance when necessary;
4. Notify the appropriate administrator;
5. Provide first aid/emergency care within the scope of the employee's training;
6. Preserve relevant evidence when appropriate;
7. Conduct an investigation;
8. Notify parents/guardians consistent with school policy;
9. Determine appropriate disciplinary consequences;
10. Assess whether additional threat assessment or behavioral intervention is necessary; and
11. Monitor for retaliation or continued conflict.

Students involved in a fight may be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

XII. WEAPONS AND SERIOUS THREATS

Weapons, suspected weapons, or credible threats involving weapons require an immediate safety response.



Students must not:

- Possess a weapon on school property;
- Bring a weapon to a school-sponsored event;
- Use an object as a weapon;
- Threaten another person with a weapon;
- Encourage another person to bring a weapon;
- Assist another person in obtaining or concealing a weapon; or
- Make threats involving weapons.

When a weapon or credible weapon threat is reported, school officials will follow the Network's emergency response procedures and applicable law, including contacting law enforcement when required or appropriate.

XIII. BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

Utopian Academy will address bullying and cyberbullying as part of its broader youth violence prevention program.

Students should report:

- Repeated harassment;
- Threats;
- Physical aggression;
- Online harassment;
- Threatening messages;
- Distribution of humiliating content;
- Impersonation intended to harm another student;
- Group attacks or coordinated harassment; and
- Retaliation.



Reports will be addressed in accordance with the Network's bullying policy and Student Code of Conduct.

XIV. SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Students are expected to use social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms, and other electronic communications responsibly.

The Network may respond to electronic communications that:

- Contain threats against students or employees;
- Promote or organize violence;
- Coordinate a planned fight;
- Encourage weapon possession;
- Target members of the school community;
- Constitute bullying or harassment; or
- Substantially disrupt the school environment.

Students should immediately report concerning online content rather than forwarding, reposting, or participating in it.

XV. SCHOOL SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREVENTION

Each school will regularly evaluate areas where violence or conflict may be more likely to occur, including:



- Hallways;
- Restrooms;
- Cafeterias;
- Arrival and dismissal areas;
- Athletic areas;
- Stairwells;
- Parking areas;
- Bus loading/unloading areas;
- Common areas; and
- Other locations identified through school safety assessments.

Schools may use appropriate strategies such as:

- Increased adult supervision;
- Staff presence in identified areas;
- Visitor-management procedures;
- Access-control measures;
- Cameras and other security systems where available;
- Clearly defined student movement procedures;
- Adequate lighting;
- Environmental improvements;
- Emergency communication systems;
- Safety drills; and
- Coordination with law enforcement and emergency management partners.

XVI. STAFF TRAINING

Utopian Academy will provide appropriate training to employees regarding youth violence prevention.

Training may include:



- Recognizing warning signs;
- Bullying prevention;
- Conflict de-escalation;
- Threat reporting;
- Behavioral threat assessment and management;
- Emergency response;
- School safety procedures;
- Student mental-health awareness;
- Trauma-informed approaches;
- Crisis intervention;
- Safe intervention techniques, when applicable;
- Suicide awareness and prevention;
- Appropriate documentation; and
- Procedures for contacting administrators and emergency services.

Staff are expected to immediately report serious safety concerns rather than attempting to independently manage a potentially dangerous situation.

XVII. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to:

- Treat others with respect;
- Follow school safety rules;
- Avoid fighting and threats;
- Report safety concerns;
- Avoid bringing weapons or dangerous objects to school;
- Not encourage or record fights;
- Not organize fights;
- Not retaliate against individuals who report concerns;
- Use social media responsibly;



- Follow staff directions during emergencies; and
- Seek assistance from a trusted adult when conflict cannot be safely resolved.

Students who knowingly encourage, record, promote, organize, or assist violence may be subject to disciplinary consequences consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

XVIII. PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and guardians are encouraged to:

- Discuss appropriate conflict resolution with their children;
- Encourage children to report safety concerns;
- Monitor age-appropriate online activity;
- Communicate with school personnel regarding significant behavioral concerns;
- Participate in school intervention meetings when requested;
- Support school safety expectations;
- Inform the school of concerns that may affect student safety; and
- Work collaboratively with the school to support the student's success.

XIX. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Utopian Academy may collaborate with:

- Local law enforcement agencies;
- School resource officers;
- Emergency management agencies;



- Mental-health providers;
- Community organizations;
- Youth-serving organizations;
- Healthcare providers;
- Juvenile justice/community partners; and
- Other appropriate agencies.

The purpose of these partnerships is to strengthen prevention, intervention, student support, emergency response, and community safety.

XX. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Information concerning student safety concerns will be handled in accordance with applicable federal and state law and school policies.

Information will be shared with appropriate personnel and agencies when necessary to:

- Protect students or staff;
- Respond to an emergency;
- Conduct a threat assessment;
- Investigate alleged misconduct;
- Meet legal reporting obligations; or
- Provide appropriate student support.

Utopian Academy will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of students and families while maintaining a safe school environment.



XXI. DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE

Violations of this plan may result in disciplinary action consistent with the Utopian Academy Student Code of Conduct.

Depending on the circumstances, consequences may include:

- Parent/guardian conference;
- Behavioral intervention;
- Loss of privileges;
- Restorative intervention;
- In-school disciplinary consequences;
- Out-of-school suspension;
- Alternative disciplinary measures permitted by policy;
- Referral to law enforcement when required or appropriate; and/or
- Other consequences authorized by the Student Code of Conduct and applicable law.

Disciplinary action will be determined based on the nature and severity of the conduct, student age, circumstances, prior behavior, applicable law, and school policy.

XXII. POST-INCIDENT RESPONSE

Following a significant violent incident, the school will evaluate whether additional actions are necessary, including:

- Medical and emotional support for affected students and staff;
- Parent/guardian communication;
- Safety reassessment;
- Threat assessment;
- Counseling referrals;



- Conflict mediation when appropriate;
- Increased supervision;
- Monitoring for retaliation;
- Staff debriefing;
- Documentation;
- Review of emergency procedures; and
- Additional prevention measures.

The goal of post-incident response is not only to address the immediate incident but also to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

XXIII. DATA COLLECTION AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

Utopian Academy will monitor youth violence-related incidents to identify trends and determine whether prevention strategies are effective.

Information reviewed may include:

- Number and type of fights;
- Threat reports;
- Bullying reports;
- Weapon-related incidents;
- Suspensions related to violence;
- Locations where incidents occur;
- Time periods associated with increased incidents;
- Repeat incidents;
- Student climate information;
- Staff observations; and
- Parent/student feedback.



The Network may use this information to modify prevention strategies, staff training, supervision plans, and student support services.

XXIV. ANNUAL REVIEW

The Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Plan will be reviewed at least annually and revised as necessary based on:

- Incident data;
- School safety assessments;
- Student and staff feedback;
- Changes in applicable law;
- Georgia Department of Education guidance;
- Community needs;
- Emergency response exercises;
- Lessons learned from actual incidents; and
- Evidence-based violence prevention practices.

XXV. CORE MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

Utopian Academy for the Arts Network wants every student to understand:

Violence is not the solution to conflict.

If you are angry, threatened, bullied, targeted, or involved in a conflict:

STOP. STEP AWAY. GET HELP.

Tell a trusted adult before the situation becomes dangerous.

Asking for help is a sign of strength and responsibility.



UTOPIAN ACADEMY'S COMMITMENT

Utopian Academy for the Arts Network is committed to creating schools where students can learn, grow, perform, create, and succeed in an environment where safety, respect, accountability, and belonging are valued.

Every Student. Every School. Every Day. Safe, Supported, and Ready to Learn.