Definitions of BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING and RETALIATION
that the Worcester Public Schools will follow to STOP BULLYING:

* BULLYING - The repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

* CYBER-BULLYING - Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons.

* RETALIATION - Any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.
If your child is being bullied at school, this can be a very painful experience for your child and your family. Here are some things you can do to support your child if he or she is being bullied:

- Never tell your child to ignore the bullying.
- Don’t blame your child for the bullying. Don’t assume your child did something to provoke the bullying.
- Allow your child to talk about his or her bullying experiences. Write down what is shared.
- Empathize with your child. Tell him or her that bullying is wrong, that it is not his or her fault, and that you are glad he or she had the courage to tell you about it.
- If you disagree with the way your child handled the bullying situation, don’t criticize him or her. It is often very difficult for children to know how best to respond.
- Do not encourage physical retaliation.
- Check your emotions. A parent’s protective instincts stir strong emotions. Although it is difficult, step back and consider the next steps carefully.
- Encourage your child to develop interests and hobbies that will help build resiliency in difficult situations like bullying.
- Encourage your child to make contact with friendly students in his or her class, or help your child met new friends outside of school.
- Teach your child safety strategies, such as how to seek help from an adult.
- Make sure your child has a safe and loving home environment.
- **Contact a teacher, school counselor or principal at your school immediately and share your concerns about the bullying your child has experienced.**
- **Work closely with school personnel to help solve the problem.**

If you or your child need additional help, seek help from a school counselor and/or mental health professional.
If your child bullies other children at school, it will need to be stopped. Here are some things you can do at home to address the issue with your child:

- Make it clear to your child that you take bullying seriously and that it is not okay.
- Make rules within your family for your child’s behavior. Praise your child for following the rules and use nonphysical and logical consequences when rules are broken. A logical consequence for bullying could be losing rights to use the phone to call friends, using email to talk with friends, or other activities your child enjoys.
- Spend lots of time with your child and keep close track of his or her activities. Find out who your child’s friends are and how and where they spend their free time.
- Build on your child’s talents by encouraging him or her to get involved in positive activities (such as clubs, music lessons, or nonviolent sports).
- Share your concerns with your child’s teacher, counselor, and/or principal. Work together to send a clear message to your child that his or her bullying must stop.

If you and your child need more help, talk with a school counselor and/or mental health professional.

This list has been adapted from a publication originally created for “Take a Stand. Lend a Hand. Stop Bullying Now!” a campaign of the Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov.