



**"Bullying"** means:

- a.** Conduct that occurs in a school, on school premises, in a school owned or leased schoolbus or school vehicle, or at any school or school sanctioned or sponsored activity or event and which:
  - (1)** is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it substantially interferes with the student's educational opportunities;
  - (2)** places the student in actual and reasonable fear of harm;
  - (3)** places the student in actual and reasonable fear of damage to property of the student; or
  - (4)** substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school; or
- b.** Conduct that is received by a student while the student is in a school, on school premises, in an owned or leased schoolbus or school vehicle, or at any school or school sanctioned or sponsored activity or event and which:
  - (1)** is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it substantially interferes with the student's educational opportunities;
  - (2)** places the student in actual and reasonable fear of harm;
  - (3)** places the student in actual and reasonable fear of damage to property of the student; or
  - (4)** substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.
- c.** "Conduct" includes the use of technology or other electronic media.

Forms of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- physical contact/assault or attempted physical contact/assault.
- name calling, verbal assaults, or other putdowns.
- damaging or destroying property.
- social ostracism.
- threats of any kind. A threat is defined as a statement that would be interpreted by a reasonable person as a serious expression of intent to harm or assault another or to damage property.
- intimidation, either physical or mental.
- extortion or attempted extortion.

### **Prohibitions**

While at school, on school premises, in a school owned or leased schoolbus or school vehicle, or at any school or school sanctioned or sponsored activity or event, a student or school staff may not:

- a.** engage in bullying; or
- b.** engage in reprisal or retaliation against:
  - (1)** a victim of bullying;
  - (2)** an individual who witnesses an alleged act of bullying;
  - (3)** an individual who reports an alleged act of bullying; or
  - (4)** an individual who provides information about an alleged act of bullying.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, in accordance with policy and law. School staff found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment in accordance with policy and law.

## **Reporting**

A victim or witness of bullying should immediately report this behavior to a teacher, counselor, or school administrator. Upon receipt of a complaint, the recipient shall forward it on to a principal or the superintendent if the principal is the subject of the complaint. Complaints alleging bullying based on an individual's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or other class protected by law (hereafter 'protected class') shall be handled in accordance with the school's harassment/sexual harassment reporting policy.

## **Reporting Options for Students and Community Members**

Students and community members (including parents) may report known or suspected violations of this policy using any of the following methods:

1. Completing a written complaint form: A complainant will have the option of including his/her name on this form or filling it anonymously. The form may be returned to any school staff member, or filed in one of the school's main offices.
2. Complete and submit an online complaint form: A complainant will have the option of including his/her name on the form or submitting anonymously.
3. File an oral report with any school staff member.

- **A complaint filed anonymously may limit the school's ability to investigate and respond to the alleged violations.**
- **Report Forms are available in the Bishop Ryan Catholic School business office as well as the high school office.**

## **Reporting to Law Enforcement & Other Forms of Redress**

Anytime a school staff member has reasonable suspicion that a bullying incident constituted a crime, s/he shall report it to law enforcement. Also, nothing in this policy shall prevent a victim/his/her family from seeking redress under state and federal law.

## **Reporting Requirements for School Staff**

The school approved form shall be completed by school staff when they:

1. witness an alleged violation of this policy; or
2. receive an oral report of an alleged violation of this policy.

The school approved form shall be completed by an administrator when s/he:

1. witnesses an alleged violation of this policy; or
2. receives an oral report of an alleged violation of this policy.

## **Documentation & Retention**

All written reports of an alleged violation of this policy received by the school shall be forwarded to the appropriate school administrator for investigation and retention. Report forms and all other documentation related to an investigation of an alleged violation of this policy shall be retained by the school for six years after a student turns 18 or graduates from high school, whichever is later. If a student does not graduate from the school, such reports and investigation material shall be retained for six years after the student turns 18.

## **Investigative Procedures**

School administrators (i.e., a principal, an assistant superintendent, or the superintendent) are required to investigate violations of this policy (as prescribed under "Prohibitions"), when in receipt of actual notice of an alleged violation. Actual notice of an alleged violation occurs when alleged bullying, reprisal, or retaliation is reported using the applicable method(s) prescribed in the reporting section of this policy.

Upon receipt of a report of an alleged policy violation, the designated administrator shall first determine if the alleged policy violation is based on a protected class—whether actual or perceived. Reports involving a protected class shall be investigated in accordance with the school’s harassment/sexual harassment policy, including the timelines contained therein.

In all other cases, administration shall determine the level of investigation necessary based on the nature of the alleged violation of this policy after considering factors such as, but not limited to: the identity of the reporter and his/her relationship to the victim/alleged perpetrator; the ages of the parties involved; the detail, content, and context of the report; whether this report is the first of its type filed against the alleged perpetrator. Based on the level of the investigation the administrator deems necessary, investigations may include any or all of the following steps or any other investigatory steps that the administrator deems necessary:

1. Identification and collection of necessary and obtainable physical evidence (NOTE: In some cases physical evidence may be unobtainable, e.g., a private social networking profile);
2. Interviews with the complainant, the victim, and/or the alleged perpetrator. At no time during an investigation under this policy shall the victim/complainant be required to meet with the alleged perpetrator;
3. Interviews with any identified witnesses;
4. A review of mitigating or extenuating circumstances;
5. Final analysis and issuance of findings in writing to the victim and bully and, if applicable, implementation of victim protection measures and disciplinary measures under this or other applicable policies.

Investigations shall be completed within 60 days unless the administrator documents good cause for extending this deadline. Such documentation should be sent to victim and alleged perpetrator during the investigation.

### **Disciplinary & Corrective Measures**

Students that the school has found to have violated this policy shall be subject to disciplinary consequences and/or corrective measures. When determining the appropriate response to violations of this policy, administration shall take into account the totality of circumstances surrounding the violation. Measures that may be imposed include, but are not limited to:

1. require the student to attend detention;
2. impose in- or out-of-school suspension or recommend expulsion. Due process procedures contained in the school’s suspension and expulsion policy shall be followed;
3. make restitution if applicable;
4. refer the student to a school counselor;
5. hold a conference with the student’s parent/guardian and classroom teacher(s), and other applicable school staff;
6. modify the perpetrator’s schedule and take other appropriate measures (e.g., moving locker) to minimize contact with the victim;
7. If applicable, contact the administrator of the website on which the bullying occurred to report it.

If the misconduct does not meet this policy’s definition of bullying, it may be addressed under other school disciplinary policies.

For bullying initiated off campus and received on campus (e.g., cyber-bullying), the school only has authority to impose any of the above disciplinary measures if the bullying substantially disrupted the educational environment or posed a true threat. In all other cases of off-campus bullying received on-campus, the school may only take corrective measures as described in items five through seven above.

If the perpetrator is a school staff member, the school shall take appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to: a reprimand, modification of duties (only if allowed by applicable policy, the negotiated agreement, and/or the individual's contract), suspension, or a recommendation for termination/discharge in accordance with any applicable law.

### **Victim Protection Strategies**

When the school confirms that a violation of this policy has occurred, it should notify the victim's parents and shall implement victim protection strategies. These strategies shall be developed on a case-by-case basis after administration has reviewed the totality of the circumstances surrounding the bullying incident(s) or other violations of this policy. Strategies may include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Additional training for all students and applicable staff on implementation of the policy and/or bullying prevention.
2. Notice to the victim's teachers and other staff to monitor the victim and his/her interaction with peers.
3. Assignment of school staff to monitor, more frequently, areas in the school where bullying has occurred.
4. Referral to counseling services for the victim and perpetrator.
5. Modification of the perpetrator's schedule and other appropriate measures imposed on the perpetrator (not the victim) to minimize the perpetrator's contact with the victim.

### **Prevention Programs & Professional Development Activities**

The school shall develop and implement bullying prevention programs for all students and school staff. The school shall include, in professional development activities, information regarding the prevention of bullying and shall provide information regarding the prevention of bullying to all volunteers and nonlicensed personnel who have contact with students.

The school shall review and revise its policy as it determines necessary.