



ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

Purpose:

The school communities within the Brooklyn Diocese believe in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. Research shows that students who learn in a safe and supportive environment succeed academically. Students have a right to learn in an environment free of any harassment that substantially interferes with their education.

Definition:

Bullying, bias-based harassment/intimidation are intentional, repeated, hurtful acts (physical, verbal, written) committed by one or more persons towards another person or persons. It usually involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power which can be physical, emotional or verbal.

If not addressed, bullying can lead to the creation of a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment and can affect a student's educational opportunities.

The behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Physical: physical violence, stalking, threats, aggressive or menacing gestures, exclusion from peer groups which is intended to humiliate or isolate the target (relational bullying).
- Verbal: taunts, teasing, derogatory language, derogatory jokes, name calling, slurs, spreading rumors.
- Written: written or graphic material including graffiti containing comments or stereotypes that are electronically written and transmitted via internet, social messaging sites, blogs, instant messaging, text messages, cell phone, and webcams. This would also include forwarding such messages if received. This generally constitutes cyber-bullying.

Reporting Procedures:

- The targeted student, parent/guardian of a student or other students in the school (bystanders), or any school staff who believe that bullying has occurred should report the incident to the principal.
- The principal needs to conduct an investigation by interviewing all parties separately.

- The parents of all involved students should be notified.
- If it is determined that bullying has occurred the child who bullied is to be subject to consequences per the school's disciplinary code.
- Parents should be advised to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency if the situation warrants such a report.
- Referral to counseling should be made for all parties if deemed necessary.
- The principal must follow up to see that the offending conduct has stopped.
- All students should be notified that retaliation against anyone who makes a report will not be tolerated and those that retaliate will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Communication of Policy:

Annually all staff, students and parents should be apprised of the policy and such a school policy should appear in the Parent/Student handbook and faculty handbook.

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-Bullying is the bullying and/or harassment to include the use of information technology equipment, including, but not limited to, email, instant messaging, blogs, chat rooms, pagers, cell phones and gaming systems to carry out the acts of bullying.

Good intervention efforts will help establish a culture and climate within the school that supports civility and respect and recognizes there are no innocent bystanders as it relates to bullying issues.

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