

St. Joseph Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation, or Anti-Bullying

The State Board of Education adopted anti-harassment and anti-bullying policy in October 2004. The policy is based on the belief that Ohio schools must provide physically safe and emotionally secure environments for all students and all school personnel. It is the goal of the State Board of Education, through the "Ohio School Climate Guidelines" and this policy, to enhance/create positive learning and teaching environments. The State Board of Education defines a positive climate as one that emphasizes and recognizes positive behaviors, evokes nonviolence, cooperation, team acceptance toward all students and staff in, and in transit to and from the school environment.

St. Joseph School Policy models policies and strategies that eliminate negative behaviors recognize positive behaviors that promote safe and secure learning environments for all students and staff.

It is the policy of St. Joseph School that any form of bullying behavior, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school or at school-sponsored events is expressly forbidden and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from the school.

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying in accordance with House Bill 276, means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts including electronically transmitted acts.(refer to definitions)

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING means any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibited toward other particular student(s) more than once and *the behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING ALSO MEANS ELECTRONICALLY TRANSMITTED ACTS ie. internet, cell phone personal digital assistance (PDA) or wireless hand-held device that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior (*same as above)

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes harassment, intimidation or bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

A SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITY shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school -related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by St. Joseph School Campus

Types of Conduct

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can include many different behaviors including overt intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate another student or school personnel: Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include: physical threats and/or attacks, threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures, extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions, exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors, repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other web-based/online sites (also known as cyber-bullying. This includes posting slurs, web logs, sending abusive or threatening instant messages, using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs and posting them online, using web sites to circulate gossip and rumors about other students or the school. Excluding other from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to internet service providers.

Formal Complaints:

Student and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation or bullying. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific including person (s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of said harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying and names of any potential witnesses and shall be promptly forwarded to the principal for review.

Informal Complaints:

Students, parents/ guardians and school personnel may make informal complaints that they consider to be harassment, intimidation and/or bullying by verbal report . Such complaints should be reasonably specific as to the actions/behaviors. Names of those involved, targeted person or group, and any potential witnesses. Teacher or Principal must then immediately document and date the report in writing. Principal will then promptly review the report.

Students and or parents who make complaints may request that their name be maintained in confidence but this is not recommended by our school since we wish to work with all parties through communication and mediation.

Teachers and School staff have the responsibility to submit a written report of any incidents of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying that they witness or become aware of promptly and submit it to the principal (no later than the next school day.) They must also keep a log of this in their classroom discipline journal.

Investigation of the Complaint- The principal with the teacher/staff member involved must in a reasonable amount of time- depending on the incident -investigate issue and interview witnesses and students involved. A written report must be made, signed, and kept on file.

Remedial Actions:

After investigation and verification of the harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, there shall be intervention by the principal and teacher or staff involved. This student intervention is designed to ensure that the prohibited behavior will cease.

Harassment, intimidation and bullying can take many forms. It can vary dramatically in seriousness and impact targeted individuals and other students. Therefore, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying as defined in said policy will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such prohibited behaviors whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action-- (detentions, in or out of school suspension, or expulsion)--are a matter of the discretion of the principal.

NON-DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS

Students may be counseled or educated about the behaviors and their duty to avoid this conduct.

Counseling with therapist or teacher is an option as is peer mediation or group counseling if warranted.

DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS

If bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of consequences as deemed by the principal.

After conference with perpetrators parents/guardians in or out of school suspensions may be imposed or expulsion in severe cases. Expulsion will be imposed after a hearing with student their parents, the principal, and pastor of our school. Also included would be the homeroom teacher and/or teacher involved.

GENERAL INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The following may serve as a reference to Principal, Parent Club, and School teachers and staff:

Respectful responses to concerns of harassment, intimidation, or bullying being raised by students, parents, or staff.

Planned professional development programs addressing any of the above problems.

Data collection to document victim problems to determine the nature and scope of problems.

Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities.

Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping (e.g. males need to be strong and tough)

Awareness and involvement of part of all school personnel and parents with regard to victim problems.

An attitude that promotes communication, friendship, assertiveness skills and character education.

Modeling by school personnel of positive, respectful and supportive behavior toward students.

Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others. (Ohio School Climate Guidelines)

Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

Form harassment, intimidation and bullying task forces, programs and other initiatives involving volunteers, parents, law enforcement and community members.

Teachers and Staff

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR PROTECTING VICTIMS

Supervise and discipline offending students fairly and consistently.

Provide adult supervision during recess, lunch time, bathroom breaks, and in the hallways during times of transition.

Maintain contact with parents and guardian of all involved students

Provide counseling for the victim and/or perpetrator is assessed as needed

Instruct personnel if the incident requires extra monitoring of students involved and check with the victim daily to ensure there are no new incidents

REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Parents of students involved will receive in writing the results of the investigation of harassment, intimidation, or bullying incident within the following week. Parents of the perpetrator will also be notified in writing the description of any discipline. In order to respect the privacy of the perpetrator only his/her parents will be notified of discipline actions.