

BULLY POLICY

We define “bullying” as repeated and systematic harassment whereby student(s) are being targeted by verbal and /or physical attacks. In *John 13:34-35*, Jesus shares these words with us - *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* Bullying goes against God’s Word and will be dealt with according to age-appropriate procedures.

Definition of Terms

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” is defined as...

any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another particular student more than once, and the behavior both:

- causes mental or physical harm to the other student; and
- is so sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” is also defined as...

electronically transmitted acts, such as 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 both:

- causes mental or physical harm to the other student/school personnel; and
- is so sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student/school personnel.

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.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior by any student/school personnel in St. John's Lutheran School is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

“A school-sponsored activity” is defined as...

any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized, or authorized by St. John's Lutheran School.

“School personnel” is defined as

- principal
- teachers and teacher aides
- pastors
- school secretary
- members of the Board of Christian Education
- coaches of school athletic teams
- custodian
- cooks
- librarian

School Policy

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behavior and affects everyone. St. John’s Lutheran School disapproves of bullying in all its forms and considers it a most serious offense that is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The pupils also know that bullying is completely unacceptable and that they must notify the appropriate school personnel if it happens to them. The faculty takes the lead in creating a climate in which pupils will report immediately any bullying incident in the expectation that it will be dealt with urgently and firmly.

All staff is required to report incidents of suspected bullying to the principal. Appropriate action will then be taken.

Student Expectations

The St. John's Lutheran Board of Christian Education expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and parents. Students are expected to live a life that is pleasing to our Savior, Jesus.

Reporting Obligations

Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator

If, after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying are verified, the building principal will notify the parent or guardian of the perpetrator. If discipline is imposed, a description of that discipline will be included in that notification.

Report to the Victim and the Parent or Guardian

If, after investigation, acts of bullying are verified, the building principal will notify the parent or guardian of the victim. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

Report to the Board of Christian Education

The school principal must semiannually provide the chairman of the Board of Christian Education a written summary of all reported incidents. The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school, or at school-sponsored events.

Report to the Proper Authorities

Allegations of criminal misconduct will be reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse must be reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines. St. John's Lutheran School must also investigate for the purpose of determining whether there has been a violation of the Board of Christian Education Policy or Procedure, even if law enforcement or CPS is also investigating. All St. John's Lutheran School personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.

Complaints and Logging a Complaint

If there is a concern about a situation, there are three ways to express the concern. A formal complaint, informal complaint, or anonymous complaint can be filed.

Formal Complaints

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Written reports need to be specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential students or staff witnesses. These reports can be filed with any school staff member and they will be promptly forwarded to the principal for review and action.

Informal Complaints

Students, parents or guardians, and school personnel may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, a principal, or other school personnel. Such informal complaints will be specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential students or staff witnesses. A school staff member or principal who receives an informal complaint will promptly document the complaint, including the above information. These reports can be filed with any school staff member and they will be promptly forwarded to the principal for review and action.

Anonymous Complaints

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and principal who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaints will be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

A “Bullying Complaint Log” is included at the back of this handbook. These forms are also available in every classroom as well as the office.

Bully Policy

Guiding Steps of Action

Action steps taken are to be used at the discretion of the staff and principal. Action taken is dependent on the severity of the offense and may include any of the following but are not limited to the following. Action taken will be age appropriate when possible.

- 1st Reported Incident --** Investigate, talk to student and develop strategy to change behavior
Verbal intervention with student and/or counseling on bullying
Verbal and/or written apology to victim
Paper-based response: Behavior Intervention Worksheet
As Needed: recess detention, detention
- 2nd Reported Incident --** Repeat 1st reported incident steps and contact parents
Recess detention, detention, suspension
As Needed: Extra-curricular activities impacted
- 3rd Reported Incident --** Any steps from 1st or 2nd reported Incident, PLUS
Extra-curricular activities impacted
Meet with student and parent + principal + Board of Christian Education representative
Possible expulsion

