

SUBJECT:		NUMBER:
Anti-Bullying Policy	Secretariat for Catholic Education/Department for Catholic Schools	Page: 1 of 3

PURPOSE:	All members of the Catholic School Community are expected to use non-violent means to resolve conflict as Reflected in the Gospel values.
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APPLICABILITY:

- Bullying behaviors contradict Gospel values, which are centered in the Teachings of Christ.
- Bullying may contribute to short-term problems for the victims (i.e. a change in behavior, drop in grades, frequent absences).
- Persistent bullying may cause long-term psychological problems (i.e. depression, dropping out, suicide ideation.)
- Bullying may contribute to involvement in other antisocial activities (i.e. alcohol/drug abuse, gangs) and threatens the physical safety of others.
- Bullying may contribute to a negative school climate, which interferes with spiritual development, academic learning, and social responsibility.

DEFINITIONS:

Bullying shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, or a series of acts.

- A. directed at another student or students;
- B. which occurs in a school setting;
- C. that is severe, persistent or pervasive; and
- D. that has the effect of doing any of the following:
 - i) substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - ii) creating a threatening environment; or
 - iii) substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school
- E. "School Setting: shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or at any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school.
- F. A school entity shall not be prohibited from defining bullying in such a way as to encompass acts that occur outside a school setting if those acts meet the other requirements specified in the definition of bullying.
- G. Cyber bullying includes but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: Harassing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or personnel employed by the school by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). All forms of cyber bullying are unacceptable and to the extent such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the school, offenders shall be the subject of appropriate consequences.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

A. Catholic Schools and Staff are expected to:

- a) provide a supportive environment that upholds Gospel values and encourages positive relationships between students, staff and parent.
- b) increase awareness and understanding of the dynamics of bullying and develop a plan to implement anti-bullying strategies within their schools.
- c) maintain an environment where bullying will be addressed age appropriately in a manner characterized by respect and civility.
- d) use resources that will assist in developing appropriate social skills, positive relationships and discourage bullying as unacceptable behaviors.
- e) encourage students to report incidents of bullying and support them in dealing with conflict resolution.
- f) support, monitor and act upon all reported incidents of bullying to ensure the safety of all students.
- g) model appropriate language and actions for students.
- h) emphasize intervention strategies that are preventative in nature.
- i) recognize that some bullying behaviors may be more serious and require more comprehensive intervention.
- j) keep open lines of communication between the home, school and parish.

B. Students are expected to:

- a) promote a positive and caring environment for all by developing an awareness of bully issues.
- b) refuse to bullying others or to be a bystander to acts of bullying.
- c) report all acts of bullying that they may experience or observe to appropriate school personnel.
- d) assist and co-operate in the implementation of school-wide anti-bullying initiatives.

C. Parents/Visitors are expected to:

- a) promote a positive and caring environment for all by developing an awareness of bullying issues.
- b) inform the school if bullying is suspected.

- c) encourage students to discuss any incidents of bullying and reinforce the need to speak out.
- d) support the school when resolving identified incidents of bullying.
- e) support the school through Catholic School Councils or the Student Assistance Programs (SAP) in promoting local school anti-bullying initiatives.

E. All schools are required to develop a local discipline policy to be placed in Student Handbooks and classrooms in each Elementary and High School in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

- a) Each school will establish written procedures for:
 - i. Reporting instances to the appropriate personnel
 - ii. Investigating bullying behaviors
 - iii. Consequences for such behaviors
- 1. A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the *Code of Student Conduct* which may include:
 - a) Counseling within the Intermediate Unit or school.
 - b) Parental conference
 - c) Loss of school privileges
 - d) Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
 - e) Exclusion from school-sponsored activities
 - f) Detention
 - g) Suspension
 - h) Expulsion
 - i) Counseling/Therapy outside of the Intermediate Unit or school.
 - j) Referral to law enforcement officials
- b) All schools will include and address the following anti-bullying statement in the discipline.

In keeping with the teachings of Christ, _____ Catholic School will provide a safe, caring and supportive school environment, free of bullying, for all member of the school community.

Effective Date:	Revision Date:	Number of Revisions:
September 1, 2011	July, 2011	