

Possible Protocol When Bullying Behaviors (all differing degrees) are Identified

We want to refer to students as “exhibiting bullying behavior” instead of calling the student a bully. We also want to refer to the student being hurt as a target instead of a victim.

This school is God’s school. We are committed to providing a safe, caring and positive environment to maximize the learning experience and provide an opportunity for spiritual growth for all students.

Every member of this school community takes personal responsibility for the emotional and physical safety of one another and the environment. It is a violation of school policy for any student to bully, harass or intimidate another student and it will not be tolerated.

This Bullying Protocol establishes practices and procedures for handling observed and reported incidents of bullying.

BULLYING DEFINITION

Bullying can take many forms including physical, verbal, emotional, relational and cyber-bullying. It can be direct or indirect, blatant or subtle. Both boys and girls engage in bullying and its harmful, long-term negative consequences are well documented.

Our school believe “Bullying” as means:

“Any act, be it physical, verbal or conduct or communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. (1) Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm or embarrassment to other student’s or the students’ body, emotional health or property;
2. (2) Causing a distress to the student’s physical or emotional health;
3. (3) Interfering with the student’s or students’ academic performance; or
4. (4) Substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.”

Conduct” may include:

- Physical acts, such as inappropriate, unwanted, uninvited, or injurious physical contact with another; stalking; sexual assault; and destruction or damage to property of another;
- Written and electronic communication of any type that incorporates language or depictions that would constitute bullying, using any medium (including, but not limited to, cell phones, computers, websites, electronic networks, instant messages, text messages and emails);
- Verbal threats made to another, blackmail, or demands for protection money;

- Non-verbal threats or intimidation such as aggressive or menacing gestures;
- Direct or indirect, relationally aggressive behavior such as social isolation, rumor spreading, or damaging someone's reputation;
- Any of the above conduct which occurs off school grounds when such conduct creates, or reasonably can be expected to create, a substantial disruption in the school setting and/or at school sponsored activities and events.

In addition to that conduct described above, *examples* of conduct that may constitute bullying include the following:

- Blocking access to school property or facilities;
- Stealing or hiding or otherwise defacing books, backpacks or other personal possessions;
- Taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking put-downs, or demeaning humor relating to a student's race, color, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics, whether or not the student actually possesses them, that could reasonably be expected to result in the disruption of school activities or that results in a hostile educational environment for the student.

Other conduct this school does not want because of the Golden Rule would be:

- Unkind teasing and sarcasm
- "Talking trash"
- Insults
- Any expressions that are lewd, profane, or intended to intimidate or harass another.

SCHOOL POLICY AND PREVENTION PRACTICES

Critical to the establishment of a Bullying Protocol is the development of a comprehensive bullying policy and school-wide strategies for effective bullying prevention and intervention. Best practices in bullying prevention include:

School establishes and enforces an effective Bullying Policy that:

- Clearly defines bullying behavior and provides examples
- Clearly establishes school rules and expectations for all members of the school community
- Communicates rules and expectations to all students, staff and parents
- Requires staff to consistently enforce school rules and encourages students to take personal responsibility for creating a physically and emotionally safe learning environment
- Provides additional instructional opportunities to address pro-social skills to prevent bullying
- Makes age appropriate, non-punitive remediation a priority
- Recognizes the importance of increased adult supervision in known "hotspots".

- Tracking all reported bullying incidents by keeping a log of the behavior.
- Ensuring bullying awareness training is available to all students, staff and parents
- Securing data about the frequencies, types and locations of bullying in the school
- Provide learning about bullying in the curriculum.
- Provide a welcoming, caring, safe culture and climate
- All staff and students are “on board” to take personal responsibility for establishing a caring environment
- School encourages and positively reinforces students’ reporting of bullying incidents

SCHOOL RESPONSE AND PRACTICES

- School personnel must report and/or investigate all incidents of bullying and take appropriate action whether they personally observe incidents or learn of them by some other means. Reporting, investigation and action must occur even if the victim does not file a formal complaint or does not express overt disapproval of the incident.
- Adult non-intervention establishes a climate of fear, reinforces students’ beliefs that bullying is “normal” and must be tolerated, and enables the bullying behavior. Furthermore, non-intervention may expose the school district to potential liability.

Students should be offered a variety of ways to report bullying such as:

- Anonymous box located in a “safe” spot
- Email, text, online, telephone
- In person to any staff member
- Peer or parent reports

Staff Response Protocol

- 1) INTERVENE - Staff members must intervene immediately or as quickly as reasonably possible to address bullying behavior.
 - a) Identify bullying behaviors. Focus on the behavior not the person. Refer to the classroom or school rules.
 - b) Stop the behavior. Get in between target(s) and perpetrator(s) if safe to do so. Resist the temptation to dismiss the bullying as normal (“boys will be boys” and “girls will be girls”) behavior for that age.
 - c) Conference with the student(s) SEPARATELY.
- 2) INVESTIGATE – All reports of bullying incidents should be recorded and investigated in a timely fashion – within 24 hours (when possible) of receiving initial report.
 - a) All reports of bullying should be addressed by any employee
 - b) All staff should receive training to recognize what constitutes bullying.

1. a) Engage the student(s) being bullied.
 - i. Focus on his/her safety.
 - ii. Reassure him/her that the bullying behavior will not be tolerated and that all possible steps will be taken to prevent reoccurrence.
 - iii. Ask what happened and how he/she feels about it.
 - iv. If necessary, refer the student being bullied to the guidance counselor.
 - v. Ask the student to log and report any future bullying situations.
 - vi. Follow up with the student on a regular basis.
2. b) Engage the student(s) exhibiting the bullying behavior. Have the student identify the issue using an 'I statement'. If he or she is unable to name the behavior, the teacher may prompt the student.
 - i. Ask questions and gather information.
 - What led to the bullying incident?
 - What caused you to choose this behavior?
 - What was wrong with your behavior?
 - What could you do differently next time?
 - ii. Remind the student of school rules and expectations.
 - iii. Utilize consequences as outlined in the school's Code of Conduct.
 - iv. Take action to prevent further bullying or retaliation.
3. c) Engage the bystander(s).
 - i. Have the student identify the problem as observed or heard.
 - ii. Ask questions and gather information.
 - What was your behavior ?
 - What caused you to choose this behavior ?
 - What, if anything, could you do differently next time?
 - iii. Remind the student of school rules and expectations and praise any efforts made to stop or report the incident.
 - iv. Take action to prevent retaliation against the bystander(s).

STAFF RESPONSE PROTOCOL

(a) Engage the target/victim first in private location

Focus on his/her safety.

Reassure him/her that the bullying behavior will not be tolerated and that all possible steps will be taken to prevent a reoccurrence. Ask what happened and how he/she feels about it. It is generally best to advise the student to walk away/ignore the behavior, use humor to dismiss it, tell the bully to stop and/or seek help from an adult. It is not advisable to suggest the victim stand up to the bully or fight back. Ask student to log any future bully/victim situations for the purpose of providing documentation.

(b) For the student doing the bullying behavior:

1. (i) Have the student identify the problem using an I statement. If they are unable to admit to a problem, say "I've been hearing that..." or "I have observed you..."

2. (ii) Ask questions and gather information. Praise honesty.
- (iii) Ask “What was wrong with what you did?”
- (iv) Ask “What problem were you trying to solve?” (not “Why did you do it?”)
- (v) Ask “Next time you have that problem, how will you solve it?”
- (vi) Remind the student of the school rules and policies, expectations for behavior and his/her personal responsibility for the learning environment.
- (vii) Utilize remediation measures and consequences according to the

If a student reports bullying behavior to a staff member, do not dismiss it as tattling, particularly if the student reporting is trying to keep another student safe. Thank the student who made the report!

1. All information concerning complaints or incidents of bullying should be treated confidentially at all times. When talking with parents, teachers and administrators cannot name the other students involved and cannot indicate disciplinary measures utilized.
2. Inform the parents of the bully and the victim of the behavior as quickly as possible. A call home the same day is preferable, followed by an appointment at school with the parents if necessary. Early intervention is most effective before patterns of behavior are established. Invite the parents to collaborate on a solution. Do not bring the parents of the victim and the bully together.

Student Considerations:

- Age and developmental maturity of the students involved;
- Nature, frequency and severity of the behaviors;
- Relationships of the parties involved;
- Context in which the alleged incidents occurred;
- Patterns of past or continuing behaviors;
- Other circumstances that may play a role.

Examples of Remedial Measures

Personal - Student Exhibiting Bullying Behavior

- Develop a behavioral contract with the student. Ensure the student has a voice in the outcome and can identify ways he/she can solve the problem and change behaviors.
- Meet with parents/family to develop a family agreement to:
 - Ensure parent/family/student all understand school rules and expectations
 - Explain the long term negative consequences of bullying on all involved
 - Understand consequences if bullying behavior continues
- Recommend a visit a counselor, social worker or psychologist if this has occurred more than once.

- Arrange for apology – written is recommended
- Reflective essay to ensure student understands the impact of their actions on others
- Research and teach a lesson to class about bullying, empathy or similar

Personal – Target/Victim

Meet with teacher or staff member to

- Explore feelings about incident
- Develop a plan to ensure student's emotional and physical safety at school
- Ensure student does not feel responsible for behavior Ask student to log behaviors in the future
- Develop skills, tools, strategies to resist bullying

Follow-up conference with student, *Parents*,

- Development an agreement of when student should let teacher know of any behaviors or conduct towards them.
- Referral for family counseling
- Parent education workshops related to bullying and social emotional learning;

Examples of Consequences for bullying behavior

Admonishment/conference with student (verbal warning)

- Written warning
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Deprivation of privileges
- Parental Notification - Letter sent home to Parent(s) ○ Parental Notification
- Phone call to parent
- In school suspension (after school, weekend)
 - Out of school suspension
 - Legal action
 - Report to law enforcement if required
 - Expulsion

Number of Past or Continuing Behaviors

Low Severity/Repeat Offense(s) Written warning

Detention (classroom or administrative) Referral to disciplinarian

Admonishment/conference with student (verbal warning) Temporary removal from the classroom

Deprivation of privileges (recess, extracurricular) Parental Notification

Apology

Behavioral contract

Additional pro-social skills training
Decipher mental health issues
Restitution
Restorative Practices

High Severity/Repeat Offenses

In school suspension (after school, weekend)

Parental Notification

Out of school suspension

Legal action

Report to law enforcement if required Expulsion Parental Notification

In school suspension (after school, weekend) Out of school suspension

Apology

Behavioral contract

Additional pro- social skills training

Research and instruct a lesson on bullying

Hold meeting with parents