

# Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying will not be tolerated in our community.  
Bullying is contrary to our policy and to Illinois State law.

Bullying is prohibited:

1. during any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned program or activity;
2. in school, on school property, on school buses, and at school designated locations for school events
3. through the transmission of information via electronic communication from a school computer or computer network, or other electronic school equipment;
4. when the behavior or communication occurs off campus or through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school and has one of the effects enumerated in the bullying definition. This paragraph applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require our staff to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program;

## Definitions:

**“Bullying,”** including “cyberbullying,” means any severe or pervasive (repeated over time) physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically (i.e., cyberbullying), directed toward a student or students, that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the following effects:

1. placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s person or property;
2. causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student’s physical or mental health;
3. substantially interfering with the student’s academic performance; or
4. substantially interfering with the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation, one or more of the following: cyberbullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, ostracism, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting, opposing or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

**Cyberbullying** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing,

images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

**Reporting:**

If a student believes they or a peer has been the victim of bullying, they should report the situation to a teacher or school administrator. Parents should report the situation directly to the Head of School. Anonymous reports are also accepted. No disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report that has not been substantiated in the course of an investigation. Students and parents/guardians should also report violations of the bullying policy to school personnel.

**Investigation:**

When a report is received, school personnel will collaborate with parents and students to agree upon a course of action and will work as quickly as is possible to ensure the safety of students, gather information, and clarify facts. School personnel will make all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date of the report and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying. Appropriate school personnel will be involved, as needed. Consistent with our policy on student privacy, school personnel will provide parents and students involved in the bullying incident with information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Head of School or other administrator to discuss the investigation, the findings, and the actions taken to address any bullying that is found to have occurred.

Interventions may be provided, as needed, to the parties involved in the bullying, including but not limited to restorative measures, counseling, and others.

**No Retaliation:**

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is a violation of our policy and will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining interventions and consequences according to this Policy. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if our investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining and consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

**Consequences:**

If a student is determined to have engaged in bullying behavior, they will be subject to disciplinary actions appropriate to the offense, the student's age and past behavior, and the circumstances surrounding the events. Disciplinary actions may include a series of graduated consequences and, in severe cases, suspension or expulsion. Disciplinary actions will be thoughtfully taken in an attempt to promote student safety and well-being, change and improve behavior, and uphold the school's Mission, Philosophy, and Core Values.

Regarding rude, mean, or bullying behaviors exhibited outside of school and among our students, teachers and administrators may get involved if students' actions impact the school experience, be it academic or social, for individuals or the community. In such instances, school personnel will work thoughtfully with students and parents to determine the best course of action.

**Policy Evaluation:**

The Head of School shall assist the Board with its evaluation and assessment of the policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, but is not limited to, factors such as:

1. The frequency of victimization.
2. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school.
3. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.
4. The types of bullying being utilized.
5. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that our school already collects for other purposes. Policy revisions will be updated in the parent and staff handbooks and our website.

This policy is fully consistent with our other policies. It is posted on the school's website and is included in the parent handbook, and, where applicable, posted where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted in the school, and is distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and staff, including new employees when hired.

At our school, we believe that bullying is inappropriate behavior that is both pre-meditated and malicious in intent. We also recognize that the 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children in our care are in the very first stages of developing the ability to both control their own actions and to develop awareness of how others feel as a result of their actions. We believe that young children in this early stage of social-emotional

development rarely have the ability to “bully” others. When children act unkindly toward each other, which does occur at times, teachers take immediate steps to help children see the hurt that has been experienced and to help children model appropriate language to prevent the situation from arising again. This may take repeated efforts. Preschool and kindergarten age children are egocentric by nature and have difficulty seeing situations from another’s perspective. Therefore, we request that as parents, you work with us to help your child develop the skill to understand others’ feelings.