

## Respect to All —-No Bullying Policy

Positive social interactions must be developed, learned, and experienced as a child progresses through the stages of his/her childhood. We recognize that children mature and grow at different rates over time. As a Catholic School, we hope to instill Christian Values in each child. Our goal is to have each child learn to **RESPECT** every person, his/her property, and his/her feelings, as we believe God has commanded us to do.

As parents and educators we must be able to distinguish between behaviors that are just part of the “growing process” and those that are not. Conflicts will happen between children and often times can be resolved. “Bullying” differs from “conflict”. Two or more students can have a disagreement or conflict. Bullying involves a power imbalance element where one or more persons target another who has difficulty defending himself or herself.

Each student should be challenged to reach his/her full potential, develop a love for learning and learn in an environment that fosters respect and understanding of one another. It is essential that St. Rose of Lima School does its best to provide a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students may be afforded the opportunity to achieve his or her maximum potential, without being subjected to Bullying, Cyber-Bullying or Retaliation. Bullying, Cyber-Bullying, Retaliation and other similar disruptive or violent behaviors constitute conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment.

In accordance with the “Bullying Prevention Policy” promulgated by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Camden, the pastor, principal, faculty and other staff are expected to demand that all students treat each other with civility and with respect. Bullying, Cyber-Bullying and Retaliation shall not to be tolerated.

**DEFINITIONS:** For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

**Aggressor** means a student who engages in Bullying or Retaliation.

**Target** means a student against whom the Bullying or Retaliation has been perpetrated.

**Bullying** is the repeated use, by one or more students, of written, oral, or electronic expressions or physical acts or gestures of any combination thereof, with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the victim, directed at a Target, which a reasonable person should know would have the effect of:

- ◆ Causing physical or emotional harm to the Target or damage to the Target’s property;
- ◆ Placing the Target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- ◆ Causing the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the Target’s education;

Or

- ◆ Materially and substantially disrupting the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.

An isolated incident, however egregious, is not Bullying. Numerous acts of misconduct against different students do not constitute Bullying. Such conduct may warrant disciplinary action, but is not Bullying.

**Cyber-Bullying** means Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by:

- ◆ Wire (cell phone, computer etc.)
- ◆ Radio

- ◆ Electromagnetics
- ◆ Photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

**Cyber-Bullying** also includes the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as the author of posted content or message, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of Bullying.

**Cyber-Bullying** 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 people, if the distribution or posting creates any conditions enumerated in the definition of Bullying.

**Retaliation** means any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports Bullying or provides information during the investigation of Bullying.

**School Grounds** means the property on which the school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

## **PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING & RETALIATION**

Bullying is prohibited:

- ◆ On School Grounds
- ◆ On property adjacent to School Grounds
- ◆ At any school-sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether on or off School Grounds
- ◆ On a school bus or any other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school
- ◆ Through the use of technology or electronic device owned, leased or used by the school

Bullying by students is also prohibited at other locations and through other means if it:

- ◆ Causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the Target's education; or
- ◆ Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.

Nothing contained in this Policy or Plan shall require the school to monitor any non-school related activity, function or program.

## **PREVENTION**

The Prevention and Intervention Plan for St. Rose of Lima School is in full support of the Diocesan Policy on Bullying. All definitions and provisions included in the Diocesan Policy are the definitions and provisions for this prevention and intervention plan. A variety of assemblies, guest speakers, awareness activities such as mock theater performance demonstrating bullying are utilized in educating students on bullying.

## **SPECIFICS OF THE PLAN**

### **REPORTING**

Any staff member who witnesses or becomes aware of Bullying or Retaliation shall report the incident(s) immediately to the Principal or Vice Principal.

Students are encouraged to report any incident(s) that may be causing them to feel they are being bullied, to a teacher, principal, vice-principal, staff member or their parents.

Students who witness any incident(s) that may resemble bullying or retaliation are encouraged to report it to a teacher, the principal, vice-principal, staff member or their parents.

Parents are encouraged to bring incident(s) to the attention of the principal, vice-principal, or staff member .

### **INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINT**

Upon receipt of such a report, the Principal or her designee shall promptly conduct an investigate the incident to determine if Bullying has occurred. The Principal will review the disciplinary history of the student(s) accused for indication of a pattern or past history of similar behaviors.

A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. The report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of Bullying were verified, and if verified, the consequence will be enforced and parents will be notified.

### **RETALIATION**

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Once the investigation is complete, the Principal or her designee shall determine the consequences for the Aggressor(s) on a case-by-case, age appropriate basis. Bullying can take many forms and can vary dramatically in how serious it is, and what impact it has on the victim and other students. While conduct that rises to the level of Bullying will generally warrant disciplinary action against the students responsible for Bullying, whether to impose disciplinary sanctions and what sanctions

What sanctions to impose in a particular case are matters within the professional discretion of the Principal or her designee. It is the goal of the school to have students achieve redemption, learn and stop Bullying.

Disciplinary action for children in kindergarten will generally be handled by the child's teacher working with the student, the student's family and the Principal (as needed). These children are very young and are learning social skills.

### **NON-DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTION**

When Bullying is identified early and/or when acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, the principal may suggest a behavior modification plan or may require the parent(s) of the student to seek counseling outside of the school by professionals.

### **CONSEQUENCES**

Consequences for a student who commits an act of Bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to nature of the behavior, developmental age of student, and history of problem behavior and performance and must be consistent with school approved student handbook. Possible consequences may include as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	Warning; Pink Memo & student sent to the Principal
2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	Call home; 3 Lunch / Recess Detentions
3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense	Call Home; In school suspension
4 <sup>th</sup> Offense	Call Home; Out of School Suspension; Parent Conference
5 <sup>th</sup> Offense	Call Home; Parent Conference; possible Expulsion

The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the aggressor will not be disclosed to the parents or guardians of the target, unless required by law.

\*\*\*Notification of the local law enforcement agency if called for by the Memorandum of Agreement with Law Enforcement.

**All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the Principal and if necessary, in collaboration with the Pastor and/or Superintendent of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Camden.**

#### **Student Assistance**

St Rose of Lima Catholic School may provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students (both targets and aggressors) affected by bullying or retaliation, as necessary.

#### **Staff Development**

St Rose of Lima Catholic School will provide opportunities for ongoing professional development for all who interact with students on a regular basis.

#### **Student Education**

St Rose of Lima Catholic School will provide age appropriate bullying prevention education for students on a regular basis.

#### **Publication and Notice**

At the beginning of the school year the Administrative Director shall provide notice to staff, parents, and students of the bullying policy and plan. The policy and plan shall be included in the Parent/Student Handbook and shall be posted on the school's website.

#### **Available Consultation**

If any staff member has questions concerning this policy, he/she is encouraged to contact the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Camden.

***This plan will be reviewed every three years.***

*Adapted from the Bullying Prevention Policy established by the Diocese of Camden Catholic Schools Office, approved and promulgated by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Camden (2014)*