

AP 351 – BULLYING

Background

The Division strives to create a learning environment in which all relationships are based on mutual respect, Catholic Teachings and Gospel Beliefs. All students have the right to enjoy their school experience feeling safe, secure, and free from bullying. Actions involving bullying of any kind (physical, verbal, and/or psychological) will not be tolerated.

Bullying is defined as intentional exposure to negative actions involving one or more students; causing emotional, psychological, and/or physical harm. Bullying can be verbal, physical, or relational (i.e. shunning, exclusion, etc.), and involves an imbalance of power.

Procedures

1. Prevention of bullying behavior is a priority within the Division. The following elements must be addressed in all schools:
 - 1.1 Expectations (consistent with Catholic Beliefs);
 - 1.2 Inclusion of appropriate learning opportunities; and
 - 1.3 Purposeful communication strategies to increase awareness.
2. Reported Bullying
 - 2.1 Information will be gathered from all parties involved (including witnesses);
 - 2.2 Those involved in the bullying incident will be interviewed individually;
 - 2.3 Documentation will be maintained by an in-school administrator.
3. Conducting an Investigation
 - 3.1 In determining a suitable course of action, the in-school administrator can request assistance from appropriate personnel.
 - 3.2 Considerations for disciplinary action:
 - 3.2.1 Developmental and maturity levels of the student;
 - 3.2.2 Level of harm incurred by the victim(s);
 - 3.2.3 Nature of the behaviors and relation to past incidences either reported or unreported;
 - 3.2.4 Circumstances in which the incidents occurred; and
 - 3.2.5 Relationships among the parties involved.

3.3 Follow-up to the Investigation

3.3.1 Parents/guardians of the parties involved will be informed of the in-school administrator's findings and subsequent actions.

3.3.2 An in-school administrator will monitor student behavior to assess compliance.

3.3.3 Subsequent incidents of bullying by a student will result in a heightening of the consequence.

3.4 All information will be documented and retained as part of the incident file.

3.5 Intentional false reports of bullying will be treated as opposition to authority, and be dealt with appropriately.

4. Implementing School Plans

A school based plan of action shall be developed in consultation with the parents (and student) when the investigation deems further action or support is needed.

4.1 If the plan involves suspensions or expulsions the division procedures (AP 352) shall be followed.

4.2 The school administration will be responsible for monitoring the school plan for a predetermined length of time, possible and/or transition to new school/program.

4.3 A written record shall be kept of the plan of action and strategies to be undertaken by the school, parents/guardians, and students involved. Such records shall be kept in a confidential file by the principal or designate and reviewed annually. Students and parents/guardians will be provided with a copy of the plan.

4.4 Parental consultation will be undertaken whenever changes are contemplated.

Reference: Sections 85, 87, 108, 109, 150, 151, 175 Education Act