



St. John's Lutheran School is committed to ensuring a safe, caring, and above all Christian environment that promotes personal growth for all. Bullying will not be tolerated in the school environment.

God's Word speaks to us regarding our interactions with others:

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:29, 31-32

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3:13

This policy supplements and elaborates on the discipline code at St. John's, which includes measures for misbehaviors of various forms.

BULLYING: Definition

Bullying or intimidation is aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying goes beyond isolated incidents of teasing and it is typically repeated over time. A child who is being intimidated has a hard time defending himself or herself. Bullying exists when a student with more social and/or physical power deliberately dominates or harasses another who has less power. Bullying is unjustified and typically is repeated.

Bullying is different from conflict or "not getting along". Two or more students can have a disagreement, conflict, or say or do mean things to each other. Bullying involves a power imbalance element where a bully targets a student who has difficulty defending himself or herself.

Bullying can take many forms **in the school environment**:

- Physical intimidation (*such as hitting or punching*)
- Verbal intimidation (*such as teasing or name calling*)
- Nonverbal intimidation or emotional intimidation (*such as gestures or social exclusion*)
- Note writing (*such as sending insulting notes, written or electronic, to others in the classroom*)

Bullying can also occur **outside the school** through means outside the school's direct control:

- Telephoning
- "Cyberbullying" through digital devices and social media
- NOTE: As a general rule, dealing with intimidation outside the classroom becomes a school responsibility if it directly affects the educational environment in the school.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN WORKING TOGETHER

Students, staff and parents must work together to ensure a safe, caring, and Christian environment. All parties will treat one another with respect and uphold confidentiality. Here are some specific responsibilities:

Students

- Try to resolve issues in a Christ-centered way
- Speak to a teacher with details of bullying
- Students who witness bullying will intervene if able, or report the incident to a teacher

Staff

- Act as a Christ-like role model
- Teach and expect appropriate behavior
- Listen to and verify reports of bullying
- Protect victim from further harm
- Identify patterns of behavior for corrective action
- Act to stop behavior from persistently reoccurring
- Make referrals to counseling or additional resources when needed

Parents

- Let child know bullying is not tolerated in any form
- With staff support, encourage students to resolve the situation themselves
- Seek to understand the perspective of all involved regarding the issue
- Communicate concerns to school authorities
- Support staff efforts for resolution

All involved parties

- Forgiveness / Reconciliation: With Christ as our example, St. John's expects that forgiveness will be sought, given, and received. Our goal is for the students and families to achieve reconciliation.

REPORTING, DOCUMENTATION, AND SCOPE OF CONSEQUENCES

By definition, bullying is a repeated event. As such, incidents of intimidation will be addressed firmly.

1. The first time the staff identifies an incident as bullying, the principal will meet with the students

involved and contact the parents of all students involved. Records of the contacts will be kept in the principal's office.

2. Progressive consequences will be administered based upon the specific behavior and the number of offenses. Examples of consequences include but are not limited to: warnings, privileges removed, detention, suspension, and expulsion.
3. Upon the receipt of a second behavior notification, the principal will additionally meet with the student offender and parents, within 3 days of the notification. Further defined consequences will be determined at this time.
4. Incidents will be reported to the school board when the consequences have reached the level of an out-of-school suspension or a recommendation for expulsion.
5. In order to effectively monitor students and for the safety of the student body, other church and school staff as appropriate will receive information regarding behavior concerns.

ONGOING EFFECTIVENESS

The faculty will review its procedures for implementing and enforcing this policy.

The school reserves the right to add, delete, or modify the guidelines as need to address ever-evolving issues related to student behavior.