

## **BULLYING OR HARASSMENT BY STUDENTS**

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Salt Lake City recognize that bullying or harassment of any kind has a negative effect on school climate. Students who are isolated, intimidated, and fearful cannot give their education the single-minded attention they need for success. Bullying or harassment can also lead to more serious violence. Every student has the right to an education and to be safe around school

Bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated because of the Christian climate and Catholic culture in the schools. Occurrence can be on or off campus, within and outside the school day, during a school activity, or on free time. Immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken whenever it is determined that a violation of this policy has taken place. The intervention and consequences will be according to the nature and severity of the incident(s) or situation(s).

### **Definitions**

*Bullying or Harassment* by a student is defined as a pattern of habitual abuse repeated over time by another student or students and involves an imbalance of strength. In many cases, but not all, bullying and harassment may be motivated by racial, sexual, religious, social, or other prejudice. Examples of bullying and harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

*Physical harassment*, such as physical intimidation or assault;

*Emotional harassment*, such as extortion, oral or written threats, cyber bullying, taunting, putdowns, name-calling, threatening gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation;

*Sexual harassment*, such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature; or

*Hazing*, such as an initiation process involving bullying or harassment.

### **Communication of Policy**

Principals, in consultation with the superintendent, will affirmatively ensure that all students are made fully aware of their rights and responsibilities under this policy as well as the rights of each student to seek redress in the event of student harassment or bullying of any kind.

### **Faculty/Staff Intervention**

It is expected that faculty and staff members who observe or become aware of bullying or harassment take immediate and appropriate steps according to this policy.

### **Reporting Bullying and Harassment**

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Salt Lake City expect students and parent(s)/guardian(s) who become aware of bullying or harassment to report it to the school principal for investigation. Any student or parent/guardian who retaliates against another for reporting bullying or harassment may be subject to the

consequences listed below.

Any Catholic school employee who becomes aware of any apparent occurrence of bullying or harassment must report this to the principal who begins intervention and corrective action.

When a principal believes that a criminal offense may have occurred, the principal will report the known facts to the appropriate criminal investigative agency.

Bad faith allegations of a violation of this policy will subject the accuser to disciplinary action.

### **Investigation Procedures**

All allegations will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. Concern for confidentiality will be adhered to throughout the investigative process. This investigation may include interviews with students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and school faculty and staff; review of school records; and identification of parent(s)/guardian(s) and family issues.

### **Student Intervention Consequences**

Intervention and consequences for students who bully or harass others shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include: counseling, a parent/guardian conference, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion, or involuntary transfer to another school. Depending on the severity of the incident, the principal may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. Procedures may include: implementing a safety plan, separating and supervising the students involved, providing staff support for students as necessary, reporting incidents to law enforcement if appropriate, and developing a supervision plan with the parent(s)/guardian(s).

### **Retaliation**

Any form of retaliation against a student who alleges student bullying or harassment is strictly forbidden. Students who believe they have experienced retaliation will report the occurrence to the principal. The principal will take the disciplinary action warranted.