



OFFICE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE OF GREENSBURG

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**POLICY 4445 — PROHIBITING
HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, HAZING, OR BULLYING**
9/18/2007

The Office for Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Greensburg is committed to providing a caring, friendly, safe, and respectful environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and visitors of our schools. A safe, secure, and respectful educational environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards and build appropriate relationships with others. Therefore, acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation, and bullying (including cyberbullying) are unacceptable behaviors and are prohibited in our schools. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and a teacher's ability to educate students in a safe, positive environment. School personnel cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under their direct supervision. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of any of our schools and the rights and welfare of its students, and is within the control of the school in its normal operations, it is the school's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist the schools of the Diocese of Greensburg in our goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence and other similar disruptive behavior. Administration, faculty, staff, and volunteers are to demonstrate appropriate behavior by treating others with civility and respect, and being aware of and not tolerating harassment, intimidation, hazing, and bullying. If incidents do occur, students should be able to report and know that the inappropriate behavior will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. An act of harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying (which collectively or shall be referred to in this document as "bullying") by either an individual student or group of students is expressly prohibited on school property; at a school-sponsored activity or event off school property; on a school bus; on the way to and/or from school; or off school grounds if these actions are intended to and/or do adversely affect the safety and well-being of students while in school (including cyberbullying). This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in such an act but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's such unacceptable behavior.
- B. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the schools of the Diocese of Greensburg shall permit, condone, or tolerate such acts.
- C. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
- E. The principal (or designee) will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against any individual who is found to have violated this policy.

Section 1: DEFINITIONS

- 1.1. Bullying involves conduct by a person, including verbal conduct, that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being.
- 1.2. Harassment, hazing, intimidation, and bullying are any acts, words or other behaviors, by an individual or group against another individual or group, characterized by:
 - 1.2.1 Intent to harm
 - 1.2.2 Intensity and duration over a period of time
 - 1.2.3 An interpersonal relationship where there is an imbalance of power, not mutual or intentional provocation by the victim
 - 1.2.4 Inflicting physical or emotional harm or discomfort or damage to the person's reputation and/or relationships; and
 - 1.2.5 A level so severe, persistent, or pervasive that an intimidating or threatening educational environment is created or the orderly operation of the school is substantially disrupted.
- 1.3. Bullying can take many forms including but not limited to: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendo, demeaning comments, cartoon drawing, graffiti, pranks, gestures, staring/leering, physical attacks, flashing a weapon, physical restraining, threats, taunting/ridiculing, stalking, malicious teasing, name calling, relationship undermining, social isolation or exclusion, other written, verbal and/or published items including cyberbullying (see Section 8), destroying/damaging property, or other physical actions.

Section 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Responsibilities of Administrators, Supervisors, Teachers and Others

To the extent that a person has supervision of other persons, activities and environments, each administrator, principal, teacher, aide or volunteer shall:

- 2.1.1. Have the responsibility for maintaining a work place, work area, learning area and/or activity area free of harassment, intimidation, hazing, and bullying. Teachers should establish a positive, friendly, and trusting relationship with the class and each individual student. The best results are obtained through a combination of generous verbal praise or other social reinforcements for positive activities and consistent negative consequences for aggressive, rule-violating behavior.
- 2.1.2. Have the responsibility to ensure that all information concerning the policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation, hazing, or bullying is disseminated to all subordinates, to all families, and to all students. This information may be in the form of rules, regulations, orders, procedures, policies, or other written or oral directives. All parties are to be instructed as to the full meaning and application of all such directives.
- 2.1.3. Have the responsibility to be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that may lead to or constitute bullying and immediately report to his or her immediate supervisor: any actions viewed by him or her which, in his or her opinion, may be construed as falling within the definition of bullying as contained within the policy; and/or any instances, reports or allegations of bullying which come to his or her attention
- 2.1.4. Have the responsibility, upon receiving an allegation of bullying, to submit a report form as described in Section 3 of this policy.

2.1.5. Administer or support the efforts of our partner organizations in administering an anonymous questionnaire survey to students, every 2 years at a minimum, to determine the nature and extent of bully/victim problems that affect students and their education.

2.1.6. Document incidents in the Diocesan PowerSchool student management system for the purpose of program evaluation and planning, as directed by the Superintendent and the Office for Catholic Schools.

2.2 Responsibilities of Students

To the extent that students have influence with other persons, their own words and actions, and school activities and environments, each student shall:

- 2.2.1 Respect and obey all teachers, staff, and volunteers
- 2.2.2 Speak and act appropriately
- 2.2.3 Respect other students in word and action
- 2.2.4 Respect the school property and the property of others
- 2.2.5 Not harass, intimidate, haze, or bully others
- 2.2.6 Recognize peer conflict, report problems, and work to resolve conflict
- 2.2.7 Be responsible for protecting the rights of others
- 2.2.8 Accept responsibility for her/his own actions as well as the actions of a group when participating in such behavior
- 2.2.9 Be truthful and candid if observing behaviors that could be a form of bullying
- 2.2.10 Be courageous to report behaviors to a teacher or administrator
- 2.2.11 Make it a point to include all students who are easily left out.

Section 3: REPORTING PROCEDURES

3.1 Any student, employee, staff member, aide or volunteer who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or any such person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged act(s) immediately to the building principal (or designee). A student may report bullying anonymously. The Office for Catholic Schools encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the reporting form available from the building principal. An oral report shall be considered an official report and must be documented.

3.2 The building principal (or designee) is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of bullying at the building level. If the report is given verbally, the principal (or designee) shall reduce it into written form using the Report Form (See Addendum I).

3.3 All other members of the school community, including parents/guardians, students, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy to a school employee. While submission of the report form is not required, it is encouraged. Report forms are available in the school and diocesan offices, as well as on the Diocese of Greensburg webpage: www.dioceseofgreensburg.org.

3.4 Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's: grades, educational environment, future employment, work assignments or work environment.

3.5 The school and the Office for Catholic Schools respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witness(es) as much as possible, consistent with the school's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations. Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or as confidential investigative data, and will not be disclosed except as required by law.

3.6 Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on an anonymous report, but only when validated.

3.7 If the complaint concerns alleged conduct by the Principal, the report form shall be delivered to the Superintendent.

Section 4: INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

4.1 Upon receipt of a report or complaint that alleges harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying, the building principal (or designee) shall undertake a prompt, thorough and complete investigation of the alleged incident in as confidential a manner as possible. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation shall be documented using the Investigation Form (see Appendix II) and may include other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator. The building principal (or designee) may take immediate steps, at her/his discretion, to protect the complainant, student(s), or others, pending completion of an investigation of bullying, consistent with applicable law.

4.2 Whether a particular action(s) or incident(s) constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and the surrounding circumstances.

4.3 The building principal (or designee) is not obligated to disclose to a victim any educational or personnel data, including any disciplinary action taken against an alleged perpetrator. To the extent permitted by law, the principal will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student(s) involved in a bullying incident and the remedial action taken, based on a substantiated report.

4.4 A full written report shall be completed by the principal or the principal's designee upon completion of the investigation. Such report may include, but shall not be limited to:

- 4.4.1 Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of the reporting or aggrieved party.
- 4.4.2 Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of the accused party.
- 4.4.3 Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of all witnesses.
- 4.4.4 *Diocese of Greensburg Schools Harassment, Intimidation, Hazing, and Bullying Investigation Form*
- 4.4.5 Factual findings and recommendations.
- 4.4.6 All written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) shall be signed by the person offering such statements.

Section 5: DISCIPLINE AND REMEDIAL ACTION

The response to students who commit one or more acts of bullying should be determined based on the totality of the circumstances. In all cases, the school should attempt to actively involve parents/guardians in the remediation of the behavior(s) concerned.

5.1 Initiate immediate talks with the bully or bullies to include:

- 5.1.1 Documenting involvement of participation
- 5.1.2 Sending a clear, strong message that the behavior is not acceptable
- 5.1.3 Warning that future behavior will be closely monitored
- 5.1.4 Warning that additional negative consequences will be administered if the behavior does not stop
- 5.1.5 Immediate consequences may be warranted for inappropriate actions in their first occurrence

5.2 Talk with the victim and his/her parents/guardians to include:

- 5.2.1 Documenting specifics of the incident

5.2.2 Providing information about the plan of action to be taken by school personnel and parents/guardians to deal with the behavior

5.2.3 Encouraging the immediate reporting of any new episodes or attempts to school personnel

5.3 In determining the appropriate response to students who commit one or more acts of bullying, school administrators should consider the following factors:

5.3.1 The development, maturity levels, and/or special learning needs of the parties involved

5.3.2 The levels of harm

5.3.3 The surrounding circumstances

5.3.4 The nature of the behaviors

5.3.5 Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior

5.3.6 The relationship between the parties involved

5.3.7 The context in which the alleged incidents occurred

It is only after meaningful consideration of these factors that an appropriate consequence should be determined, consistent with the diocesan policies and school procedures.

5.4 Upon completion of the investigation, the building principal (or designee) will take appropriate action. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions, referral to school and outside resources, detentions, up to and including suspension or expulsion. In summary, action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the applicable statutory authority, and the school and diocesan policies and regulations.

5.5 The parents/guardians concerned should be contacted. Depending on the situation, meetings can be held together with parents/guardians of both sides, or to minimize tensions meetings can be held with each family separately. To support the teacher convening this meeting, the school psychologist, guidance counselor, principal or assistant principal may be invited to attend.

Section 6 PROTECTION FOR THOSE REPORTING INCIDENTS

The Diocese of Greensburg Schools prohibit intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged bullying, any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation; or any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement may be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the person who reported the incident. Disciplinary action will be in accordance to diocesan policies, procedures, and agreements, and may range from positive behavior intervention up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Section 7: FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Students, school employees, visitors or volunteers who are found to have falsely accused another of bullying shall receive consequences in accordance with diocesan policies, procedures, and agreements. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement may be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the person who was falsely accused. Consequences shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, and may range from positive behavior intervention up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Section 8: CYBERBULLYING

8.1 Definition

Cyberbullying is when someone is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by a peer using information and communication technologies.

8.2 Related Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures herein related to other forms of bullying, and in the Diocese of Greensburg Schools Technology Resource Acceptable Use Policy, also apply to cyberbullying. However, because the motives, methods, profile, and demographics of cyberbullies are varied and sometimes different from the traditional bully, the solutions and prevention messages must address their special issues.

The schools have a valid concern and legal obligation to maintain discipline and protect their students while in their care in the classroom, on school grounds, and at school-sponsored activities. However, if cyberbullying originates or occurs off school grounds and outside of school hours and does not directly impact the school itself, schools have limited authority to react to cyberbullying. Each school's Technology Resource Acceptable Use Policy, signed by the student and parent, must include a provision reserving the school's right to discipline the student for actions taken off school grounds if these actions are intended to and/or do adversely affect the safety and well-being of students while in school. Documentation on how the incidents affect the school must be kept.

8.2.1 Children should be counseled to immediately tell a responsible adult. Depending on what they are doing, how they are doing it, and if repeated, cyberbullies' actions might escalate from annoyance, to bullying, to a violation of their ISP's terms of service or to the school's disciplinary code, to criminal acts.

8.2.2 If the cyberbullying is repeated and threatening, the victim and the parents/guardians should contact the school so the situation can be monitored in school for the safety of all. School authorities must respond to allegations of cyberbullying:

8.2.2.1 By gathering information using the Investigation Form and procedures detailed in this policy, including the telecommunication method used and the effect of the threat at school. Collecting and preserving electronic evidence is important to facilitate the investigation and any eventual prosecution. Do not: 1) install or allow to be installed any programs; 2) remove or allow to be removed any programs; or 3) take or allow other remedial action on the involved computer or communication device during this process. These actions may adversely affect the investigation and any eventual prosecution.

8.2.2.2 In one or more of the following ways:

- Contact law enforcement if the victim is in danger of physical harm
- Contact both sets of parents/guardians and try to mediate the situation and reiterate applicable policy
- Institute an educational and awareness program to help stop further cyberbullying by students, and to help educate parents/guardians about the problem

Section 9: POLICY DISSEMINATION, PREVENTION PROGRAMS, AND CURRICULUM

9.1 Information regarding the policy against bullying shall be incorporated into the school's employee in-service program and policies.

9.2 It is the responsibility of the administration and staff to ensure that each child is made aware and understands definitions, conditions, and examples of bullying. The schools will provide annual education and information to students and parents/guardians regarding bullying, including information regarding the Diocese of Greensburg Schools' policy prohibiting bullying.

9.3 Classroom lessons explaining inappropriate behaviors, role-playing such behaviors, modeling appropriate responses, and teaching proper steps in reporting incidents are to be provided periodically, on a basis to be determined, through a prevention program. Such programs can be delivered by outside organizations using their curriculum or by the school.

9.4 Intervention programs may also be delivered by Intervention Specialists, Guidance Counselors, SAP Liaisons, and/or professional school personnel.

9.5 Four Basic Principles for Prevention/Intervention in Bully/Victim Problems are:

9.5.1 Awareness and warm, positive involvement of adults (e.g., teachers, principals, school counselors, parents/guardians);

9.5.2 Set and stick to firm limits as to what behavior is unacceptable (i.e., Bullying is not accepted in our school);

9.5.3 Consistently apply non-hostile, non-physical negative consequences for rule violation and unacceptable behavior; and

9.5.4 Encourage adults to act as authorities and positive role models in students' academic learning and social relationships in school.

9.6 Prevention programs and curriculum should be based on periodic needs assessment. Examples of strategies for prevention and/or intervention for students in regard to bullying are:

Holding periodic classroom meetings to discuss such topics as needed.

9.6.1 Having students take an anti-bullying pledge.

9.6.2 Using a yearly planner that reinforces strategies taught in a bully prevention program.

9.6.3 Creating a display that demonstrates positive character traits with examples gleaned from the students.

9.6.4 Forming discussion groups for students wanting to air complaints and suggest solutions.

9.6.5 Establishing a bullying prevention committee.

9.6.6 Creating a long-term anti-bullying plan and raise school and community awareness and involvement.

9.6.7 Using student surveys to determine if there is a bullying problem.

9.6.8 Involving parents/guardians in planning, discussions and action plans.

9.6.9 Establishing classroom rules against bullying.

6. What did the alleged offender(s) say or do?

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

7. Why did the bullying occur?

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

8. Did a physical injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:

- No Yes, but it did not require medical attention Yes, and it required medical attention

9. Was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? Yes No

If yes, how many days was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? _____

10. Did a psychological injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:

- No Yes, but psychological services have not been sought Yes, and psychological services have been sought

12. Had steps been taken to resolve such activity prior to this report? Yes No Not applicable

13. Is there any additional information you would like to provide? _____

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For office use

Received by: _____
(School Personnel Name and Position)

Date received: _____



DIOCESE OF GREENSBURG – OFFICE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, HAZING OR BULLYING INCIDENT SCHOOL INVESTIGATION FORM

School Personnel Completing Form: _____ Position: _____

Today's date: _____ / _____ / _____ School: _____
Month Day Year

Person Reporting Incident (From reporting form) Name: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Student Parent/guardian Other _____

1. Name of victim: _____ Age: _____ Days absent as a result of the incident: _____
(Please print)

2. Name(s) of alleged offender(s) (If known):	Age	School	Is he/she a student?	Days absent due to incident
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____

(Please print)
 Total number of alleged offenders: _____

INVESTIGATION

3. What actions were taken to investigate this incident? (choose all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed victim <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed alleged offender(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed witnesses <input type="checkbox"/> Witness statements collected in writing <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed school nurse <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed any medical information available <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed teachers and/or school staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed victim's parent/guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed alleged offender's parent/guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Examined physical evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Conducted student record review <input type="checkbox"/> Obtained copy of police report <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ |
|--|--|

4. Nature of Incident: Possible reasons/alleged motives for the bullying incident (choose all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Because of race <input type="checkbox"/> Because of national origin <input type="checkbox"/> Because of marital status <input type="checkbox"/> Because of gender <input type="checkbox"/> Because of gender identity <input type="checkbox"/> Because of religion <input type="checkbox"/> Because of disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Because of imbalance of power <input type="checkbox"/> Because of physical appearance <input type="checkbox"/> To impress others <input type="checkbox"/> Just to be mean <input type="checkbox"/> Because of another reason (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> The reason is unknown |
|--|---|

5. Frequency: Did the bullying occur at regular times/occasions/places? How often?

6. Was a clear-cut threat involved? What was said and/or done?

7. Effect:

- Disrupted school environment and the educational process
- Physical Harm Any possible permanent effects? Yes No
- Emotional/psychological harm or discomfort
- Absenteeism
- Damage to reputation and/or relationships
- Other (specify) _____

8. What corrective actions were taken in this case (choose all that apply)?

- None were required, this was a false allegation
- None, the incident did not warrant any corrective action
- Student conference
- Student warning
- Letter of apology
- Mediation
- Counseling
- Parent letter
- Parent phone call
- Parent conference
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension/expulsion
- Contacted law enforcement
- Other (specify) _____

9. Additional pertinent information gained during investigation _____

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

10. Physical evidence collected: _____

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

- ◇Please attach copies of any physical evidence and written reports of interviews
- ◇Please enter incident(s) in PowerSchool

Bullying Prevention Tips

For Students:

1. If bullied, tell your parents/guardians. Telling is not tattling.
2. Tell a trusted teacher, counselor, principal, or have your parents/guardians talk to the school.
3. Do not retaliate or get angry.
4. Respond evenly and firmly or say nothing and walk away.
5. Develop friendships and stick up for each other.
6. Act confident.
7. Take a different route to and from school.
8. Avoid unsupervised areas of school.
9. Do not bring expensive items to school.

For Parents/Guardians:

1. Encourage your child to share problems with you with the assurance that it is not tattling.
2. Praise and encourage your child - a confident child is less likely to be bullied.
3. Help your child develop new friendships - new peers can provide a new chance.
4. Maintain contact with your child's school. Keep a detailed record of bullying episodes and communication with the school.
5. Encourage your child to participate in sports or physical activity to improve esteem.