



**ST. COLETTA'S OF ILLINOIS
LT. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, JR. SCHOOL
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN**

POLICY & PROCEDURES

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

POLICY: It is the policy of Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. School for Exceptional Children at St. Coletta's of Illinois to maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment and bullying, which may include but not to be limited to, race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, religion, creed, physical or cognitive disability, gender identity, order of protection status, status of being homeless or actual potential marital or parental status including pregnancy, or other protected group status.

PURPOSE: Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. School for Exceptional Children prohibits any form of harassment including bullying that is sufficiently severe, pervasive and persistent so as to interfere with or limit the ability of an individual to participate in, or benefit from Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. School for Exceptional Children program or activities, or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment. This policy applies to all students of Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. School for Exceptional Children at St. Coletta's of Illinois and is intended to protect students from discrimination and harassment and bullying. "Bullying", including "cyberbullying," is any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- 1) Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
- 2) Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
- 3) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or

- 4) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the school.

PROCEDURE: Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

I. Reporting

Any student that believes he or she is the victim of or is becoming a victim of harassment, including bullying, by a student or school employee is encouraged to immediately report the alleged offending acts to the school principal (708-342-5278 or dangelini@stcil.org) or teacher. This will result in the allegation(s) being documented and investigated by the assigned administrative personnel. Investigations will continue until it is revealed the event occurred or that it did not occur. Final findings, relevant facts and recommendations will be reported to the Director of Education where a final decision will be determined. The decision will be rendered in a set period of time to expedite the matter.

Bullying can be reported to the Director of Education, the Principal or the Human Resources Director's private telephone extension or their confidential e-mailbox for anonymous reporting. Consistent with state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, parents or guardians will be promptly notified of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and a discussion will occur, as appropriate.

Social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures will be made available to persons served and students who feel they are or are becoming a victim of harassment including bullying.

II. Investigation

All allegations of bullying and/or harassment will be promptly investigated and addressed including the following:

- A. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within ten (10) school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
- B. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
- C. Notifying the principal or school administrator or his or her designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
- D. Consistent with Federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights and providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.
- E. Interventions to address bullying will include but not be limited to: school counseling and social work services, restorative measures including conflict resolution and peer mediation, social-emotional skill building, school psychological services, and community based services. In addition, we will post depictions on bulletin boards and hallways that school and classrooms are bully free zones. Finally, students will treat each other with dignity and respect. The key to interventions is to respond, not ignore it. We will empower victims and witnesses. The primary direction is to create a sense of belonging and community.
- F. Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited and may be subject to actions warranted by the behavior that may include but not be limited to: consequences of discipline, dismissal, and/or involvement of law enforcement.
- G. Accusations of bullying by an individual that are found to be false may result in consequences and appropriate remedial actions.

There will be a policy evaluation process to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the Bullying Policy that includes, but is not limited to, factors such as:

- A. The frequency of victimization.
- B. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school.
- C. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.
- D. The types of bullying that are common or occurring.
- E. Bystander intervention or participation.
- F. The information developed as part of the evaluation process must be posted on the district website. If the internet website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, school board members, school personnel, parents, guardians, and students

The school will investigate whether a reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of the district's or school's jurisdiction. Furthermore, the school will provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the district and the community.

- II. The bullying policy aligns with the other policies of the school board community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs. The policy had a range of stakeholders that provided input, such as: students, parents, administrators, counselor, behavior specialist, teachers, and the board. Each policy on bullying adopted by the school will:

- A. where applicable, be posted where other policies, rules, or standards of conduct are posted in the school.
- B. be posted on the district or school website.
- C. be included in the school handbook.
- D. be distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

Effective Date: 7/11/17
Reviewed: 5/8/20; 9/2021
Revised 2/25/22; 3/17/22