

Anti-Bullying Policy

We are committed to making our school a safe and caring place for all students to grow as God's dear children. In response to God's love for us and by His power, we will treat each other with Christian love and respect and we will refuse to tolerate bullying at school.

At St John's Lutheran School we acknowledge that children have been entrusted to our care. With that care comes the responsibility of providing a safe environment so that physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth can take place. The mandate to care for one another comes from our Lord Jesus. Jesus' commands us to love God and to love one another.

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matthew 22:37-39

At the heart of following Jesus command is a commitment by the faculty and staff of St John's Lutheran School to model the love that Jesus has shown to us, to validate the pain caused by bullying behavior(s) and to take immediate action in stopping the bullying behavior(s).

Because of the grace shown to us in Christ Jesus, we embrace a conflict resolution model that emphasizes accepting responsibility for our actions and forgiving one another. Character education focusing on God pleasing character traits is routinely taught and nurtured.

Bullying is defined as "any written or verbal expression, or physical act or gesture, or pattern thereof, that is intended to cause distress upon one or more students in the school, on school grounds, or at school activities, sanctioned events or in transit to activities or events."

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Typically, it is repeated over time. A child who is being bullied has a hard time defending him or herself.

Bullying can take many forms:

- Physical bullying (such as hitting or punching)
- Verbal bullying (such as teasing or name calling)
- Nonverbal bullying or emotional bullying (such as intimidation using gestures or social exclusion)

Harassment Policy

St. John's Lutheran Church and School is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment in any form. Harassment of any student or employee by any other student or employee is prohibited. The church and school will treat allegations of harassment seriously, and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

A charge of harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, substantiated acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action up to and including

dismissal. Students found to have made false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or an environment which is hostile or intimidating because of a person's race, creed, color, national origin, physical disability, or gender. Harassment can occur any time and includes, but is not limited to any or all of the following:

Verbal/Digital/Cellular/Cyber/Electronic Harassment: Derogatory comments or jokes with intent to harass; threatening or obscene words spoken to another person or through digital means, such as texts, posts, emails.

Physical Harassment: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements or any intimidating interference with normal movement.

Visual Harassment: Publicly displaying or making obscene gestures with the intent to harass; derogatory or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words or drawings.

Sexual Harassment: Includes unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors, and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Reporting of harassment: Students or employees who feel aggrieved because of conduct that may constitute harassment should directly inform the person engaging in such conduct that such conduct is offensive and must stop. If students or employees do not feel comfortable doing this or are unable to do so, they shall direct their complaint to the principal, a teacher, or any pastor of the congregation.

Consequences

Students who engage in any act of bullying or harassment are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include classroom discipline, discipline by the principal, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities. The severity and pattern of the bullying or harassment shall be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made.