

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Central Private School recognizes that a school that is physically and emotionally safe and secure for all students promotes good citizenship, increases student attendance and engagement, and supports academic achievement. To protect the rights of all students and groups for a safe and secure learning environment, Central Private School prohibits acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence. Bullying or harassment, like other forms of aggressive and violent behaviors, interferes with both a school's ability to educate its students and a student's ability to learn. All administrators, faculty, staff, parents, volunteers, and students are expected to refuse to tolerate bullying and harassment and to demonstrate behavior that is respectful and civil. Central Private School believes that standards for student behavior must be set through interaction among the students, parents and guardians, and staff, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline and their ability to respect the rights of others.

The scope of this policy includes the prohibition of every form of bullying, harassment, and cyber bullying/harassment, whether in the classroom, on school premises, immediately adjacent to school premises, when a student is traveling to or from school (portal to portal), or at a school-sponsored event, whether or not held on school premises. Bullying or harassment, including cyber bullying/harassment, that is not initiated at a location defined above is covered by this policy if the incident results in a potentially material or substantial disruption of the school learning environment for one or more students and/or the orderly day-to-day operations of the school or any school program.

I. Definitions

- "Bullying" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:
- Any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts, i.e. cyber bullying, through the use of internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer, or wireless handheld device, currently in use or later developed and used by students
- Systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees and is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power.
- Is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress;
- Is directed at one or more students, employees, or applicants for admissions;
- Is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological or emotional means;
- Substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students, employees, or applicants for admissions;
- Adversely affects the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress; and,

- Is based on a student or employee's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:

1. Unwanted teasing
2. Threatening and/or Intimidating
3. Stalking
4. Cyber stalking and/or Cyber bullying
5. Physical violence
6. Theft
7. Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
8. Public humiliation
9. Destruction of school or personal property
10. Social exclusion, including incitement and/or coercion
11. Rumor of spreading of falsehoods

- "Harassment" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:
- Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee
- Is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, or employee's work performance, or has the effect of substantially negatively impacting a student's or employee's emotional or mental well-being or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school and/or school work environment.
- Is directed at one or more students, employees, or applicants for admission;
- Is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological or emotional means;
- Substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students;

- Adversely affects the ability of a student or employee to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the student or employee is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and
- Is based on a student or employee's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above), or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.
- Cyber stalking is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:
 - Is to engage in a course of conduct to communicate or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication
 - Is directed at or about a specific person, causing emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.
 - Cyber bullying is defined as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, email, blogs, rooms, "sexting," instant messaging, or video voyeurism. Note: Voyeurism, which may be utilized in cyber bullying, in and of itself, is a criminal offense in the State of Louisiana.

"Bullying," "Cyber bullying," and/or "Harassment" also encompass:

1. Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
2. Retaliation also includes reporting a baseless act of bullying, harassment, or discrimination that is not made in good faith
3. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying, harassment, and/or discrimination by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by: (a) incitement or coercion; (b) accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the school; or (c) acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

"Bullying," "Cyber bullying," "Harassment," and/or "Discrimination" (hereinafter referred to as bullying, as defined on page 1, Section A for the purpose of this Policy) also encompass, but are not limited to, unwanted harm towards a student or employee in regard to their real or perceived: sex, race, color, national origin, age, disability (physical, mental, or educational), marital status, socio-economic background, ancestry, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, linguistic preference, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or social/family background or being viewed as different in its education programs or admissions to education programs and therefore prohibits bullying of any student or employee by any Board member, school employee, consultant, contractor, agent, visitor, volunteer, student, or other person in the school or outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school vehicles, and at training programs sponsored by the school.

- "Accused" is defined as any school employee, contractor, visitor, volunteer, student or other person in the school and outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school vehicles, and at

training programs sponsored by the school who is reported to have committed an act of bullying, whether formally or informally, verbally or in writing, of bullying.

- “Complainant” is defined as any school employee, contractor, visitor, volunteer, student, or other person who formally or informally makes a report of bullying, orally or in writing.
- “Victim” is defined as any school employee, contractor, visitor, volunteer, student or other person in the school or outside the school at school sponsored events, on school vehicles, and at training programs sponsored by the school, who is reported to have been the target of an act of bullying during any educational program or activity conducted by Central Private School.

II. Expectations

Central Private School expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and contractors, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

Central Private School prohibits the bullying of any student or school employee:

- during any educational program or activity conducted by Central Private School;
 - during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity on a Central Private school bus or designated vehicle;
 - through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds or on a Central Private school bus or designated vehicle, computer software that is access through a computer, computer system, or computer network of Central Private School. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this Policy.
 - through threats using the above to be carried out on school grounds. This includes threats made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity, or on a Central Private School bus or designated vehicle.
 - while the school does not assume any liability for incidences that occur in route to and from school, a student or witness may file a complaint following the same procedures for bullying against a student and the school will investigate and/or provide assistance and intervention as the principal/superintendent or his/her designee deems appropriate.
- However, if a student’s ability to receive an education or a school’s ability to provide an

education is significantly impaired, as determined by the school administration, disciplinary sanctions may be issued.

--though an incident of alleged bullying (cyber bullying or other) may occur off campus and may not entail threats of acts to occur during school hours, if a student's ability to receive an education or the school's ability to provide an education is significantly impaired, as determined by the school administration, disciplinary sanctions may be issued.

III. Training

Central Private School requires school officials to disseminate annually the policy to all school staff, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of harassment and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, or on a school bus. The principal/superintendent shall develop an annual process for discussing the school's policy on harassment and bullying with students and staff.

IV. Disciplinary Consequences

Central Private School believes that the best discipline for aggressive behavior is designed to (1) support students in taking responsibility for their actions, (2) develop empathy, and (3) teach alternative ways to achieve the goals and solve the problems that motivated the aggressive behavior.

Central Private School prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. Periodic classroom meetings should be conducted to teach bystanders how and when to respond to bullying and harassment incidents. Informal classroom discussions and activities designed to provide awareness and increase student connectedness promote a positive shift in peer norms that will support empowered bystanders.

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances, followed by the determination of disciplinary sanctions appropriate to the perpetrator's position. Central Private School requires its school administrators to develop and implement procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses to a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of bullying and harassment. The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by school administrators for determining appropriate consequences for each act of harassment or bullying.

Factors for Determining Consequences:

- Age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved
- Degree of harm (physical and/or emotional distress)
- Surrounding circumstances

- Nature and severity of the behavior(s)
- Incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behavior
- Relationship between the parties involved
- Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

Note: In order to ensure students' perception of fair and impartial treatment, a student's academic or athletic status is not a legitimate factor for determining consequences. Consequences must be perceived as fair and impartial.

School employees will also be held accountable for bullying or harassing behavior directed toward school employees, volunteers, parents, or students. Consequences for a student who commits an act of bullying and harassment shall vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with the school's approved code of student conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to: correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the behavior; and protect the victim of the act. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

Examples of Consequences:

- Admonishment
- Participation in a guided reflection process designed to teach alternative behavior
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Loss of privileges
- Classroom or administrative detention
- Referral to disciplinarian
- In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend, for students
- Out-of-school suspension
- Legal action
- Expulsion or termination

V. Reporting an Act of Bullying

The investigation of a reported act of bullying of a student, school-based employee, parent/guardian, or other persons providing service to the school is deemed to be a school-related activity and begins with the report of such an act. Central Private School requires the principal/superintendent and/or designee to be responsible for receiving oral or written complaints alleging violations of this policy.

Any student (and/or the parent on that complainant's behalf if the complainant is a minor) who believes he/she is a victim of bullying (or any individual, including any student who has knowledge of any incident(s) involving bullying of students) is strongly encouraged to report the incident(s) in writing to a school official. Complaints should be filed as soon as possible after the alleged incident and noted on the specified data system, but must be filed within ninety (90) days after the alleged incident (i.e. within 90 school days of the last act of alleged bullying). Failure on the part of the victim to initiate and/or follow up on the complaint within this period may result in the complaint being deemed abandoned.

All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal/superintendent designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Central Private School requires the principal/superintendent and/or designee to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the principal/superintendent and/or designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within five school days after a report or complaint is made. The parents of the students involved shall receive written notice from the school on the outcome of the investigation (in compliance with current privacy laws and regulations). All reports on instances of bullying and/or harassment must be recorded for annual data review.

VI. False Accusation(s)

Central Private School prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of bullying or harassment. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying or harassment shall be in accordance with school policies, procedures, and agreements.

VII. Retaliation Prohibited

Central Private School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment or cooperates in an investigation. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment in connection with filing a complaint or assisting with an investigation under this Policy.

Retaliatory or intimidating conduct against any individual who has made a bullying complaint or any individual who has testified, assisted, or participated, in any manner, in an investigation is specifically prohibited and as detailed in this Policy shall be treated as another incidence of bullying.

VIII. Confidentiality

To the greatest extent possible, all complaints will be treated as confidential and in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. The school's obligation to investigate and take corrective action may supersede

an individual's right to privacy. The complainant's identity shall be protected, but absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The identity of the victim of the reported act shall be protected to the extent possible.

IX. Referral for External Investigation

If the act is outside the scope of Central Private School, and determined a criminal act, referral to appropriate law enforcement shall be made immediately, the parent will be notified, and the referral documented by the principal/superintendent and/ or designee in the specified data system.

While the school does not assume any liability for incidences that must be referred for external investigation, it encourages the provision of assistance and intervention as the principal/superintendent and/or designee deems appropriate.

X. Additional Referral

In all cases, Central Private School reserves the right to refer the results of its own investigation to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for possible criminal charges, whether or not the school takes any other action.

This policy should not be interpreted as to prevent a victim or accused from seeking redress under any other available law either civil or criminal.

XI. Severability

If a provision of this policy is or becomes illegal, invalid, or unenforceable in any jurisdiction, that shall not affect the validity or enforceability in this jurisdiction of any other provision of this policy.