

## BULLYING POLICY

St. Peter School has adopted the Rockford Diocese's bullying policy. Per that policy, any action, word, or behavior which harasses, intimidates, or causes physical, emotional or psychological harm to another student or students is strictly prohibited, whether the action, word or behavior is based on a person's characteristic(s) or other matter. This prohibited conduct also extends to the use of technology ("Cyber bullying") as a tool to harass or cause harm.

Bullying is prohibited during any school-sponsored education program or activity; while in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities; or through the transmission of information from a computer, a computer network, or other similar electronic device equipment. Please note that this policy is not limited to conduct that occurs on the premises of the Diocesan school or during school hours or school activities.

"Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in person, in writing or electronically ("cyber bullying"), directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing the student/students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's/students' person or property.
- Causing a substantially detrimental effect on a student's/students' physical or mental health.
- Substantially interfering with a student's/students' academic performance.
- Substantially interfering with a student's/students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by St. Peter School.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation to one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. Examples of "cyber bullying" include but are not limited to the use of e-mail, web sites, text messaging, posting or sending of electronic photos or videos on social media or "Apps" (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, etc.) to harass or intimidate. These lists are meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

*Reporting the conduct:* Any School employee who is made aware of conduct which violates this policy, or who receives a report of bullying, shall promptly report this information to the School administrator and, in the administrator's absence, to the administrator's designee, assistant principal, or dean of students. Any parent/guardian who has information that bullying involving a student(s) of the School is occurring shall promptly notify the School of this information.

*Notifying the parents/guardian:* Within 24 hours of the School being made aware of a reported bullying incident, the School administrator shall notify the parents/guardian of each of the students reportedly involved. The School administrator shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent/guardian using all contact information available to the school or which the school within that 24 hours can reasonably obtain.

*Investigating:* The School administrator shall investigate the matter, may involve School support personnel or others as deemed appropriate, and will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days of the date the report is received by the School. However, information may be discovered during the investigation which extends the investigation beyond 10 school days.

Students who violate this policy will generally be subject to the discipline policy of the student's School, but where the nature or extent of the conduct warrants, violators of the policy may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

The School administrator or designee will provide to the parents/guardians of the students who are parties in the investigation (parties are the student(s) reported to be the target of the conduct, and the student(s) reported to be committing the conduct) information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the School administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the investigation findings, and actions or interventions taken to address bullying, adhering to privacy rules and laws. To the extent appropriate, the School will identify to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the involved student(s) school- or community-based resources, if available, to assist the involved student(s). The School may require the parent/guardian of the involved student(s) to participate in community-based resources for the involved student(s). (Diocesan Policy #5170)