

SUSSEX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

In accordance with the recent New Jersey State Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Law, the following policy has been adopted in addition to our school's existing Anti-Harassment Policy.

1. Definition: "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory [handicap] disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus and that:
 - a. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property; [or]
 - b. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause [substantial] disruption in, or [substantial] interference with, the orderly operation of the school;
 - c. Creates a hostile environment at school for the student; or
 - d. Infringes on the rights of the student at school.
2. Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Actions-will be implemented for any pupil or person who commits one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Consequences may be up to and including suspension or expulsion from school. Biblical remediation will take place for all parties involved.
3. Anti-Bullying Coordinator will be the administrator. Anti-bullying Specialists are Katie Reitmeyer and Carol Dekker. A school safety team will meet 2 times per year consisting of the administrator or administrator's designee, teacher, Anti-Bullying specialists and a parent of a pupil. (Team will be provided with professional development.)
4. Investigation:
 - a. Initiated by the Administrator within 1 day.
 - b. Investigation conducted by the Anti-Bullying Specialists. The Administrator may appoint additional personnel who are not school anti-bullying specialist to assist in the investigation.
 - c. A written report of the investigation will be submitted to the Administrator no later than 10 school days from the date of the report.
 - d. The Administrator will report the results of the investigation to the School Board.
 - e. Parents who are parties to the investigation will be provided with written information regarding the nature of the investigation and outcome within 5 days after results are presented to the School Board.
5. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying information:
 - a. Policy will be disseminated annually to all staff, consultants, volunteers and parents
 - b. School website will identify the Anti-Bullying Coordinator and have a link to the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy.

6. Reporting:

- a. Administrator reports all acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying two times per year at a School Board meeting.
- b. Information will be reported to the Department of Education who grades school based on report.
- c. The school's grade is posted on the Department of Education's website.

7. Training:

- a. All school employees, consultants, and volunteers who have significant contact with pupils will receive instruction on our policy and ways to prevent harassment, intimidation and bullying.
- b. Teachers are required to complete 2 hours of instruction.
- c. Board members are required to complete training.

8. "Week of Respect" will be observed annually the first Monday of October.

Existing Anti-Harassment Policy:

The policy of Sussex Christian School is to provide an academic environment that is free from harassment—whether based on sex (gender), race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability—an environment that is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation, and harassment (including sexual harassment), where all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect. The school includes bullying in its definition of harassment. The school is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. This policy applies to the actions of administration, teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, and students. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion.

The school does not tolerate harassment of students, nor does it tolerate reprisals against any student who makes a harassment complaint. Administration, teachers, staff, volunteers, and students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion from school or discharge from employment. Any administrative personnel who receive a complaint of harassment and fail to appropriately report it or take corrective action pursuant to this policy are also subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

1. Definitions and Prohibited Acts

- a. **Sexual harassment.** "Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the work or educational setting, under any of the following conditions:
 - Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's academic status or progress. This may occur by clearly stated acts or words or by implied acts or words.
 - Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
 - The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact on the individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
 - Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through this school.

- b. **Unwelcome and Offensive.** The fact that a student may not openly object to others' actions or words does not prove that they were unwelcome. Under the law of harassment, or bullying and intimidation, a student does not have to openly object to others' actions or words to prove that the actions or words are unwelcome. Harassment, bullying, or intimidation may occur even if the student originally remains silent or fails to show disapproval. Acts and statements that may not offend some people may be highly offensive to others. Therefore, all employees, volunteers, and students should be sensitive to the feelings of others whether they object or not.
- c. **Verbal Harassment.** Prohibited statements include, but are not necessarily limited to, the use of derogatory descriptions of a student or group of students based on race, color, disability, ethnic or national origin, or age. It is also a violation of this policy to state stereotypical classifications concerning race, national or ethnic origin, color, age, or disability of a student or group of students, especially if they are repeatedly made. Although some students or individuals may enjoy discriminatory identifications and jokes, the school does not tolerate such on its premises or during working hours.

Examples of prohibited statements include, but are not necessarily limited to, derogatory or vulgar comments regarding a person's gender, sexually vulgar language, remarks about a person's physical anatomy or characteristics, dirty jokes, sexual innuendo, or display of written or graphic materials. Also prohibited are suggestive pictures, magazines, posters, offensive cartoons, and other words or pictures of a suggestive nature. Also prohibited are statements that demean women.

- d. **Physical Sexual Harassment.** Prohibited actions include, but are not necessarily limited to, touching a student in a sexually suggestive way, or touching another so as to invade his or her personal privacy. This includes intentional touching or intentional movements made in order to observe another in a sexual manner. Also prohibited are physical acts such as hitting and pushing, and making physical gestures of a sexual nature. As a general rule, any act or touching of a person that most individuals refrain from doing with a stranger should not be done with another student.
- e. **Sexual Harasser.** A harasser may be a male harassing a female, a female harassing a male, a male harassing a male, or a female harassing a female, just as long as the harassment is sexually based or based on the gender of the student.
- f. **Race, Color, National or Ethnic Origin, Age, and Disability Harassment.** Unwelcome statements, name calling, or other verbal or physical conduct based on a student's race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability is prohibited if and when any of the following occurs:
- Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's academic status or progress. This may occur by clearly stated acts or words or by implied acts or words.
 - Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
 - The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact on the individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through this school.
- g. **Electronic Harassment.** Harassment may occur through a number of mediums or means, including electronic communications. The student anti-harassment policy applies to all harassment, including any that occurs by or through any type of electronic communication. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, Internet, email, cell phones (including picture phone or text messaging as well as voice), PDAs or other communication devices, and facsimile (fax) communications of any type. This list of electronic devices is not inclusive, and the policy is intended to cover other types of electronic communication.
- h. **Physical Harassment.** Prohibited actions include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: Display of signs, pictures, cartoons, written statements, or other material that denigrates, intimidates, bullies, or otherwise discriminates against any student based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability. General harassment, pushing, shoving, or other intentional acts perpetrated in whole or in part because of the student's race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability. Physical altercations will result in a call to parents and the student will be dismissed for the remainder of the day. Work missed will receive a "zero."
- i. **Definition of Bullying or Intimidation.** "Bullying or intimidation" means any written, oral, or physical act or gesture that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of harming a student or damaging his or her property or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or that has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying includes a gesture or an act, whether written, oral, or physical, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by a characteristic such as sex (gender), race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability.
- j. **Examples of Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation.** Unwelcome conduct of this type can include a wide range of verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual or other nature. Among the types of conduct that would violate this policy are the following:
- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions.
 - Offering academic benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
 - Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
 - Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters.
 - Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, and jokes about a student's race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability.
 - Verbal abuse of a sexual or other nature; graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations.
 - Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding, or blocking movements.
 - Any conduct that has the effect of insulting or demeaning a student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or that is

severe, persistent, or pervasive so that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

2. **Application of Anti-Harassment Policy.** The student anti-harassment policy applies to school hours; to any school-sponsored event or activity, including during school-arranged transportation of any type to or from an event or activity, and whether the activity or event occurs on or off the school campus; while on school property or at school-leased facilities; or at any other time when the event or activity has any school recognition. Additionally, as a Christian school, the school has the right to expect and does expect that students and any employee of the school will conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner and/or as a Christian role model. Conduct violating these biblical standards—whether occurring at school or during school-sponsored events, activities, or functions or not, or on campus or not—is subject to appropriate action by the school. The school cannot be responsible for incidents that occur during non-school hours and at non-school sponsored activities/events.

3. **Prohibited Actions:**

- a. **Employee-Student Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation.** Employee-student harassment, bullying, or intimidation of any type is prohibited.
- b. **Student-Student Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation.** Student-student harassment, bullying, or intimidation of any type is prohibited.

4. **What to Do If You Experience or Observe Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation:**

Students who feel that they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing, bullying, or intimidating nature are encouraged to promptly report the matter to their classroom teacher, Administrator, or the Anti-Harassment Specialists indicated below.

Students who observe conduct of a harassing, bullying, or intimidating nature are also encouraged to report the matter to one of the school officials designated below. All complaints will be promptly investigated.

5. **Where to Report Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation.** The following individuals are specifically authorized to receive complaints and to respond to questions regarding harassment:

- Mrs. Trish King, Administrator
- Anti-Harassment Specialists Katie Reitmeyer and/or Carol Dekker
- Classroom Teachers

6. **Confidentiality.** Every effort will be made to reasonably protect the privacy of the parties involved in any complaint. However, the school reserves the right to fully investigate every complaint and to notify a student's parent/guardian and appropriate government officials as the circumstances warrant.

7. **Protection Against Retaliation.** It is against the school's policy to discriminate or retaliate against any person, including any student, who has filed a complaint involving harassment, bullying, or intimidation or who has testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in any investigation, formal proceeding, or hearing concerning harassment, bullying, or intimidation. However, if in the course of an investigation or subsequently the school learns that a student or others have made a complaint that was not in good faith or it was known to be false at the time of the complaint, the school reserves the right to take appropriate action. Making false complaints or complaints not made in good faith can jeopardize someone's reputation.

8. **Procedure for Investigation of a Complaint and Taking Corrective Action:** When one of the school officials designated in this policy receives a complaint, he or she shall immediately inform the administrator. The administrator will direct an investigation. If the investigation confirms the allegations, prompt corrective actions shall be taken. The individual who suffered the harassing, bullying, or intimidating conduct shall be informed of the corrective action taken. In addition, any employee or student found to be responsible for harassment, bullying, or intimidation in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination. The severity of the disciplinary action will be based on the circumstances of the infraction.