



BEREAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING/HARRASSMENT POLICY

Florida Policy **5.002 Anti-Bullying and Harassment**

Berean Christian school is committed to providing a safe, caring and positive environment to enhance the learning experience and opportunities for all students. It is a violation of school policy for any student to bully, harass or intimidate another student.

Definitions

a. Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gestures, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

1. Teasing
2. Social exclusion
3. Threat
4. Intimidation
5. Stalking
6. Physical violence
7. Theft. Stealing or hiding backpacks or other personal possessions
8. Sexual, religious, or racial/ethnic harassment
9. Public humiliation. Repeated or taunting, name calling, belittling, mocking putdowns
11. Damaging or Destruction of property
12. Placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his person or property
13. Cyber-bullying
14. Cyber-stalking

Conduct that would not ordinarily be considered bullying may include but not limited to:

1. Mere teasing
2. "talking trash"
3. Trading insults
4. Not liking someone
5. Being excluded in a game (only six can play)
6. Accidentally bumping into someone

Harassment

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

1. Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

c. Bullying and harassment also encompass:

a. Retaliation against a student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Berean prohibits any retaliation against anyone who submits a report. If the investigation determines that a violation has occurred, Berean will take disciplinary action against those who engaged in the misconduct.

Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made with honest intentions is considered retaliation and may result in disciplinary action.

b. Unwanted harm towards a student in regard to his/her actual or perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship or any other characteristic protected by law.

Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identify of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

1. Cyber-stalking means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic email to electronic

communication, directed at a specific person, causing emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

2. Parent means either or both parents of a student, any guardian of a student, any person in a parental relationship to a student, or any person exercising supervisory authority over a student in place of the parent.

Expectations

Standards of student behavior are set cooperatively through interaction among students, parents or legal guardians, staff and community members. Students are required to:

- a. conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior;
- b. respect the person, property, and rights of others;

The bullying of any student or school employee is strictly prohibited:

- a. During any school-related or school-sponsored program, function or activity
- b. While on school transportation
- c. While off campus
- d. Through the use of any computer, technology or electronic device if the bullying substantially interferes with or limits the victim's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school, regardless of who owns the computer, technology or electronic device or where the computer, technology or electronic device is located.

Procedures for Reporting Acts of Bullying or Harassment

School personnel must report all incidents of bullying to their supervisor or dean whether they personally observe the incident or learn of it by some other means. There will be an immediate, thorough, and objective investigation of all complaints.

- a. The principal, dean, teacher or staff shall be responsible for receiving complaints of bullying or harassment.
- b. All school employees are required to report alleged bullying or harassment to the principal, or dean.
- c. Students and parents are encouraged to report any act of bullying or harassment to principal or dean. Such complaints may be made anonymously, in-person or in writing. However, formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any written or oral report of an act of bullying or harassment shall be considered an official means of reporting and shall be documented.

Investigation of Complaints

The investigation of a reported act of bullying or harassment will be investigated by the principal or dean. The investigation shall begin no later than the next school day.

The investigation must include documented interviews of the victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses. Each individual must be interviewed separately and at no time will the alleged

perpetrator and victim be interviewed together. The investigator shall collect and evaluate the facts, including, but not limited to:

- a. A description of the incident(s) including the nature of the behavior;
- b. The context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred;
- c. How often the conduct occurred;
- d. Whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;
- e. The relationship between the parties involved;
- f. The characteristics of the parties involved, i.e. grade, age, etc.;
- g. The identity of individuals who participated in bullying or harassing behavior;
- h. Where the alleged incident(s) occurred,
- i. Whether the conduct adversely affected the student's education or educational environment;
- j. Whether the alleged victim felt or perceived an imbalance of power as a result of the reported incident;
- k. The date, time and method in which parents or legal guardians of all parties involved were contacted.

Prevention Practices

School Wide Policy to Prevent Bullying

- a. Clearly defines bullying behavior and provide examples (posted in classroom)
- b. Clearly establishes school rules and expectation for all students
- c. Communicates rules and expectations to all students (classroom teachers)
- d. Staff communicates rules and expectations to all students
- e. Encourage students to take personal responsibility for creating a safe learning environment
- f. Make sure "hotspots" (locker room, hallways and cafeteria) have adult supervision
- g. School encourages and reinforces students' reporting of bullying incidents

After an investigation of the facts

- a. Principal or dean will decide whether or not there has been a violation of the bullying policy based on the facts and circumstances.
- b. Referral: In conjunction with the disciplinary consequences steps may be recommended to stop the bullying or harassing behavior.
- c. A final report must be kept on file. The report must include each incident of bullying or harassment and the resulting consequences, including discipline, interventions

and referrals. A report that does not meet the criteria of bullying or harassment must be kept on file.

- d. Notification to parents of all students involved shall take place on the same day an investigation has been initiated
- e. Respond and obey authority

Consequences

When facts and surrounding circumstances reveals that a student has engaged in bullying, consequences can range from after school detention, suspension or expulsion.

Consequences will be enforced for those who are found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another of bullying or harassment. Retaliation against any person who makes a report of bullying or harassment will not be tolerated. Consequences for those who are found to have committed an act of bullying or harassment shall be determined by administration.

Counseling Intervention

A teacher or parent may request an informal consultation with the school counselor to determine the need for counseling to address the bullying or harassment that is alleged to have occurred.

Victims of bullying or harassment may be referred to the school counselor for problem-solving techniques, support and interventions to address the needs of the victim.

Perpetrators of bullying and/or harassment acts may be referred to the school counselor to determine the need for counseling and/or interventions to address the behavior of the students who bully or harass others. Example, but are not limited to anger management.

Parents may also be referred to outside agencies or provided with assistance or support as deemed appropriate.

