

Administrative Procedure 336

ANTI-BULLYING

Background

The Board of Trustees affirms that the Catholic ethos requires that all students, their families, and employees within Catholic education have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. It is the responsibility of each school community to create a culture of caring which will not tolerate bullying.

Harassment (Administrative Procedure #190), over a period of time, leads to bullying behavior. Bullying *Behaviors* are about an imbalance of power where there is a deliberate intent to cause harm or distress. These behaviors can be verbal, social, psychological or physical. They impact on the lives of the person/people being bullied, those doing the bullying and those looking on. This policy will assist schools in combating bullying in the school, responding to bullying behaviors and protecting and supporting all parties involved.

Guidelines

Bullying behaviors can occur in many ways. Some examples include:

- ❑ **Physical:** hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others.
- ❑ **Verbal:** teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumors, using foul language
- ❑ **Non-Verbal:** writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using e-mail or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures
- ❑ **Exclusion:** deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone
- ❑ **Extortion:** threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money
- ❑ **Property:** stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property

Specific Responsibilities

1. The respective teacher will deal with all initial cases of bullying. The teacher will keep the Vice Principal/ Principal informed.
2. An interview (formal or informal depending on the severity) will be conducted to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying and its effect on the victim, in an attempt to develop *mutual empathy*. Decisions will be made as to the level of severity of the incident and whether the parents (of both parties) need to be informed. As a result of the interview, the teacher will determine if there is a need to provide appropriate strategies to assist both the victim and the bully.
3. A less formal post-interview follow up of both parties should be conducted a week after the initial incident, to ensure that the situation has improved.

If the student continues to engage in bullying behavior, the Principal or Vice Principal will interview the student. The school administrator will determine if the parent, a Priest, RCMP Liaison Officer, and/or the Class Teacher/Home Room teacher should be involved in the interview.

4. Direct consequences will include calling on internal and external assistance to develop a plan of action to manage student behavior, conflict resolution, anger management etc.
5. The victim of the bullying may need further support to develop strategies to overcome the situation. The class teacher will seek to involve the parents in the formulation of the plan.
6. When action plan(s) have been implemented, all those engaged in their development will continue to monitor and formally follow up at regular intervals.
7. Students involved in recurring incidences of bullying could lose their extra curricular privileges, school privileges, and risk the possibility of suspension or expulsion for the school year.
8. Schools are expected to develop more detailed polices/ procedures that ensure that schools are Safe and Caring and work towards a Bully Free Alberta.

Reference Administrative Procedure #190 Anti-Harassment
Bully Free Alberta <http://www.bullyfreealberta.ca/>
Alberta Education Safe and Caring Schools <http://www.edc.gov.ab.ca/safeschools/>