



CHILD OF GOD STATEMENT

(Anti-Bullying Statement)

Saint Joseph School is committed to providing an excellent Catholic education for all its students. We follow Jesus' great command, "Love one another." As such we expect that every child of God will be treated with respect and be seen as made in His image and likeness. Such recognition demands that we think before we act, think before we speak and think before we write. It also demands that we practice the virtues of charity, generosity and patience. We are also catholic in that we include and embrace all students from many cultures, races, and religious beliefs.

We provide a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying. Saint Joseph School acknowledges that its purpose for existence is rooted in the mission of the Church. We must share and live out, through Catholic tradition, the message of Jesus Christ and be committed to providing an integrated Catholic educational environment that permeates all aspects of its daily life and operations. All children must be challenged to reach their full potential by fostering a love of learning and by providing an environment that fosters respect, understanding and appreciation of one another as children of God.

What follows is our Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan as required by the Archdiocese of Boston Bullying Prevention Policy and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This policy is aligned with the legislation passed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It prohibits bullying on school grounds, as well as "cyberbullying." Through cyberbullying, students spread rumors about one another on websites like *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram* and other social networks. Cyberbullying also includes sending threatening or harassing messages via the web and through text messaging. Bullying, as defined by the bill and this policy, encompasses crimes such as stalking and harassment.

Definition of Bullying

“Bullying” is the **repeated use** by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- Causes physical or significant emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. By way of example only, Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:
 - Unwanted teasing
 - Threats
 - Intimidating
 - Stalking
 - Cyber-stalking
 - Physical violence
 - Theft
 - Sexual, religious, racial or any other type of harassment
 - Public humiliation
 - Destruction of School or personal property
 - Social exclusion, including incitement or coercion
 - **Rumor or spreading of falsehoods**

For the purpose of this policy, bullying does not mean mere teasing, put-downs, “talking trash,” trading of insults, or similar interactions among students.

For the purpose of this Plan, whenever the term “Bullying” is used it is to denote either Bullying or Cyber-Bullying (as defined below). “Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- Wire
- Cellular phones
- Any form of text messaging via a cellular phone
- Electromagnetic
- **Photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.**
- **Cyber-bullying shall also include 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. Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.**

Bullying is prohibited:

- At school and at all school facilities;
- At school-sponsored or school-related functions, whether on or off school grounds;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school;
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, licensed or used by the school; and
- At non-school related locations and through non-school technology or electronic devices if the bullying affects the school environment.

Saint Joseph School will take action against students who bully other students.

First Offense

The principal will record this information in the student's file and will contact the parents of those students directly involved.

- Punishment for at-fault student will include a 1-3 day out of school suspension with F's earned for every missing assignment or test.

Second Offense

- The principal will record this information in the student's file and will contact the parents of those students directly involved
- Parents will be informed, and will be asked to meet with the principal to discuss the final opportunity for a change in behavior.
- A written warning will be issued, letting the student know that he/she will be expelled should there ever be a next time.

Third Offense

- **The student will be expelled.**