

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

**PART V – Trinity School**
**SECTION II – Administrative/Operational**

**Policy # 2-003SH**

**Anti-bullying**

**PURPOSE**

(105 ILCS 5/27-23.7) The Illinois General Assembly finds that a safe and civil school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Bullying causes physical, psychological, and emotional harm to students and interferes with students’ ability to learn and participate in school activities. The General Assembly further finds that bullying has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping and dropping out of school, fighting, using drugs and alcohol, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Because of the negative outcomes associated with bullying in schools, the General Assembly finds that school districts, charter schools, and non-public, non-sectarian elementary or secondary school personnel about what behaviors constitute prohibited bullying.

**POLICY**

According to Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7), Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in all school districts, charter schools, and non-public, non-sectarian elementary and secondary schools. No student shall be subjected to bullying:

1. during any school-sponsored education program or activity;
2. while in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designed school bus stops, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities;
3. through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This time (4) applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require a district or school staff to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

“Bullying includes “cyber-bullying” and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communication made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more the following:

1. placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s or students’ person or property;
2. causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student’s or students’ physical or mental health;
3. substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ academic performance
4. substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

**DEFINTION**

Bullying, may take various forms including without limitation 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. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo electronic system, or photo optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity 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 effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. "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 effects enumerated in the definition of bullying as defined above.

**PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING BULLYING**

* A student who experiences bullying as defined above and a staff member who witnesses an incident of bullying are encouraged to promptly report the incident orally or in writing to the School Director, Stacey Paprocki within 24 hours using an Unusual Incident Report form. Anonymous reports are also accepted after school hours that includes details of the incident to (815) 463-0719.
* Reports of bullying or harassment can also be sent to the School Director, Stacey Paprocki at spaprocki@trinityservices.org or called in to (815) 463-0719. Any information sent to this email address or called in will be reviewed by the Trinity School Leadership Team and is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians.

**PROCEDURE FOR PROMPT INVESTIGATION**

The witnesses and/or student/target of bullying shall report the incident to the building’s School Director and complete the Unusual Incident Report form, giving as many specific details as possible. After a formal report has been filed the School Director will investigate and make a determination of next steps regarding communication with the involved stakeholders, additional supports, disciplinary action, and restorative measures.

The School Director or designee shall promptly conduct and complete an investigation within 10 days of receipt of the written report. The Leadership Team should take into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying. All related documentation of the incident will be kept in the School Director’s office.

As part of the investigation, the primary investigating Leadership Team Member will see that Parents or Legal Guardians of any involved students are informed of the incident and ongoing investigation. The School Director will also ensure that the procedure for informing Parents or Legal Guardians strictly follows Federal and Illinois State Laws regarding student privacy rights. If necessary, the IEP Team shall convene to plan for additional supports or to implement/revise a Behavior Intervention Plan.

**PROCEDURE FOR INTERVENTION AND REMEDIAL ACTION**

* All School staff shall intervene immediately upon witnessing incidents of bullying to ensure the safety of all involved.
* There should be no reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying. The primary investigating Leadership Team Member in consultation with the student’s Case Manager, Network Director and School Director will determine the consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation.
* The procedure for Anonymous reporting should be informally phoned in to the School Director at (815) 463-0719 within 24 hours of the incident, and include such details as: student’s name, date of incident, time of incident, location, persons involved, specific details surrounding the circumstances of the incident.
* Trinity School’s Leadership Team will determine consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying.
* If disciplinary action is recommended based on the outcome of the investigation, including falsely accusing another of bullying, the following factors shall be taken into consideration: (1) age and maturity level, including developmental age of the student, (2) severity of the behavior and surrounding circumstances, (3) previous pattern of bullying.
* If it is determined that an act of bullying falls outside of the scope of Trinity School’s jurisdiction and capability, proper local Law Enforcement may be contacted.
* In the case of a threatening electronic message that may impact the school environments of those present in the milieu, the Leadership Team will evaluate the level of threat and may collaborate with local Law Enforcement to investigate the incident to keep all parties safe. Regarding any cyber communications that may impact a student in their home environment; Parents or Legal Guardians will be advised to contact their local Law Enforcement Agency.
* Trinity School is committed to following up with all involved parties and will provide resources for students or families who may seek counseling or therapy services outside of school, as a result of the bullying incident.
* Any party who is not satisfied with the outcome may appeal the decision to the Program or Executive Director.

**POLICY EFFICACY AND EVALUATION PROCESS**

* Trinity School acknowledges that a policy alone is not enough to combat or prevent bullying in a school setting. Trinity School is committed to creating a culture that fosters positive social relationships amongst our student body and in accordance with the State Law that ensures a safe environment where students are protected from bullying.
* At Trinity School all staff members are encouraged to provide every student with a caring, compassionate, positive and reinforcing environment while giving them the tools they need to maintain cooperative relationships with peers and staff. Opportunities for social skills building will be embedded into each student’s daily classroom routine.
* All school related staff will be provided yearly Safety-Care Behavioral Training that provides them with the skills and competencies to effectively prevent, minimize, and manage behavioral challenges with dignity, safety and the possibility of change.
* Furthermore, all staff members will be provided training regarding identifying the signs of bullying as well as their roles and responsibilities in responding to acts of bullying.
* Following incidents of bullying, the Leadership Team will document the event as well as contribute to a record for identifying:

 1) the frequency of victimization

 2) student, staff and family observations of school safety

 3) areas of the school where bullying occurs

 4) the types of bullying occurrences

 5) actions, interventions or participation of bystanders

 6) summary information

* The content of this policy will be available at <https://www.trinityservices.org/services-and-supports/trinity-school> , and updated biennially.
* This policy is consistent with the policies of the relevant school boards, elementary and secondary schools, as well as Trinity Services, Inc.