

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING POLICY

For Students and Parents/Guardians

Immaculate Conception School ("ICS" or the "school") prohibits all acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying of its students. ICS has determined that a safe, civil and respectful environment in school, in conformity with Catholic social teachings, is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, disrupts both a student's ability to learn and ICS's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority and mutual cooperation are essential elements of the learning environment at ICS. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward one another and all members of the school community. Students are also expected to comply with this school policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation and bullying.

1. **Definition.** For purposes of this policy, "harassment, intimidation or bullying" ("HIB") means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by an 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 disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off of school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of ICS or the rights of other students, faculty, staff or any other person, 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;
 - b. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students: or
 - c. creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.
 - d. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to prohibit or abridge the legitimate statement, expression, or free exercise of the beliefs or tenets of the Catholic faith by ICS or any member of ICS's faculty, staff, or student body.
2. **Minimum Appropriate Behavior.** ICS expects students to refrain from all acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Indeed, ICS expects students to conduct themselves at all times in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities and the care of school facilities and equipment, consistent with the student code of conduct. ICS also expects that students will act in accordance with the student behavior expectations set forth in detail in the Code of Student Conduct.

3. **Consequences for Violation of this Policy.** The school, in its discretion, shall determine appropriate consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who commits one or more acts of HIB under this policy. Such consequences may include positive behavioral interventions but may also include suspension or expulsion of students as set forth in the Code of Student Conduct. Students found to have engaged in acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying, or any other action in violation of this policy, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, to be determined by ICS in its discretion, up to and including immediate expulsion from the school. In appropriate cases, ICS may report the incident to law enforcement personnel and/or take other appropriate legal action.

Remedial measures may include actions designed to correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the problem; protect and provide support for the victim of the act; and other appropriate corrective action. In deciding upon the appropriate consequences and remedial measures for each act of harassment, intimidation or bullying, the school, in its discretion, may consider all relevant factors, including but not limited to, the following:

- a. Age, developmental and maturity levels of the students involved,
- b. Degrees of harm;
- c. Surrounding circumstances;
- d. Nature and severity of the behaviors;
- e. Incidences of past or continuing patterns of behavior;
- f. Relationships between the parties involved; and
- g. Context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Students, parents, and visitors should report alleged violations of this policy to the principal on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident, or as soon thereafter as reasonably practicable. Students, parents, and visitors may report an act of harassment intimidation or bullying anonymously.

4. **Procedure for Review.** The school will conduct a thorough and complete review into each report of an alleged incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying, to be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee promptly following the verbal report of the incident. The review shall be conducted by the principal or the principal's designee. The review shall be completed and the written findings submitted to the principal as soon as possible, generally not later than ten(10) school days from the date of the written report of the alleged incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Should information regarding the reported incident and the review be received after the written report has been submitted, the principal may amend to the original report of the results of the review.

Parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the review will be provided with certain information about the review, in accordance with Federal and State law and regulation. This information will include the nature of the review; whether evidence of harassment, intimidation, or bullying was found; and whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

A parent or guardian of any student who is a party to the review may request a formal meeting with the principal and/or the principal's designee(s) regarding the result of the review. The parent or guardian should request such a meeting no later than five (5) days after ICS notifies the parent or guardian of the results of the review. At the meeting, the parties may hear from and consider information provided by appropriate school personnel regarding the alleged incident, the findings from the review of the alleged incident, recommendations for consequences or services, and any programs instituted to reduce such incidents, prior to rendering a determination. Following this meeting, the principal may affirm, reject, or modify the original decision.

5. **Prohibition on False Reporting.** ICS also prohibits students from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying. If any student is found to have made a false or misleading accusation regarding acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying, ICS reserves the right to take appropriate action to ensure that the individual(s) responsible for making the false or misleading accusation is/are punished appropriately, up to and including expulsion from the school.
6. **Applicability.** This policy applies to all acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions or on a school bus and, as appropriate, acts that occur off school grounds.
7. **Publication.** This policy shall be annually disseminated to all students, and parents who have children enrolled in Immaculate Conception School. The current version of this policy shall be maintained on the home page of the school's website. All students and parents who have children enrolled in Immaculate Conception School shall be required annually to sign an acknowledgment form acknowledging receipt of this policy.

This policy is subject to modification by ICS from time to time in its discretion.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING POLICY

I, the undersigned student, have received a copy of the Immaculate Conception School's Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Student Policy. I understand that I am expected to read this entire policy and abide by its terms.

Student's Signature

Date

Name - Printed

I, the parent/guardian of the above-referenced student, have received a copy of the Immaculate Conception School's harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Student Policy. I understand that I am expected to explain this policy to my child and help him or her understand and comply with its terms.

Student's Signature

Date

Name - Printed