SS. Peter and Paul School BULLYING POLICY

Bullying is a serious problem that affects many students at all grade levels, sometimes seriously affecting their ability to succeed in school and their emotional and psychological development. Bullying and cyber bullying are a major concern to our faculty, staff, students, and parents. It (bullying) is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any reported incidents of bullying will be fully investigated. Our school is a "bully-free" zone. The SSPP Code of Conduct will be used to determine appropriate consequences for those students committing the bullying. Our students need to feel safe in order to maximize their academic and social potential.

Bullying may involve but not be limited to actions such as: hitting or punching (physical bullying), teasing or name-calling (verbal bullying), or intimidation through gestures or social exclusion. Or it may be cyber bullying, which is sometimes referred to as online social cruelty or electronic bullying. Cyber bullying can involve: sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images; posting sensitive, private information about another person; pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad; (or) intentionally excluding someone from an online group.

It is important to know and understand the signs of bullying, as well as know the difference between bullying and peer conflict. Peer conflict is a normal part of relationships and growing up. Sometimes, there are incidents that are referred to as "bullying", but are actually more along the lines of peer conflict. To help understand and know the difference, refer to the chart below.

What is Bullying?

Be able to identify bullying, and tell the difference between that and peer conflict. It helps knowing the difference so that the term "bullying" is not overused.

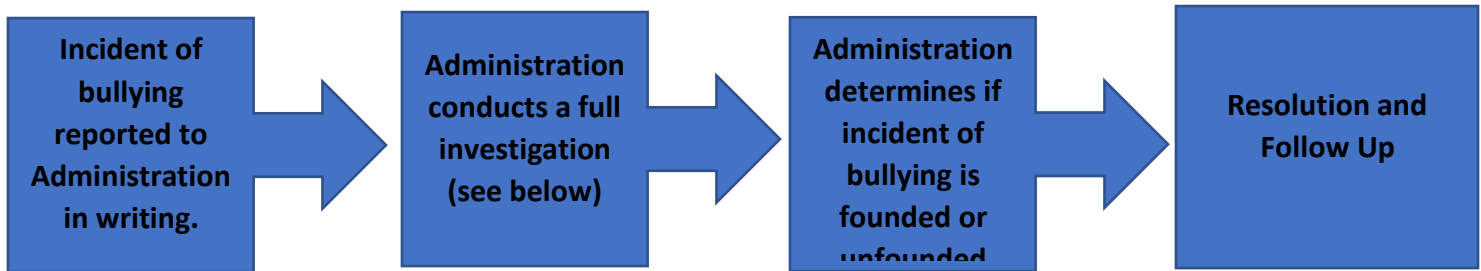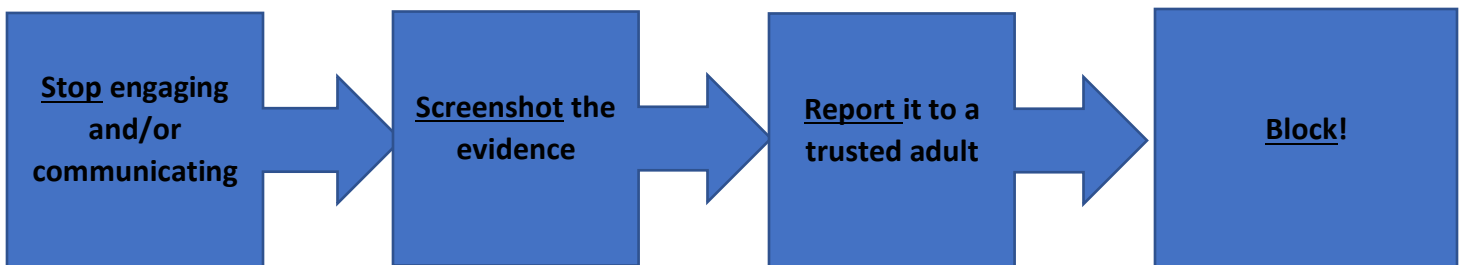| Peer Conflict	V.	Bullying
Being Rude/Mean: unintentionally or intentionally saying or doing something that hurts someone else **Teasing ("roasting"):** fun, good natured, "give and take" between friends to get BOTH parties laughing **Conflict:** struggle, dispute, disagreement, or misunderstanding		For a behavior to be considered "bullying", it must meet all 3 criteria below: • Intentional • Aggressive (verbal, physical or indirect*) • Repetitive *Verbal: name calling, verbal threat, etc. *Physical: throwing, spitting, hitting, etc. *Indirect: rumors, exclusion *Cyber: apps, internet, texting

If you feel that your child is a victim of bullying, please report the incident in writing immediately. All incidents of bullying can be sent to Mrs. Rizzo via email: principal@sspphamburg.com. The flowchart below shows the steps taken when an incident is reported.

| Incident of bullying reported to Administration in writing. | → | Administration conducts a full investigation (see below) | → | Administration determines if incident of bullying is founded or unfounded | → | Resolution and Follow Up |

Incidents of bullying/harassment will be addressed by the principal and a response initiated in a timely manner. The following steps of investigation will be taken:

- Individual discussions with the parents/guardians of the target(s) and the parents/guardians of the student(s) responsible for the behavior
- Individual discussions with the target(s) and the student(s) responsible for the behavior
- Discussions with direct witnesses or bystanders
- Discussion with supervising adult
- If required by Diocesan Policy, report the incident to the Department of Catholic Education
- If required by law, report the incident to law enforcement
- Follow up with the target within 48 hours of the report
- A report, complete with plan of action and follow-up summary, may be filed in each student's records

If you believe your child is a victim of cyberbullying, please follow the flowchart below and advise your child to follow the steps as well.

| Stop engaging and/or communicating | → | Screenshot the evidence | → | Report it to a trusted adult | → | Block! |

The trusted adult would then make the report of cyberbullying in writing, and the steps listed previously will be taken.

If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid (founded), prompt attention and disciplinary action will be taken immediately. In the event the investigation reveals that a student has not engaged in any wrongful behavior (unfounded), the principal will inform both parties of such. Reasonable measures will be taken to protect the confidentiality of the student who files a complaint and to protect the reputation of any student wrongfully charged in a complaint.

A plan of action will be age and incident appropriate. The responsible student will provide an apology and may face disciplinary action. The responsible student may also be required to enter into a behavior contract or to seek counseling. In addition, the target may agree to an action that limits contact such as a change in seating or alternate activity circumventing the responsible individual from direct contact. He or she may also agree to talk to a counselor, follow up with a teacher/principal, or undergo peer mentoring. Consequences of the behavior will be in accord with our Discipline Policy and Acceptable Use Policy (if technology was used in the incident).