

**West Oaks Academy**  
**INFORMATION:**  
**Bullying/Harassment Policy**

# What Parents Need to Know

# Florida State Statute 1006.147

“Stand Up for all Students Act”

Prohibits bullying or harassment to any student, school employee, volunteer, parent and/or school visitor.

# West Oaks Academy Bullying/Harassment Policy

Our Board is committed to a safe, secure, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment that is free from bullying or harassment of any kind for all of its students, employees, volunteers, parents and/or school visitors.

# Is it Bullying or Normal Conflict?

The word bullying is overused to describe situations, so we must first determine if the problem is bullying.

# What is Conflict?

It happens every now and then and can be accidental and is unplanned.

It is not about seeking attention or gaining power and control.

# What is Bullying?

Harm occurs as the result of an intentional act, rather than the result of an accident.

A power imbalance exists between the target and the bully. (Real or imagined by the target)

The bully enjoys carrying out the action.

The bully repeats the behavior, often (if given a chance) in a systematic way.

The target is hurt physically or psychologically and has a sense of being persecuted or oppressed.

*-Source Olweus*

# Florida State Statute: Definition of Bullying

Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting,...



# Definition of Bullying continued...

...or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or a student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; to cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation.

# It may involve, but is not limited to:

- (Unwanted) teasing
- Social exclusion
- Threat(s)
- Intimidation
- Stalking
- Physical violence
- Theft
- Public humiliation
- Sexual, religious, or racial/ethnic harassment
- Damaging or destruction of property
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or property
- Cyber-bullying
- Cyber-stalking

# Characteristics of Bullying

**Repeated**

**( Note: A severe one time incident may still meet the definition of bullying)**

**Imbalance of Power**

**Purposeful**

# What is Harassment?

Any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

# What is Harassment continued...

- Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to her or her person or damage to his or her property
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school

# What is Cyber-bullying & Cyber-stalking?

The use of electronic communication or technological devices to bully or harass

# Cyber-bullying & Cyber-stalking

“Use of electronic communication or technological devices to include...”

- Email messages
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- Cellular phone communication
- Internet blogs
- Social websites
- Internet chat rooms
- Internet postings
- Digital pictures / images
- Defamatory websites to engage in acts of bullying and harassment

# Cyber-bullying continued...

No matter where or what computer is used, if a student uses it to bully/harass a student and/or school based adult, if reported, disciplinary sanctions must be taken by the school administrator.



# How to Respond When Your Child Reports a Conflict or Bullying Situation

- Respond calmly.
- Help them calm down (if necessary).
- Question them to get details about the situation.

# When Your Child Reports To You

Tell them you're glad they came to you and get the details of the incident.

**What happened first?**

**What happened next?**

**Who else was there?**

**What did they do?**

**Where did it happen?**

**When did it happen?**

# Your Child's Report Continued...

If you think it is bullying complete a parent or student reporting form found on the West Oaks Academy website parent portal.

Whether the situation is or is not bullying, the critical issue is to resolve the problem and empower your child.

# How to Approach the School

Call the school and make an appointment with the appropriate person.

Remain Calm.

Have as many facts as possible and a completed bully report form if appropriate.

# School Response To Bullying

Once the parent or student reporting form has been submitted, school staff has 5 school days to complete the investigation.

Schools will address the issue of safety with you and your child.

# School Response To Bullying

Remember, the school cannot give you any information about students involved due to confidentiality regulations.

# Talk To Your Child About Positive Peer Relationships

Encourage your child to cultivate positive relationships and not to hang out with kids who make him/her feel badly about themselves.

# Anti-Bully Strategies

- Help develop talents and positive attributes in your child.
- Encourage your child to make contact with friendly students.
- Help your child put the conflict in perspective and not take it personally.
- Teach your child safety strategies.
- Nurture a positive self view.



# Teach Your Child How to be a Positive Bystander

- Help solve the conflict
- Get adult help
- Call the victim over
- Show disapproval
- Show empathy
- Stand up and speak out

# Incident Reporting and Immunity

**GOOD FAITH** – Anyone making a report in good faith is immune from cause of action/damages. It will NOT effect employment, grades, learning/working environment or assignments.

**FALSE REPORTING WILL RESULT IN** consequences, and appropriate remedial action will apply.

# Actions Taken Against Students Who Violate the Policy

- Counseling
- Letters/phone calls to parents of both the bully and the victim
- Social Skills Training
- Safety Plan
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Reported to law enforcement

# Support Available for Students Who Are Targets of Bullying

- Counseling
- Safety Plan
- Social Skills Training

# Consequences for Parents, Visitors/Volunteers Who Violate This Policy

- Determined by the school administrator
- Trespassed
- If applicable, report to appropriate law enforcement agency

# How Can Parents of Elementary Students Prevent Bullying?

- Model speaking and acting in respectful ways to solve problems.
- Discuss bullying behaviors and how hurtful it can be.
- Make behavioral expectations clear and consistent when siblings/peers engage in hurtful teasing and bullying.
- Help children understand the meaning of friendship.
- Urge children to report bullying.

# We Encourage All Parents To...

- Know the school rules, expected behaviors and consequences for bullying/harassment.
- Be engaged in your child's education.
- Communicate regularly with teachers.
- Report bullying behaviors immediately.
- Don't hesitate to ask for help.

# Remember...

You Are Your Child's Most Important Teacher