

BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING POLICY

(This policy is contained in the *Seton Catholic School Student Handbook*.)

Seton Catholic School is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for our students. The school recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to violence that is more serious. Therefore, the Seton Catholic School prohibits bullying and cyberbullying. Definitions **“A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.”** Dan Olweus

Bullying is an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another person or group of people. Bullying, also includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is an intentional electronic act or series of acts, through the utilization of computers, the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, or electronic devices that are directed at another person or group of people.

This definition includes three important components:

- 1) Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
- 2) Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
- 3) Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength.

When bullying occurs in a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive, it has the effect of doing any of the following:

- 1) Substantial interference with a student’s education.
- 2) Creation of a threatening environment.
- 3) Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

By definition, a school setting includes the school building itself, school grounds, school vehicles, designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

Reporting

Seton encourages students who have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to a teacher or school principal. In addition, any student, school employee, or person associated with the school is requested to report bullying that is observed. All complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying. Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

Every teacher will review this policy annually with students. The policy shall be posted on the school website.

Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include, but shall not be limited to:

- 1) Counseling within the school
- 2) Parental conference
- 3) Loss of school privileges
- 4) Exclusion from school-sponsored activities
- 5) Detention
- 6) Suspension
- 7) Expulsion
- 8) Counseling/Therapy outside of school
- 9) Referral to law enforcement officials.

INTERNET & SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

The following are prohibited by students, guardians, or school employees on any personal websites, blogs or social networking sites:

- Threats or disparaging remarks about the school, its employees or its students.
- Cyber bullying or sexual harassment or any behavior that is ill-mannered or disrespectful.

The consequences for the above will be handled by the administration and priests on an individual basis.