

(ANTI-BULLYING POLICY OF (NAME OF SCHOOL))

Prefatory Statement

The School values a healthy and peaceful educational environment.

All members of the School community, which includes students, parents and guardians, and the community members should be made aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on victims and the School in general, and should work towards ensuring that students can work in an environment without fear.

The School will do whatever is reasonably necessary and possible within its authority to eradicate bullying in all its forms.

The School takes a strong stance against bullying.

Bullying is unacceptable in our School and will not be tolerated.

I. Preliminary Provisions

Section 1. Legal Basis. This Policy is adopted in compliance with Republic Act No. 10627, otherwise known as the “Anti-Bullying Act of 2013”.

Section 2. Scope and Coverage. This Policy applies to the Kindergarten, Elementary, and High School programs at the (Name of School), hereafter referred to as the “School”.

Section 3. The following shall be the parties and/or stakeholders in bullying incidents:

1. ***Bully*** - refers to a student who commits any of the acts of bullying as defined in R.A. No. 10627, its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), and this Policy. This term also includes a student who participates in any of the acts of bullying by supporting or aiding the commission thereof.
2. ***Bystander*** - refers to any student who witnesses or has personal knowledge of any actual or perceived acts or incidents of bullying or retaliation as defined by R.A. No. 10627, its IRR, and this Policy. Bystanders include the silent majority of students who witness bullying but are unable to do something because of fear; and those who try to stop bullying by defending the victim or reporting the incident.
3. ***Bullied or Victim*** – refers to any student who experiences the acts of bullying or retaliation as defined by R.A. No. 10627, its IRR, and this Policy.
4. ***Parent or Guardian*** - refers to the parent or guardian, of either the bully or victim, or other students involved in the bullying incident, on record with the School.
5. ***School*** – refers to *(Name of School)*.
6. ***School Personnel*** - refers to all staff and employees of the School; regardless of rank or status; whether classified as academic, academic-support, or non-

academic; and whether full-time or part-time; and whether probationary, contractual, or regular.

7. *Service Providers* - refers to outsourced personnel of the school, which includes, but is not necessarily limited to, maintenance and security, coaches, trainers, and drivers and staff of accredited transport or bus services.

II. Prohibition on Bullying

Section 4. Statement of Policy. The School as a matter of policy prohibits bullying in all its forms, regardless of the means, place and time of its commission.

Section 5. Definition of Bullying. The School adheres to the definition of bullying including the different forms, as provided in the IRR of R.A. No. 10627, which provides:

“Bullying” refers to any severe, or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; infringing on the rights of another student at school; or materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school; such as, but not limited to, the following:

(1) Any unwanted physical contact between the bully and the victim like punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, slapping, tickling, headlocks, inflicting school pranks, teasing, fighting and the use of available objects as weapons;

(2) Any act that causes damage to a victim’s psyche and/or emotional well-being;

(3) Any slanderous statement or accusation that causes the victim undue emotional distress like directing foul language or profanity at the target, name-calling, tormenting and commenting negatively on victim’s looks, clothes and body;

(4) *“Cyber- bullying”* or any bullying done through the use of technology or any electronic means. The term shall also include any conduct resulting to harassment, intimidation, or humiliation, through the use of other forms of technology, such as, but not limited to texting, email, instant messaging, chatting, internet, social media, online games, or other platforms or formats as defined in DepED Order No. 40, s. 2012.

Section 6. Other Forms of Bullying. The term *“bullying”* shall also include:

(1) *“Social bullying”* – refers to any deliberate, repetitive and aggressive social behavior intended to hurt others or to belittle another individual or group;

(2) *“Gender-based bullying”* – refers to any act that humiliates or excludes a person on the basis of perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI);

(3) Retaliation against a student who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying; and

(4) All other forms of bullying analogous to those provided under the Anti-Bullying Law and its IRR.

Section 7. Common Forms of Bullying. The common forms of bullying shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. **Calling names** with the express purpose of humiliating, embarrassing a student, or otherwise cause trouble.
2. **Rudeness and Intimidation.** These may be done through unwanted physical acts but may also be carried through non-verbal means. A mean look or stare is an example of a non-verbal bullying.
3. **Threats and extortion.** Creating fear and extorting money, food or possessions from other students. Threatening texts or messages in chat rooms and social media sites are included in this form.
4. **Malicious gossip and exclusion from the group.** Circulating gossip or damaging stories that tends to discriminate, exclude, and hate another student.

Section 8. Fair and equal treatment of bullying incidents. The School shall address each and every bullying incident fairly and equally. All forms of bullying should be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Section 9. Situs of Bullying. The School has the authority to impose school discipline to its students including this Policy. This authority of the School is not confined within the School premises.

The School particularly undertakes to prevent and address bullying committed at the following:

a. **On Campus.** School Grounds including classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, canteen, faculty rooms, auditorium, gymnasium, computer rooms, laboratories, and all places and facilities within the campus.

b. **Off-Campus** which covers:

- 1) properties immediately adjacent to School grounds including places or establishments frequented by our students;

- 2) any other place where school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions or programs are conducted;
- 3) School bus stops;
- 4) School service, buses, or transport used by the School in an activity off-campus; and
- 5) School buses or School services operated or accredited by the School to transport students to and from the campus.

c. **On Cyberspace.** Text messages, emails, chat rooms, and other social media and web sites regardless of the web site administrator's permission to use foul or explicit language or content, or absence of any particular standard of use.

III. Prevention Programs

Section 10. The School shall raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through various programs; assemblies; activities; and integration in the curriculum as it may deem appropriate.

The School undertakes to develop anti-bullying programs that are comprehensive, multi-faceted and shall involve all education stakeholders and personnel. The programs may contain among others:

(1) School-wide initiatives centered on:

- a. positive school climate and environment conducive to the attainment of learning objectives, the development of healthy relationships and the understanding of and respect for individual differences;
- b. periodic assessment and monitoring of the nature, extent, and perceptions of bullying behaviors and attitudes of students;
- c. periodic review and enhancement of the students' and personnel's manual or code of conduct in relation to bullying;
- d. conduct of activities for students, school personnel and service providers on how to recognize and respond to bullying.
- e. continuing personnel development to sustain bullying prevention programs; and
- f. coordination with Local Government Units, barangay (Barangay Council for the Protection of Children) and other stakeholders.

(2) Classroom-level initiatives that focus on:

- a. reinforcing school-wide rules pertaining to bullying;
- b. building a positive sense of self and interpersonal relationships through the development of self-awareness and self-management, interpersonal skills and empathy, and responsible decision-making and problem-solving;
- c. discussion of issues related to bullying, and strategies for responding to and reporting of incidents of bullying;
- d. teaching positive online behavior and safety and how to recognize and report cyber-bullying; and
- e. providing an inclusive and caring learning environment for students.

(3) Involving parents in bullying prevention activities, such as:

- a. discussions on this Policy, emphasizing bullying prevention during Parents-Teachers Association meetings and seminars; and
 - b. conducting or sponsoring education sessions for parents to learn, teach, model, and reinforce positive social and emotional skills to their children.
- (4) Monitoring students who are vulnerable to committing aggressive acts or who are perpetrators of bullying, or who are possible targets or victims, for the purpose of early intervention. This activity shall be conducted with utmost confidentiality and respect for all parties concerned.

Section 11. Early Detection of Bullying. There are signs indicative that a student is being bullied in school. A change in the student's behavior or actions, change in the student's routines, or the absence or presence of other circumstances, may be a sign that the student is a victim of bullying. The teacher, parents or guardian shall check and report to School authorities these changes should they become manifest. These changes may include the following:

1. Feeling sick in the morning;
2. Unwillingness to go to school and leave home;
3. Unwillingness to be left alone in the School;
4. Crying to sleep at night or has nightmares;
5. Bedwetting;
6. Doing poorly in class or school work;
7. Coming home with torn clothes or damaged belongings;
8. Has possessions missing;
9. Has unexplained cuts and bruises;
10. Being frightened to say what is wrong;
11. Being anxious or lacking in self-confidence; and
12. Attempting or threatening self-harm.

IV. Intervention Programs

Section 12. The School shall develop intervention programs to promote the continuity of comprehensive anti-bullying policies.

Intervention refers to a series of activities which are designed to address the following:

- a. issues that influence the student to commit bullying;
- b. factors that make a student a target of bullying; and
- c. effects of bullying.

Section 13. Forms of Intervention. Interventions may include programs such as counseling, life skills training, education, and other activities that will enhance the psychological, emotional and psycho-social well-being of both the victim and the bully.

Such programs may:

- a. involve activities that will address acts of bullying;
- b. emphasize formative and corrective measures rather than punishment;
- c. conform to principles of child protection and positive and non-violent discipline;
- d. help the victim, the bully, and the bystanders understand the bullying incident and its negative consequences; and
- e. provide opportunities to practice pro-social behavior.

Section 14. The School shall develop intervention strategies involving all parties, such as bullies, victims, bystanders, parents, school personnel, service providers and all other persons who may be affected by the bullying incident.

V. Responsibilities in Bullying Incidents

Section 15. The following are the responsibilities of stakeholders in bullying incidents:

(1) Bully

The “**Bully**” shall:

- a. Comply with the intervention and prevention programs of the school;
- b. Submit to due process of the school as part of disciplinary action whenever necessary.

(2) Bullied or Victim

The Bullied or Victim shall:

- a. Avoid retaliation;
- b. Report his/her experience to the teacher, Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office, or other persons or school authorities; and
- c. Be circumspect in his/her claims against the alleged bully.

(3) Bystander

The bystander shall:

- a. Promptly report cases of bullying, that which he or she witnessed or has personal knowledge of, to the teacher, Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office, or any person or school authorities;
- b. Not to join the bullying;
- c. Secure the safety of the victim whenever possible without causing harm to himself or herself.

(4) School

The School through the Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office, teachers and other school administrators shall:

- a. Implement the provisions of this Policy;

- b. Provide all students and their parents or guardians a copy of this Policy. This policy shall likewise be included in the School's student and/or employee handbook and shall be conspicuously posted on the School walls and website;
- c. Educate students on the dynamics of bullying, the anti-bullying policies of the school as well as the mechanisms for reporting of acts of bullying or retaliation;
- d. Educate parents and guardians about the dynamics of bullying, the child protection or anti-bullying policy of the school and how parents and guardians can provide support and reinforce this Policy at home;
- e. Devise prevention, intervention, protective and remedial measures to address bullying;
- f. Conduct the capacity building activities for guidance counselors/teachers and the members of the Child Protection Committee;
- g. Ensure effective implementation of the anti-bullying policy and monitor compliance therewith;
- h. Ensure the safety of the victim of bullying, the bully, and the bystander and determine the students' needs for protection;
- i. Ensure that the rights of the victim, the bully, and the bystander are protected and upheld during the conduct of the investigation;
- j. Maintain a record or statistics of incidents of bullying and retaliation;
- k. Coordinate with appropriate offices and other agencies or instrumentalities for appropriate assistance and intervention, as required by the circumstances.

(5) Teachers and Other School Personnel

Teachers and other School personnel shall:

- a. Participate and cooperate in all prevention, intervention, and other measures related to bullying by the School;
- b. Report incidents of bullying;
- c. Update himself/herself on detection and proper handling of bullying incidents;
- d. Be objective and handle incidents with due consideration of confidentiality and tender age of students involved;
- e. Coordinate closely with the Child Protection Committee of the school; and
- f. Observe due diligence in the prevention of bullying cases during classes or other student activities he/she is directly in charge of.

(6) Students in General

Students shall:

- a. Participate and cooperate in all prevention, intervention and other measures related to bullying implemented by the School;
- b. Avoid or refrain from any act of bullying;
- c. Intervene to protect the victim, unless it will jeopardize his safety and security; and
- d. Report to school authorities any incident of bullying.

(7) Parents

Parents shall:

- a. Participate in bullying prevention activities of the school which includes:
 1. Education on relevant policies;
 2. Sharing of best practices on how to reinforce positive social and emotional skills to the children.
- b. Cooperate with the school authorities in bullying incidents involving their child/children; and
- c. Not to take matters into their own hands in resolving bullying incidents.

VI. The Anti-Bullying Committee

Section 16. The Anti-Bullying Committee. The School's existing Child Protection Committee (CPC) shall also be designated as the School's Anti-Bullying Committee as required under DepEd Order No. 40, series of 2012.

Section 17. Composition. The Committee shall be composed of the following:

- a. Principal – Chairperson
- b. Guidance Counselor – Vice Chairperson
- c. Representative of the Teachers
- d. Representative of the Parents
- e. Representative of students; and
- f. Representative from the Community as designated by the Punong Barangay, preferably a member of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC). (*ad hoc*)

Section 18. Functions. The Anti-Bullying Committee shall perform the following tasks:

- a. Conduct awareness-raising programs with school stakeholders in preventing and addressing bullying;
- b. Ensure that the anti-bullying policy adopted by the school is implemented;
- c. Monitor all cases or incidents related to bullying reported or referred by the teacher, guidance counselor or coordinator or any person designated to handle prevention and intervention measures mentioned by the preceding sections of this Policy; and
- d. Make the necessary referrals to appropriate agencies, offices or persons, as may be required by the circumstances.

VII. Handling Bullying Incidents in the School

Section 19. Exclusive Jurisdiction. Complaints of bullying and other acts under this Policy shall be within the exclusive jurisdiction of this School or jointly by Schools

whenever the incident involves students from different schools. Bullying incidents shall not be brought for amicable settlement before the Barangay, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations. Complaints for acts covered by other laws shall be referred to the appropriate authorities.

Section 20. Effect of Institution of Criminal Action. The filing of criminal complaint by either or both the bully and the bullied before the law enforcement agencies, prosecutor's office, or courts of law shall not operate to divest this School of its authority to conduct its own investigation, fact finding, and/or disciplinary proceeding on the students involved.

Section 21. Immediate Responses. The victim or anyone who witnesses or has personal knowledge of a bullying incident or retaliation shall immediately call the attention of any school personnel. The school personnel who was notified of a bullying incident or retaliation shall intervene, by:

- a. Stopping the bullying or retaliation immediately;
- b. Separating the students involved;
- c. Removing the victim or, in appropriate cases, the bully or offending student, from the site;
- d. Ensuring the victim's safety, by:
 1. Determining and addressing the victim's immediate safety needs; and
 2. Ensuring medical attention, if needed, and securing a medical certificate, in cases of physical injury.
- e. Bringing the bully to the Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office

Section 22. Reporting the Bullying Incident or Retaliation

1. A victim or a bystander, or a school personnel who receives information of a bullying incident or retaliation, or any person, who witnesses or has personal knowledge of any incident of bullying or retaliation, shall report the same to the teacher in charge, or the Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office, who shall immediately report the matter to the Principal.

2. The School shall inform the parents or guardian of the victim and the bully about the incident.

3. If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from another school during a school authorized or school-sponsored activity on or off-campus, this School shall promptly notify the appropriate administrator or school head of the other school so that appropriate action may be taken.

4. Reports of incidents of bullying or retaliation initiated by persons who prefer anonymity shall be entertained, and the person who reported the incident shall be afforded protection from possible retaliation; provided, however, that no disciplinary administrative action shall be taken against an alleged bully or offending student solely on the basis of an anonymous report and without any other evidence.

5. Teachers shall make sure that no bullying incident should be kept unreported or unnoticed. For this purpose, a Record of Bullying Incidents Form is designed and developed where teachers in charge may keep track of bullying incidents or indications in the classroom or off-campus activities. The same shall be kept in strictest confidence in a central file with the Guidance Office.

Section 23. Fact-Finding and Documentation

The Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office shall:

1. Separately interview in private the bully or offending student and the victim.
2. Determine the levels of threats and develop intervention strategies. If the bullying incident or retaliation or the situation requires immediate attention or intervention, or the level of threat is high, appropriate action shall be taken by the school within twenty-four hours (24) from the time of the incident.
3. Inform the victim and the parents or guardian of the steps to be taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and
4. Make appropriate recommendations to the Child Protection Committee on proper interventions, referrals and monitoring.

Section 24. Referral to Experts Outside of the School. The School may, upon evaluation, refer the victim and the bully to trained professionals outside the school, such as social workers, guidance counselors, psychologists, or child protection specialists, for further assessment and appropriate intervention measures, as may be necessary. The School also undertakes to notify the Women and Children's Protection Desk (WPCD) of the local Philippine National Police, in appropriate cases involving the bully or offending student.

VIII. Disciplinary Measures

Section 25. Where students resist or refuse to respond to intervention or preventative strategies to address bullying, the School will resort to stringent actions to deal with persistent and violent bullying. Disciplinary actions may or may not be resorted to by the School depending on the circumstances of each case with due consideration to the age of the students or pupils involved.

Section. 26. Due Process

- A. Bullying cases may be initiated either through:
 - 1) a Complaint; or
 - 2) a *motu proprio* Charge from the Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office on the basis of a report of the teacher, school personnel or bystanders.
- B. The Complaint should be duly executed by:
 - (1) the complaining student with the assistance of his or her parents;

(2) or solely by the parents on the basis of their child's statements.

C. In both instances, the Complaint must be duly sworn to by the executing student and/or parent stating clearly how the act/s of bullying was/were committed and other attendant circumstances. The complaining party may attach sworn statements of witnesses and other proofs to substantiate the Complaint.

D. The Complaint or Charge for Bullying shall be filed with the Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office.

E. The Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office shall furnish the parents of the respondent student/s a copy of the Complaint or Charge and direct the student/s concerned with the assistance of the parents to file a Sworn Answer within a period of forty-eight (48) hours or within a reasonable period from receipt of the Complaint or Charge as may be allowed under the circumstances.

F. Upon receipt of the Sworn Answer, the Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office may schedule a conference with the Complainant and/or the Respondent separately to clarify the allegations in the Complaint and the Sworn Answer. The Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office may also interview witnesses, bystanders, and others who may have knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the incident.

G. The Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office shall then issue a resolution on the Complaint or Charge stating clearly its basis. A resolution finding the commission of bullying shall state the appropriate sanction. The resolution shall be deemed a recommendation to the Principal, which the latter may either disapprove or modify. The decision of the Principal may be subject to reconsideration, or appeal to the Schools Division, within a period of ten (10) calendar days from receipt of the decision.

Section 27. Sanctions

- 1) If the act of bullying committed does not fall under any offense defined in the Student Manual, the following sanctions shall apply:
 - 1.1 First Offense: Reprimand and Summon of Parents
 - 1.2 Second Offense: Suspension from Classes for three (3) to five (5) school days, or Community Service for three (3) to five (5) school days, or both. The duration of the suspension and/or community service may be further reduced or lengthened by the School depending on the nature, gravity or severity of the bullying act.
 - 1.3 Third or Subsequent Offense: Non-Readmission to Exclusion.
- 2) If the act of bullying committed falls under an offense already defined and prohibited in the Student Manual, the higher penalty or sanction shall apply.

- 3) Depending on the seriousness or gravity of the offense committed and/or the extent of injuries suffered by the victim, the School reserves the right to impose the extreme penalty of expulsion subject to approval of the Department of Education.
- 4) In addition to the disciplinary sanction imposed, the School may, after careful evaluation, likewise refer the alleged bully and/or the alleged victim for counselling of School's Guidance Counsellor or to a private counsellor of their choice, or to other intervention programs of the School should it become necessary.

Section 28. Preventive suspension. The School may at its discretion and during the pendency of the investigation, put any student on preventive suspension for a period not longer than three (3) school days, if there is reason to believe that the presence of said student might put him/her at risk of more harm, or will jeopardize the general peace and order of the campus. Such preventive suspension may extend to the parents or guardians of the students involved in the incident. In such case, the parents are barred from entering the School's premises or attend School activities during the said suspension.

Section 29. False Accusation of Bullying. If a student, after an investigation, is found to have knowingly made a false accusation of bullying, the said student shall be subjected to the same disciplinary actions or to appropriate interventions for "bullies" under this Policy.

Section 30. Confidentiality. Any information relating to the identity and personal circumstances of the bully, victim, or bystander shall be treated with utmost confidentiality by the Anti-Bullying Committee, teacher concerned, and the Office of Student Affairs (OSA)/Prefect of Discipline/Guidance Office, provided that the names may be made available to the parents or guardians of students who are or have been victims of bullying or retaliation.

Any school personnel who commits a breach of confidentiality shall be subject to appropriate sanctions including termination of employment as may be provided in the School's Employee's Handbook.

Section 31. Effectivity. This Policy shall take effect immediately upon the date of its approval and shall not be modified, altered, amended or repealed unless otherwise resolved through a valid Resolution of the Board of Trustees/Directors of the School.