



## Respectful Learning Environment

Increasingly, the media has been filled with disturbing stories about bullying in our nation's schools. We all know that bullying can cause pain and embarrassment and at the very least has no place in any school or institution that is about the dignity of human persons, about life. The fact that some of the most prominent incidents have not happened at a Catholic school does not imply that we can be complacent. Our challenge as Catholic educators is to be alert to any behavior that does not align with the values we hold and attempt to promptly stop such behaviors, should they occur.

The Diocese of Las Vegas believes that everyone should enjoy our schools equally, feel safe, secure and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion and nationality. This is essential if a positive learning environment is to exist. As stated in our school's Mission and Philosophy Statements, our schools are committed to developing a framework for moral reasoning and ethical decision-making. The faculty and staff of each school takes this responsibility seriously and endeavors to assist you in developing Catholic attitudes and behaviors as an integral part of your child's growth process. Further, our curriculum, Schoolwide Learning Expectations, and Life Skills support the necessary opportunities which allow students to grow in a school community of faith where Gospel values are nurtured and sustained.

On July 1, 2010, NRS 388.123-139 became law. It prohibits bullying in general and cyberbullying specifically. The definition set forth in Policy 4260 (Prohibition of Bullying, Intimidation, and Harrassment) states:

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying— is an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act that:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education.
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment.
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Conduct that is "substantially interfering with a student's education" will be determined by considering a targeted student's grades, attendance, demeanor, interaction with peers, participation in activities, and other indicators.

Conduct that may rise to the level of harassment, intimidation, and bullying may take many forms, including, but not limited to, slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, ostracism, physical attacks or threats, gestures, or acts relating to an individual or group whether electronic, written, oral, or physically transmitted messages or images. There is no requirement that the targeted student actually possess the characteristic that is the basis for the harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

The law encourages schools to adopt policies that ensure "a safe and respectful learning environment." The victim is not responsible for being a target of bullying. Such behaviors will not be tolerated. As stated within our Parent/Student handbooks, such behaviors may result in suspension/expulsion.

**Respectful Learning Environment**

**We believe all Diocese of Las Vegas students should:**

- Value student differences and treat each other with respect.
- Not become involved in bullying incidents or be a bully.
- Be aware of the school's policies and support system with regard to bullying.
- Report honestly and immediately all incidents of bullying to a faculty member.
- Be alert to your surroundings, especially in places without adult supervision, e.g., bathrooms.
- Support students subjected to bullying.
- Talk to teachers, counselor, and parents about concerns and issues regarding bullying.
- Work with other students and faculty, to help the school deal with bullying effectively.
- Be a good role model for other students and support them if bullying occurs.
- Participate fully and contribute to classroom lessons dealing with bullying.

Students who have been bullied or have seen someone being bullied, should tell the bully to stop the behavior and speak to an adult, (parent and/or faculty member) about the incident.

**We believe all Diocese of Las Vegas parents should:**

- Work in partnership with the school to encourage positive behavior, valuing differences, and promoting sensitivity to others.
- Discuss regularly with their child their feelings about school work, friendships, and relationships.
- Inform faculty of changes in their child's behavior or circumstances at home that may change a child's behavior at school.
- Keep themselves and their child informed and aware of school bullying policies.
- Alert faculty if any bullying has occurred.
- Support the faculty's intervention policies.

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**As a student of the Diocese of Las Vegas, I have read and agree to abide by all of the above.**

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**As a parent of a Diocese of Las Vegas student, I have read and agree to abide by all of the above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_