

MARY E. SILVEIRA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

This policy has been created to support our values of respect and caring for others and to support our students in learning together as a community.

This policy applies to all students, parents, faculty and adults on our campus, whether employed by Mary E. Silveira Elementary School or the Dixie School District, working as contractors, or volunteers.

Mary E. Silveira Elementary School Social Vision

We are a community that cares. Students feel they belong to something important. We take care of our school and everyone in it. We are safe, respectful, and responsible.

Purpose of this policy

In any school community, there will be occasions when members of the community do not get along. Sometimes members attempt to hurt, exclude or take power from each other. Sometimes these behaviors are motivated by anger, jealousy, insecurity, attention-seeking or lack of skill in dealing with conflict. This policy is designed to guide Mary E. Silveira Elementary School in how to respond to conflict and bullying, so that we move past these behaviors and develop the skills to learn and play together.

How Our School Responds to Incidents of Conflict Among Students

Conflict is part of life, and shows up in communities such as schools, where we work and play with the same group of people day in and day out during the school year. Sometimes conflicts arise between our students that they find too big or persistent to resolve by themselves. Unless we help them resolve such conflicts, students can lose focus in the classroom and divisions occur within the peer group that can travel up the grades and may affect peer dynamics years after the event. At Mary E. Silveira Elementary School we use TALK, a quick and effective protocol that parents and teachers can follow to facilitate the resolution of persistent or disruptive conflicts between two students. We encourage our parents to follow this protocol at home to reinforce what we teach at school. We encourage students to follow this same protocol when talking through a peer conflict without the help of an adult. Here is the protocol for TALKing it through.

TALK PROTOCOL

Agree to talk it through without putdowns and interruptions.

Tell what happened and how you feel.

Each of the two students takes a turn to say what happened and to name the emotions that they feel, while the other student listens.

Ask for what you need. Each student takes a turn to make specific requests for what they need from the other.

Look for solutions. The students brainstorm together what might solve the problem for both of them. This is known as looking for a “win-win” solution. Try to find at least three solutions.

Keep the best solution. Make an agreement and Commit to following that agreement.

It seals the deal if the adult follows up with the two students to check that they have successfully solved the problem.

*If the problem has not been solved,
figure out why the initial solution did not work
repeat the TALK process, and
look for new solutions*

How Our School Responds to Incidents of Bullying

We are committed to a culture where we have respect and caring for one another. We see bullying and harassment as obstacles to realizing our values for how we all get along. The following part of this policy describes our roles in responding to bullying and in supporting the culture of Mary E. Silveira Elementary School.

What we mean by bullying

Bullying occurs when a student, or group of students, attempts to take power over another student. Often bullying is repeated, where students fall into the roles of **bully** (the student that is bullying), **bully-follower** (a student that goes along with the bully), **target** (the child being bullied) and **bystander** (a student that sees the bullying but does nothing to stop it). The main ways in which bullying may happen are:

Physical bullying, when a student uses physical force to hurt another student by hitting, punching, pushing, pantsing, shoving, kicking, spitting, pinching, getting in their way, or holding them down. It is also bullying to interfere with another student's belongings, to take or break their possessions, and to demand or steal money.

Verbal bullying, when a student directs words at another student with the intention of putting them down or humiliating them. This includes threatening, taunting, intimidating, shouting, insulting, sarcasm, name-calling, teasing, put-downs and ridiculing. It is also verbal bullying when a student uses hostile gestures towards another student, such as making faces, staring, giving the evil eye, and eye rolling.

Relational bullying, when a student influences another student's friendships and relationships through deliberately leaving them out, spreading gossip and rumors about them, whispering, giving them the silent treatment, ostracizing or scape-goating. This also includes writing words or creating cartoons, posters or drawings about another student designed to hurt or humiliate that student.

Cyber bullying refers to the use of cell-phones, text messages, e-mails, instant messaging, chatrooms, web blogs and social networking sites to bully another student in any of the ways described above. Examples of cyber bullying are sending threatening or insulting messages by phone and e-mail, posting untrue information or embarrassing pictures about another student on message boards, blogs or social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook, using another student's email address or IM name to send messages that make the student look bad, creating a web page devoted to putting down another student, forwarding a text-message or e-mail that was meant for your eyes only. Refer to the Dixie School District Internet Use Agreement.

When bullying is also harassment. Bullying is part of a continuum of aggression and may, at times, amount to harassment. Harassment occurs when a student is the recipient of threatening, disturbing or unwelcome behaviors because of a particular characteristic. **Sexual Harassment** includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can be directed toward a student under conditions such as the following: verbal, written, physical, and visual. Sexual harassment is dealt with under the sexual harassment policy (Policy 4301). Whether or not bullying amounts to harassment, our school will not tolerate student bullying on our campus, at school district/school-sponsored events, or directed towards students traveling to and from school. Refer to Policy 5130-Bullying Prevention.

The Silveira Action Team

- The Action Team is a permanent committee to ensure the implementation of this policy, to oversee the social and emotional development of our students and to help our school live by our values of respect and caring for each individual.
- The principal will be the team leader.
- The team leader shall convene meetings regularly throughout the school year.

Solution Team

- The Solution Team® response to bullying was created by *No Bully* as a non-punitive way of addressing bullying dynamics that may have arisen within a class or group of students. Under the Solution Team response, an adult facilitator pulls together a team of students to solve the bullying of one of their peers. Solution Team offers a simple six-step procedure that includes an initial meeting and two follow-up meetings.
- Solution Team is an opportunity for students to learn and apply empathy on behalf of their peers. It helps stop bullying dynamics in most cases.
- The Principal ensures that sufficient faculty members are trained as facilitators in this approach.
- A Facilitator initiates a Solution Team response when requested by a staff or faculty member by meeting with the student that is being bullied (“the target”).
- The Facilitator explains the Solution Team response to the target and asks the target whether they would like this to be used on their behalf.
- The Facilitator informs the parents of the target if their child has asked for the help of the Solution Team response.

THE SOLUTION TEAM RESPONSE TO BULLYING

1. A Solution Team facilitator meets with the target and asks if they want help.
2. The facilitator selects the members of the Solution Team.
3. The facilitator convenes the first meeting of the Solution Team.
4. The facilitator checks in with the target.
5. One week later the facilitator convenes the second meeting of the Solution Team.
6. A second week later the facilitator convenes the final meeting of the Solution Team,

Teachers and Staff

- All teachers, administrators and staff are role models for living by the school's values of respect and caring for others. They remain mindful at all times of their role in establishing a classroom and school climate based upon these values.
- Teachers raise awareness of harassment and bullying regularly throughout the year by teaching modules from the school's designated anti-bullying curriculum.
- Teachers and staff intervene swiftly to stop verbal aggression and bullying and will give consequences if a school rule has been broken.
- Teachers and staff shall communicate with the appropriate classroom teacher whenever they become aware of incidents of harassment or bullying.
- The classroom teacher will use his or her discretion to resolve the situation and shall refer incidents that have not been resolved to the Principal and/or one of the Solution Team facilitators.
- The classroom teacher shall inform the principal in writing using a citation form whenever bullying occurs.
- The principal maintains a log of incidents of bullying and tracks their successful resolution.
- The P.E./Dance staff and After Care staff have the same responsibility as teachers to intervene to stop putdowns and bullying, both during practice and games, and to give consequences where appropriate. They shall refer incidents that have not been resolved to the principal.
- All adults in the Mary E. Silveira Learning Community will encourage and support every student to do their best.

Students

Our school is a community of respectful and caring learners. All students need to get along and be friendly, whether or not they are actually friends. We all show respect for the feelings and needs of others. Here are things that students can do to keep our school bully-free.

- Respect all students. Never harass or bully anyone or be a bully-follower.
- Use classroom lessons to learn what bullying is, be able to name it when you see it, and have good ideas for what to do when it happens.
- Think how other students might perceive your actions or words. It is not okay to say "only kidding" after you have bullied another student.
- Communicate as respectfully by cell phone or online to others as you would face to face. If you wouldn't say it F2F, don't say it online or post behind their back.
- If you see harassment or bullying, be an ally to the student that is being bullied. Ask the bullies to stop or immediately find an adult if you cannot stop the bullying yourself.
- If you are harassed or bullied by other students, speak out! Do not give your power away and become a target. Remember that you have the right to respect and ask these students to stop.
- If the harassment or bullying continues, seek help. Mary E. Silveira Elementary

- School encourages you to tell an adult on campus that you trust.
- Our school takes a problem-solving approach to bullying. Sometimes we pull together a Solution Team of students in your grade and ask them to solve the bullying. Many Solution Teams have successfully stopped the bullying after one or two meetings without punishing anybody.
- Never take revenge or ask someone to retaliate against a student that has reported bullying.

How parents can help us support our culture of care and respect

- In this section, references to parents include guardians and volunteers.
- We ask that parents support our school's values of respect and caring in all their interactions with other parents, faculty, staff, and students.
- Familiarize yourself with the school protocol for dealing with student interactions. Trust that teachers have the best interests of the children at heart; try not to make assumptions—check things out with the teacher directly.
- Encourage your child to show respect and caring for the dignity and worth of every student, parent and adult that works at the school.
- Establish a peaceful, respectful environment at home. Parents who use physical power and inconsistent consequences create children that rely on power to get their own way.
- Do not allow your children to intimidate or bully each other.
- Have conversations with your children about diversity. Reinforce the message that everyone is different and that diversity brings our school many gifts.
- Be a role model. Monitor how you talk about others in front of your child. If you exclude or put down others, you are teaching your children to do the same.
- Monitor how you talk about others in front of your child. If you exclude or put down others, you are teaching your children to do the same.
- Teach your children what happens when friendships go wrong. Tell them that feelings of anger, sadness, jealousy and confusion are normal. Explain that—whatever they might be feeling—bullying, retaliation and revenge are never acceptable responses.
- Have a conversation with your child about the use of technology in your house. Limit your child's Internet access to computers in the shared areas. Discuss the responsibility to show respect when online and the effect of texting or posting threatening words, rumors and hurtful images. If your child wants to join a social networking site, ask that you have the password, and encourage them to restrict access only to friends.
- Please participate in the anti-bully events, activities, and other awareness programs throughout the year.

What a parent can do if their child engages in bullying

- Do not close yourself to the possibility that your child is using bullying behavior. Empathy, kindness and respect are learned behaviors and it is up to parents to teach these.

- Explore what happened without shaming your child.
- Help your child understand their underlying motivation and what they might be gaining from the bully role (e.g. power, popularity, attention, revenge).
- Empathize with your child's *feelings*, while helping them find alternative ways to *act*.
- Partner with the school in establishing consequences that will promote positive behavior and are appropriate to what your child has done.

What a parent can do if their child is harassed or bullied

- Raise the subject of bullying indirectly and give your child space to answer. Thank them for trusting you, empathize with their experience and reassure them of their value.
- Do not intervene behind your child's back or you risk losing your child's trust.
- Frame the problem to show your child can take their power back. Role-play what your child might do or say in the future. Find activities outside school where they are valued and can succeed.
- Do not confront the parents of the bullies or the bullies themselves. Generally such confrontations are high-conflict and can make your child's situation worse.
- If you know or suspect that your child is being bullied, please contact your child's teacher immediately. If our intervention does not resolve the bullying, please let us know. The school can only help you if you entrust us with the problem and tell us what is happening.