

# Zion Lutheran School Anti-Bullying Policy

Parents and Students,

Indiana state code requires that all schools develop and enforce an anti-bullying policy. This policy has been created in accordance with state legislation. Please read through the entire policy with your students so that everyone understands the school's stance on bullying and consequences of such actions.

**Please sign below and tear off this page.** You can keep the policy and have your child return this page to the school office. Your signatures below represent the acknowledgement that you have read and understand the Zion Lutheran School Anti-Bullying Policy.

Thank you,

Mr. Hill  
Principal/Social Studies and PE Teacher  
728-9995  
[mhillprincipal@gmail.com](mailto:mhillprincipal@gmail.com)

Student Name (if multiple, put all on this form): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Zion Lutheran School Anti-Bullying Policy

## Anti-Bullying Policy

The following policy has been established by the school board of Zion Lutheran School regarding anti-bullying.

### I. Policy Statement

The school board of Zion Lutheran School prohibits acts of bullying of a student. The school board has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior; treating others with civility and respect; and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.

### II. Definitions

#### 1. Bullying

- a. As defined by the school corporation, bullying means aggressive behaviors that involve unwanted negative actions that are repeated over time and involve an imbalance of power.
- b. As defined by IC 20-33-8-.2, bullying means overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors, that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:
  - i. Places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
  - ii. Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
  - iii. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
  - iv. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.
- c. This term may not be interpreted to impose any burden or sanction on, or include in the definition of the term, the following:
  - i. Participating in a religious event.

- ii. Acting in an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or substantial danger.
  - iii. Participating in an activity consisting of the exercise of a student's rights protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article I, Section 31 of the Constitution of the State of Indiana, or both.
  - iv. Participating in an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one or more adults.
  - v. Participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the student's parent.
  - vi. Engaging in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside Indiana.
- d. Bullying can occur regardless of physical location. Disciplinary actions can be taken any time described below:
- i. The individual committing the bullying behavior and any of the intended targets of the bullying behavior are students attending this school; and
  - ii. Disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of others to a safe and peaceful learning environment.
  - iii. Examples of potential bullying locations include, but are not limited to:
    - 1. School
    - 2. Athletic events
    - 3. Bus rides and field trips
    - 4. Online
    - 5. Cell phone (texts, calls, apps, etc.)
- e. The discipline rules of bullying must prohibit bullying through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a:
- i. Computer;
  - ii. Computer system; or
  - iii. Computer network.
- f. This section may not be construed to give rise to a cause of action against a person or school based on an allegation of noncompliance with this section. Noncompliance with this section may not be used as evidence against a school in a cause of action
- g. A record made of an investigation, a disciplinary action, or a follow-up action performed under rules adopted under this section is not a public record under IC 5-14-3.
- h. The school shall periodically review each policy adopted under this section to ensure the policy's compliance with this section.

### III. Policy Provisions

1. The school shall adopt discipline rules in compliance with IC 20-33-8-13.5 that prohibit bullying and include provisions concerning education, parental involvement and intervention. These discipline rules shall apply regardless of the location in which the bullying occurred when the bully and the targeted student are students at a school within the school corporation, or disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interferences with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of others to a safe and peaceful learning environment.
  - a. See Appendix I
2. The principal shall implement procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses for students who commit one or more acts of bullying, consistent with the code of student conduct, as well as the consequences and remedial responses for staff members who commit one or more acts of bullying. Appropriate consequences and remedial actions are those that are graded according to the severity of the offenses and consider both the developmental ages of the student offenders and students' histories of inappropriate behaviors, per the code of student conduct.
3. The principal shall be responsible for receiving all complaints alleging violations of this policy.
4. All school employees, volunteers and contracted service providers who have contact with students are required to verbally report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal's designee on the same day that an incident was witnessed or reliable information regarding the occurrence of an incident was received. A written report of the incident shall also be submitted to the school principal or principal's designee within one (1) school day of submitting the verbal report.
5. Students, parents and visitors of a school within the school corporation are encouraged to submit a written report of alleged violations of this policy to the principal (or principal's designee) on the same day that an incident was witnessed or reliable information regarding the occurrence of an incident was received. Such a report may be made anonymously. Formal action for violations of the code of student conduct may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
6. Any school employee, volunteer or contracted service provider who promptly reports an incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying, and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures of this policy, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.
7. The principal or designee shall conduct a thorough and complete investigation for each report of an alleged incident of bullying received. The investigation shall be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee within one school day of the report of the incident. The principal may appoint additional personnel to assist in the investigation. The investigation shall be completed and the written findings submitted to the principal as soon as possible, but not later than five school days from

- the date of the report of the alleged incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The principal or his/her designee shall report the results of each investigation to the board of education on a quarterly basis during regularly scheduled board meetings.
8. The school shall record the frequency of bullying incidents in the following categories: verbal bullying, physical bullying, social/relational bullying and electronic or written communication bullying. Each school shall report this information to the school board and the Indiana Department of education. Information shall be submitted to the Indiana Department of Education by July 1 of each year.
  9. The principal shall provide the parents of the students who are parties to the investigation with information about the investigation, in accordance with Federal and State law and regulation. The information to be provided to parents includes the nature of the investigation, whether the corporation found evidence of bullying, and whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the bullying incident if the evidence of bullying was substantiated. This information is to be provided in an expedited manner.
  10. Any school employee, volunteer or contracted service provider who receives a report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying from a student, parent, visitor or colleague, and fails to initiate or conduct an investigation, or who witnesses or observes a bullying incident and fails to take sufficient action to minimize or eliminate the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, may be subject to disciplinary action.
  11. The school board is authorized to define the range of ways in which school staff and the principal or the principal's designee shall respond once an incident of bullying is confirmed, according to the parameters described in the corporation's code of student conduct. The school board recognizes that some acts of bullying may be isolated incidents requiring that the school officials respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious that they require a response either at the school corporation level or by local law enforcement officials. Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who commits an act of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.
  12. The principal shall proceed in accordance with the code of student conduct, as appropriate, based on the investigation findings. As appropriate to the investigation findings, the principal shall ensure the code of student conduct has been implemented, and provide intervention and/or relevant support services (i.e., refer to counseling, establish training programs to reduce bullying and enhance school climate, enlist parent corporation and involvement or take other appropriate action). Intervention and support implemented by the principal or his/her designee should include follow up services to both the targeted student and the bully. The principal shall inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents, and, as appropriate, may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services.

13. The principal is authorized to acknowledge and respond to instances of false reporting of alleged bullying incidents. The principal is expected to respond with consequences and remedial actions regarding any person found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying as permitted under P.L. 285-2013 for:
  - a. Students – Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student could range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.
  - b. School Employees – Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee or contracted service provider who has contact with students could entail discipline in accordance with corporation policies, procedures and agreements.
  - c. Visitors or Volunteers – Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer could be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act, including law enforcement reports or other legal actions, removal of building or grounds privileges, or prohibiting contact with students or the provision of student services.
14. The school board shall annually disseminate this policy to all parents who have children enrolled in a school within the school corporation. The school board shall post a link to the policy that is prominently displayed on the home page of the school corporation's website. The school board shall ensure that notice of the corporation's policy appears in the student handbooks and all other publications of the school corporation that set forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards for schools within the school corporation.
15. The school shall disseminate the anti-bullying policy and bullying prevention instruction to all students in grades 1-12 within the school no later than October 15<sup>th</sup> of each school year. It is expected that anti-bullying information will be part of a more comprehensive bully prevention effort communicated to the students throughout the school year, and that the age appropriate, research based instruction for all students in grades 1-12 be delivered by a school safety specialist, school counselor or other person with training and expertise in the area of bullying prevention and intervention.
16. The school shall provide annual training on this policy and bullying prevention and intervention instruction to school employees, volunteers and contracted service providers who have direct and on-going contact with students.
17. The school board understands that the characteristics and resultant needs of the school will continue to evolve, and that the existing base of knowledge regarding bullying prevention and intervention will continue to grow. Research on bullying prevention practices will continue to emerge, and the date on the nature of bullying behaviors will continuously change. It is essential that school administrators and school officials regularly review available bullying prevention and intervention data.

Additionally, school administrators are expected to collect and analyze in-house data regarding bullying incident investigations, incident frequency and the effects of the corporation's efforts to address bullying behaviors. Through data-driven practice, administrators will be best qualified to determine the need for changes to policies and procedures and to institute improvements to prevention and intervention programs and approaches.

## **Appendix I-Levels of Disciplinary Consequences and Supports**

### **Level 1: Conference/Parent Contact**

- School personnel and parent
- Conference with student

### **Level 2: Intervention Options**

- Psycho-educational training: Student is provided materials/counseling intended to increase empathy, communication skills, social skills, and understand the impact of bullying.
- Referral: Administration, school counselor, social worker, or support staff.
- Time-out: The removal of a student from classes for one-half day or less.
- Detention: Detainment of a student for disciplinary reasons that takes place before, during or after school hours.
- School Behavior Agreement with student/parent: A written statement listing steps to be taken to improve behavior or attendance. The statement also describes the support to be provided by school staff and/or parent as well as the date when the contract will be reviewed.
- Intervention Assistance Team: A meeting of school personnel, parents, and other individuals to consider the behavior and/or progress of the student and make recommendations.
- Restricted activity: The denial of participation in school activities.
- School/community service: Assignment of student to perform school/community service.
- A combination of any Level 2 option and Level 1 conference/parent contact.
- Other options as discussed among parent, teachers, and administrators.

### **Level 3: In-School Alternatives**

- Placement of student in an in-school suspension program for one-half day or more with a parent contacted.
- Placement of a student in-school suspension program for one or more days with a parent contacted.
- Placement of a student in a specially designed in-school class or program.
- In-school community service.
- Placement as outlined above and in combination with levels 1 and 2 consequences. Additional empathy and social skill training
- Suspension from class by the teacher – A teacher may exclude a student from participation in any educational function under that teacher's charge and supervision for a period not to exceed one school day when a student interferes with the educational function of which the teacher is then in charge.

### **Level 4: Out-of-School Suspension (1-5 days)**

- Suspension with parent conference or the parent may attend school with the student for one school day.
- For each day of suspension four hours of community service may be served.
- Suspension with parent conference and contractual agreement.



- May be in combination with Levels 1, 2, and 3 consequences.

**Level 5: Alternative Consequences/Programs**

- Modified schedule.
- School probation with referral to a community agency such as juvenile court
- School probation may be in combination with Levels 2, 3, and 4 consequences.
- Conditional school (able to attend school based upon set conditions).

**Level 6: Expulsion Meeting/Expulsion**

- Procedure with request for expulsion meeting.