

DIOCESAN HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Diocese of Sacramento affirms the Christian dignity of every person, the right of each person to be treated with respect, and is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment. Harassment of or by any student is prohibited.

Every school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner. Allegations that are substantiated may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal.

Regulations.....

1. Elementary and secondary students are undergoing a period of rapid growth in their maturity and social skills. It is not unusual for a student to make a mistake in their social interaction with another student. Any mistake should be corrected so that the student may learn from it and treat other students respectfully. An honest mistake should not be considered harassment. Part of any investigation into a charge of harassment will be to determine if the incident was a mistake, or something more serious.

Harassment is unacceptable conduct that is deliberate, severe, and repeated. Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or to a school environment that is hostile, offensive or intimidating due to, but not limited to, an individual's race, religion, color, national origin, physical or mental ability or gender. Harassment can occur any time during school, school related activities, and outside the school. It includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- A. Verbal Harassment: Derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory words, whether oral or written (including cell phones);
 - B. Physical Harassment: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, bullying or intimidating interference with normal work or movement;
 - C. Visual Harassment: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, pictures, web pages (including cell phones), or gestures;
 - D. Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct which includes sexual harassment, but is not limited to, includes: sexually demeaning comments, sexual statements or jokes; suggestive or obscene letters, phone calls, e-mail; deliberate, unlawful physical touching; leering, gesture, display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
2. It is the responsibility of each school to fully implement this policy and to make all faculty, staff, students, and parents aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement. Any individual seeing or hearing about any incident of harassment, is encouraged to follow the procedures below. If the harassment stems from the principal, the person being harassed is to contact the pastor, or superintendent in cases of diocesan schools.
 3. The following procedures are to be followed for filing and investigating a harassment claim:
 - A. Persons who feel aggrieved because of conduct that constitutes harassment should, depending on the severity of the conduct, directly inform the person engaging in such conduct that such conduct is offensive and must stop.
 - B. If the person does not feel comfortable with the above, is unable to do so, or the offensive conduct does not stop, he/she shall direct his/her complaint to the principal or a member of the school staff, who will report it directly to the principal. Parents of students involved are to be contacted as soon as possible and involved in the entire process.
 - C. The individual(s) alleging harassment will be asked to complete a written complaint. Students at the primary level may verbally explain their complaint rather than writing it. The claim will be investigated thoroughly, involving only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.

- D. The investigation will include a meeting with the person alleged to have harassed, sharing with that person the nature of the allegations, as well as the name of the person bringing the allegations.
 - E. Once the facts of the case have been gathered, the Principal, in consultation with the Pastor or Superintendent (for Diocesan high schools), will decide what if any, disciplinary action is warranted. The disciplinary action will relate to the nature, context, and seriousness of the harassment and can include all disciplinary actions up to and including immediate dismissal.
 - F. Any party involved who is not in agreement with the decision has the right to the Appeal Process For Reconciliation found in the Administrative Handbook.
- 4. If the complaint is against a non-employee or non-student, such as a parent, volunteer, or vendor, the school will take steps, within the extent of its power, to investigate and eliminate the problem.
 - 5. If the complaint is against an employee by any co-worker, the process described in the Diocese of Sacramento's Personnel Handbook, Section D-4.0, is to be followed.