

Sylvan Heights Science Charter School
Title: Anti-Bullying and Extortion Policy
Policy # 249
Approved: September 21, 2005
Revised: August 17, 2015

PURPOSE

The Sylvan Heights Science Charter School strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students. It shall be the policy of SHSCS to maintain an environment in which the objectives of positive peer interactions are reinforced daily while stressing that bullying and extortion are not tolerated.

DEFINITION

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying behavior includes, but is not limited to, physical intimidation or assault; oral or written threats; teasing, putdowns, or name calling that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an intimidating, hostile, or abusive environment; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; psychological cruelty, such as spreading rumors of false accusations; shunning the individual; and cyber-bullying via any form of electronic communication, including but not limited to, phone, text messaging, internet, websites, e-mail, blogs, chat rooms, and/or instant messaging;.

Extortion is the action of one student or a group of students to obtain or withhold the property of another student by force, threat of violence or other harm, or intimidation.

School setting means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

PROHIBITION

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully another student or to extort property from another student in the school setting.

DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

The school expects staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying or extortion to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying/extortion persists, s/he shall report the bullying or extortion to the school principal or designee for further investigation.

If a student or parent becomes aware of an act of bullying or extortion, s/he should promptly report it to a staff member or principal for further investigation. If it is determined that a student has deliberately made a false accusation, such student shall be subject to disciplinary action, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying and extortion.

GUIDELINES

INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES:

Upon learning about a bullying or extortion incident, the principal or designee shall promptly interview the students involved and thoroughly investigate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents, and school staff; the review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues.

CONSEQUENCES/INTERVENTION:

Consequences for students who bully others or extort the property of others will be subject to disciplinary options that may include counseling, parent conference, detention, suspension or other consequences as provided in the Code of Student Conduct.

DISSEMINATION AND TRAINING:

- A. A summary of this policy, as well as a copy of the Student Handbook referred to in this policy, shall be included in the student handbook in ____.
- B. This policy shall be made easily available to pupils and staff by the principal.
- C. Discussion of the policy shall be included in the orientation of each new teacher and periodically in staff development workshops.
- D. Faculty will include instruction in bullying/extortion prevention as part of classroom character building instruction.

BULLYING PREVENTION:

SHSCS shall adopt proactive measures to prevent bullying. Such measures may include a daily motto, a school-wide no-bullying contract, a bullying prevention team, rewards for positive student behavior or such other practices as the Principal may deem appropriate. The principal shall report periodically to the Board on the School's bullying prevention efforts.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Sylvan Heights Science Charter School recognizes that both the complaining student and the alleged bully/extorter have strong interests in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of the complaining student, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with Family Education Privacy Rights Act ("FERPA") and any discovery or disclosure obligations. As limited by FERPA protections, the principal

or designee may inform the complaining student/parents of the outcome of the investigation.

REPRISAL

Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying or extortion or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or hearing may be subject to disciplinary action.

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 1302-A, 1303.1-A

State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 12.3

Board Policy – 000, 218, 233, 236, 248