

**DR. MICHAEL A. BALOURDAS HELLENIC CULTURAL SCHOOL OF ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Rule 1 – Misconduct** A student shall not, by use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, harassment, intimidation, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct, cause, attempt, or threaten to cause the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission process, activity, or function of the school including all curricular and extra-curricular activities. Neither shall any student urge other students to engage in such conduct for the purpose of causing, attempting, or threatening to cause the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, activity, or function of the school including all curricular and extracurricular activities.

**Rule 2 - Inappropriate Language** No student shall use profane, vulgar, racially or religiously derogatory, abusive, or otherwise disrespectful language in any school building areas during school hours or at any school-sponsored or related activities or events. Neither shall any students use profane, vulgar, or other improper gestures, publications, pictures or signs, nor engage in any socially or sexually improper behavior.

**Rule 3 - Forgery/False Reports** No student shall cheat, lie, prefabricate, deceive, use crib notes, receive or disseminate answers to a test, or falsify records. Neither shall any student forge, falsify, distort or misrepresent (in verbal or written form) dates, times, addresses, grades, signatures or other data contained in any communication to or from the school. Any student who assists or participates in any of the above actions on a secondary basis shall also be subject to discipline.

**Rule 4 - Academic Dishonesty** No student shall fraudulently, dishonestly or deceptively obtain and use the work of another, or otherwise violate a teacher's reasonable requirements with respect to proper test taking or the completion of work assignments. Neither shall any student assist another student in the pursuit of academic dishonesty by providing information or by any other means. For purposes of this Policy, work is broadly construed and includes without limitation, ideas, writings, works in progress, completed work product, examination questions and examination answers. Any student who misappropriates or plagiarizes someone's work, assists another in such misappropriation or otherwise engages in academic dishonesty shall not obtain credit for the work in question and shall be subject to other disciplinary action.

**Rule 5 - Electronic Devices** No student shall use radios, televisions, cellular phones, devices that can produce a photographic image, I-pods, pagers, laser pointers or any other electronic equipment on school grounds during school hours that interfere with the educational program or the operation of the school. Because of their potential disruptive and distracting nature to the operation of the school, electronic devices as specified above may not be carried with students during class time. Electronic devices used or carried in violation of this rule may be confiscated and returned directly to the parent.

**Rule 6 – Bullying** Bullying behavior by any student/school personnel is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once. The behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. This behavior is prohibited on church property, or at a school-sponsored activity. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying by an electronic act may be suspended. Permission, consent or assumption of risk by any individual subjected to hazing, bullying, and/or dating violence will not lessen the prohibition contained in this Policy, and will not exempt any student from discipline under this Policy. Students are prohibited from making false complaints.

For the purpose of this Code of Conduct, the term “harass” includes, but is not limited to, conduct which intimidates, insults, persistently annoys or otherwise physically or verbally (orally or in writing) abuses another. No student shall retaliate against any other student, school employee, community member or school visitor for assisting with the investigation of a complaint of harassment.

Any student who believes that he/she has experienced any form of harassment should report this conduct immediately to his/her building principal, guidance counselor or a teacher. (see pages 5-8 for procedures.)

A member of the administration will meet with the student to discuss the complaint and to develop a clear understanding of the student’s statement of facts. An administrator will then attempt to meet with the charged party to obtain his/her response to the complaint. The administrator also will attempt to meet with individuals identified by the charging party or the charged party to substantiate the position of the charged party or charging party. Based on this evidence, the administrator will make a decision regarding the need for discipline.

All complaints of harassment will be treated as “confidential” and information will only be released on a “need to know” basis.

No student shall be retaliated against for reporting harassment or assisting in the investigation of a harassment claim. Students should report charges of retaliation to the administrator investigating the complaint.

**Rule 7 – Accomplice** No student shall place himself/herself in a position to aid, abet, facilitate, encourage, allow or in any manner to actively or passively assist another student to violate any school rule. The prohibition of this section includes but is not limited to serving as a "look out" for a student engaged in misconduct. In addition to the foregoing, students shall also have an affirmative duty to report another student who a student knows has violated, is violating, or is planning to violate a school rule involving any dangerous weapon or any illegal, prescription or counterfeit drug. In administering discipline under this Section, school officials and administrators shall have discretion to consider the circumstances and nature of the offense, including any mitigating circumstances.

**Rule 8 - Misconduct During Extracurricular Activities** A student who is participating in a school-sponsored or related extracurricular activity (including but not limited to seasonal programs, field trips, etc.) shall not behave in any manner which, in the sole discretion of school authorities, disrupts or tends to interfere with the conduct of that activity and shall not violate the rules, regulations or policies which govern participation in an extracurricular activity which rules, regulations or policies are provided to participants and made part of this code. Students attending any school-sponsored or related activity shall not behave in any manner that, in the sole discretion of school authorities, disrupts or tends to interfere with the conduct of that activity.

**Rule 9 - Any Other Conduct Which Disrupts or Interferes with the Educational Process**

Students may be disciplined for any other misconduct that, although not detailed herein, is determined by school authorities to disrupt or to interfere with the educational process. Students shall comply with the directives and orders of teachers, student teachers, educational aides, substitute teachers, principals or other authorized school personnel during any period of time when they are properly subject to the authority of the school. Verbal and written abuse, including insults and intimidation, will not be tolerated. It shall be considered "insubordination" for anyone to disobey or fail to comply with directives relating to this code by authorized school personnel.

**Rule 10 - Repeated Violations of School Rules** No student shall repeatedly fail to comply with school rules and regulations or with directions of teachers, student teachers, teacher aides, principals or other authorized school personnel.

**The above examples of misconduct will generally result in the following penalties that are cumulative for any offense in this section. The principal may modify this sequence based on circumstances.**

1<sup>st</sup> - Warning by the teacher

2<sup>nd</sup> – Meeting with the principal and/or superintendent

3<sup>rd</sup> -meeting with students, parents and /or teacher and /or principal and Priest

4<sup>th</sup> -Recommendation for suspension

**Rule 11 - Use of Tobacco, Alcohol or Drugs** The use and/or sale of any tobacco products, alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs by students is prohibited. This applies to all extracurricular activities both on school property and away from school.

**Rule 12 - Damage, Destruction, or Theft of School or Private Property, Vandalism**

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to church property or to personal property of fellow students, teachers, school personnel or other persons. Neither shall a student steal or attempt to steal property of students, teachers, school personnel or other persons or participate or attempt to participate in the unauthorized removal of property either on school grounds or during a school-sponsored or related activity, function or event off the school grounds. The prohibition of this Section includes, but is not limited to, intentional damage or destruction of computer hard drives or materials stored on a hard drive or, any form of computer piracy, any improper usage of the Internet or other on-line agencies, or the willful and malicious burning of or attempt to burn any property.

Pursuant to ORC 3109.99 and ORC 3109.091, a student and/or their parent or legal guardian shall be held financially accountable for any damage, destruction or theft caused by their child.

**Rule 13 - Weapons, Dangerous Instruments, Fireworks and Explosives**

No student shall use, possess, handle, transmit, sell or conceal any object that can be classified as a weapon or dangerous instrument while on school grounds, at school-sponsored or related activities, functions or events off school grounds, on school-owned, operated or leased vehicles, or at any other time that the student is subject to the authority of the school. Weapons and dangerous instruments include any object that is used or may be used to inflict physical harm or property damage.

**Rule 14 - False Alarms**

The act of initiating a fire alarm or initiating a report warning of a fire or catastrophe such as a tornado without cause, or a bomb threat, may result in Recommendation for Expulsion of up to one year.

**These examples (Rule 12-14) of misconduct that are cumulative may result in a suspension along with a possible recommendation for expulsion and/or police and court referral due to the more serious nature of these offenses.**

## **School Personnel Responsibilities and Complaint Procedures**

Bullying behavior by any student/school personnel of the Balourdas Hellenic Cultural School of St Demetrios Church, is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts, including electronically transmitted acts, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to haze, harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to church grounds, at any school-sponsored activity; through the use of any District-owned or operated communication tools, including but not limited to e-mail accounts and/or computers; or on school-provided transportation.

Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and/or attacks (including but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, etc.)
2. threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
3. extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions;
4. exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors;
5. repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other web-based/online sites (also known as "cyber bullying"), such as the following:
  - A. posting slurs on web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals;
  - B. sending abusive or threatening e-mails, web site postings or comments and instant messages;
  - C. using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs or videos of students and/or distributing or posting the photos or videos online and
  - D. using web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals, e-mails or instant messages to circulate gossip and rumors to other students.
6. excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes bullying, special attention is paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

## **Teachers and Other School Staff**

Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying as defined above, should promptly notify the principal, and promptly file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed.

Teachers, other school staff, and adult volunteers who receive student or parent reports of suspected bullying should promptly notify the principal of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, the complaint is forwarded to the principal no later than the next school day. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other professional employee, he/she prepares a written report of the informal complaint that is forwarded to the principal no later than the next school day.

## **Complaints**

### **1. Formal Complaints**

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, bullying. The reports should be written. Such written reports must be reasonably specific including person(s) involved; number of times and places of the alleged conduct; the target of suspected harassment, intimidation and/or bullying and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator. They are promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

### **2. Informal Complaints**

Students, parents or guardians and school personnel may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator or other school personnel. Such informal complaints must be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of hazing, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior(s) and the names of any potential student or staff witness. The school staff member or administrator who receives the informal complaint promptly documents the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the school staff member and/or administrator is promptly forwarded to the principal for review and action.

### **3. False Complaints**

Students are prohibited from deliberately making false complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Students found responsible for deliberately making false reports of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be subject to a full range of disciplinary consequences.

## **Intervention Strategies**

### **1. Teachers and Other School Staff**

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school personnel are encouraged to address the issue of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence in other interactions with students.

School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, hazing, intimidation and bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior.

School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying.

### **2. Administrator Responsibilities**

#### **A. Investigation**

The principal is notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, intimidation or bullying. Under the direction of the principal all such complaints are investigated promptly. A written report of the investigation is prepared when the investigation is complete. The report includes findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence were verified, and when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action, is included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements are attached to the report.

#### **B. Non-disciplinary Interventions**

When verified acts of bullying are identified early and/or when such verified acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of the behavior, its prohibition and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassing, hazing, intimidating and/or bullying.

#### **C. Disciplinary Interventions**

When acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. (Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, cannot provide the basis for disciplinary action.)

In and out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education. This consequence is reserved for serious incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating prohibited behaviors.

Allegations of criminal misconduct are reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse is reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines.

#### **Report to the Custodial Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator**

If, after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying by a specific student are verified, the principal notifies the custodial parent or guardian of the perpetrator, in writing, of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline is included in such notification.

Strategies are developed and implemented to protect students from new or additional harassment, intimidation or bullying, and from retaliation following reporting of incidents.

#### **Reports to the Victim and His/Her Custodial Parent or Guardian**

If, after investigation, acts of bullying or hazing against a specific student are verified, the principal notifies the custodial parent/guardian of the victim of the finding.

Bullying matters, including the identity of both the charging party and the accused, are kept confidential to the extent possible. Although discipline may be imposed against the accused upon a finding of guilt, retaliation is prohibited.

School administrators shall notify both the custodial parents or guardians of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence and the custodial parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were committed, and shall allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by law.

#### **Police and Child Protective Services**

In addition to, or instead of, filing a complaint through this policy, a complainant may choose to exercise other options including, but not limited to, filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private law-suit. Nothing prohibits a complainant from seeking redress under any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or common law that may apply.