

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Student Leadership Academy of Venice is committed to providing an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying for all of its students and employees. The School will not tolerate unlawful bullying and harassment of any type and shall strictly adhere to all Florida law prohibiting bullying and harassment.

Florida Statute 1006.147 defines bullying and harassment. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited.

“Bullying” means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students and may involve:

- Teasing;
- Social exclusion;
- Threat;
- Intimidation;
- Stalking;
- Physical violence;
- Theft;
- Sexual, religious, or racial harassment;
- Public humiliation; or
- Destruction of property.

“Harassment” means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Under Florida law, the definitions of “bullying” and “harassment” include:

- Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
- Perpetuation of conduct listed above by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause physical harm to a student or school employee by:

- Incitement or coercion;
 - Accessing or knowingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system;
 - Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.
- Inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees.
 - Unwanted written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause discomfort or humiliation.
 - Unreasonably interference with the individual's school performance or participation.
 - May involve but is not limited to teasing; social exclusion; threat; intimidation; stalking; physical violence; theft; sexual, religious, or racial harassment; public humiliation; or destruction of property.

The Student Leadership Academy of Venice upholds that bullying or harassment of any student or school employee is prohibited as follows:

- During any education program or activity conducted by a public K-12 educational institution;
- During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
- On a school bus
- Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a public K-12 education institution.

In May 2013, Governor Rick Scott signed a bill in law that targets bullying into law. The new law includes three major changes:

- Students can be bullied publicly or privately;
- Cyberbullying is defined as harassment using electronic means, such as email or impersonating someone online;
- Schools are allowed to become involved if off-campus bullying affects the targeted student's on-campus education.

The law also requires schools to educate staff and students on how to identify bullying and what to do if they see it. The law does not require schools and school districts to monitor off-campus activity.

Incidents of bullying or harassment should be reported to the principal immediately. The principal or designee will investigate all reports of bullying that have been deemed a violation of the policy. Upon receipt of the complaint, the principal or designee will notify the parents of the students involved and begin an investigation. Parent/guardian involvement and cooperation is required.