



Alvarado Elementary School Anti-Bullying Policy

"If you want to be happy, practice compassion." -Dalai Lama

Our Social Vision

At Alvarado we are all ethnicities, religions, orientations, abilities and backgrounds. No matter where we come from, we are one inclusive community. We celebrate our differences.

We help children to be included and to feel safe and empowered. We teach children to actively include others in work and play.

To teach by example, staff and parents model kindness, respect, empathy and cooperation with students and each other.

Purpose of this policy

In any school community, there will be occasions when students do not get along. Sometimes conflicts arise between students that they find too big or persistent to resolve by themselves. Sometimes students bully in an attempt to hurt, exclude or take power from another student. These behaviors may be motivated by hurt feelings, anger, jealousy, insecurity, attention-seeking or lack of skill in dealing with conflict. Whatever their underlying cause, bullying and unresolved conflict stand in the way of our vision. This policy is designed to guide us in how to respond to student conflict and bullying, how to learn and play together as a community and how to live by the core values of kindness, empathy, and inclusiveness contained in our social vision.

Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all students, parents, staff, coaches and all other adults on our campus, whether employed by the school, San Francisco Unified School District, working as contractors, or volunteers. This policy governs student behavior both on our campus, at School or SFUSD school-sponsored events, and also when students are traveling to and from school.

The PEACE Team

- The PEACE Team is a permanent committee to ensure the implementation of this policy, to oversee the social and emotional development of our students and to help our school live by our values of kindness and inclusiveness contained in our vision statement. PEACE stands for: **P**actice **E**mpathy **A**nd **C**aring with **E**veryone.
- The principal appoints the team leader(s).
- The team leader shall convene meetings regularly throughout the school year.



How Our School Responds to Incidents of conflict

Conflict occurs when two or more students disagree because each perceives the other as getting in the way of their needs, concerns or goals. Conflict becomes **bullying** when one of the students attempts to take power over another to resolve the conflict. When students become stuck in a persistent or disruptive conflict, but are not bullying, we bring the students together and use TALK, a quick and effective protocol, to facilitate conflict resolution. We encourage our parents to follow this protocol at home to reinforce what we teach at school. We encourage students to follow this same protocol when talking through a peer conflict without the help of an adult. Here is the protocol we use for TALKing it through.

TALK PROTOCOL

Agree to talk it through without putdowns and interruptions.

Tell what happened and how you feel.

Each of the two students takes a turn to say what happened and to name the emotions that they feel, while the other student listens.

Ask for what you need. Each student takes a turn to make specific requests for what they need from the other.

Look for solutions. The students brainstorm together what might solve the problem for both of them. This is known as looking for a “win-win” solution. Try to find at least three solutions.

Keep the best solution. Make an agreement and Commit to following that agreement.

It aids resolution if the adult follows up with the two students to check that they have successfully solved the problem. If the problem has not been solved, figure out why the initial solution did not work repeat the TALK process, and look for new solutions.

How Our School Responds to Incidents of Bullying

We are committed to a culture where we have kindness, empathy, and inclusiveness. We see bullying and harassment as obstacles to realizing our values for how we all get along. The following part of this policy describes our roles in responding to bullying and in supporting the culture of Alvarado School.

What we mean by bullying

Bullying occurs when a student, or group of students, attempts to take power over another student. Often bullying is repeated, where students fall into the roles of **bully** (the student who is bullying), **bully-follower** (a student who goes along with the bully), **target** (the student who is being bullied) and **bystander** (a student who sees bullying but does nothing to stop it). The main ways in which bullying happens are:

Physical bullying: when a student uses physical force to hurt another student by hitting, punching, pushing, pantsing, shoving, kicking, spitting, pinching, getting in their way, or holding them down. It is also bullying to interfere with another student's belongings, to take or break their possessions, and to demand or steal money.

Verbal bullying: when a student directs words at another student with the intention of putting them down or humiliating them. This includes threatening, taunting, intimidating, shouting, insulting, sarcasm, name-calling, teasing, put-downs and ridiculing. It is also verbal bullying when a student uses hostile gestures towards another student, such as making faces, staring, giving the evil eye, and eye rolling.

Relational bullying: when a student influences another student's friendships and relationships through deliberately leaving them out, spreading gossip and rumors about them, whispering, giving them the silent treatment, ostracizing or scape-goating. This also includes writing words or creating cartoons, posters or drawings about another student designed to hurt or humiliate that student.

Cyber bullying refers to the use of mobile phones, text messages, e-mails, instant messaging, chatrooms, web blogs and social networking sites to bully another student in any of the ways described above. Examples of cyber bullying are sending threatening or insulting messages by phone and e-mail, posting untrue information or embarrassing pictures about another student on message boards, blogs or social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook, using another student's email address or IM name to send messages that make the student look bad, creating a web page devoted to putting down another student, forwarding a text-message or e-mail that was meant for your eyes only.

When bullying is also harassment. Bullying is part of a continuum of aggression and may, at times, amount to harassment. Harassment occurs when a student is the recipient of threatening, disturbing or unwelcome behaviors because of a particular characteristic. **Sexual Harassment** includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can be directed toward a student under conditions such as the following: verbal, written, physical, and visual. Sexual harassment is dealt with under the sexual harassment policy that you can find at the end of this policy.

Staff and Administrators

- All teachers, administrators and staff are role models for living by the school's values of kindness, empathy, and inclusiveness. They remain mindful at all times of their role in establishing a classroom and school climate based upon these values.
- Teachers raise student awareness of harassment and bullying regularly throughout the year and especially during Inclusiveness Week and during Alvarado Week by teaching modules from the school's designated anti-bullying curriculum.
- All staff are trained as primary responders to intervene swiftly to stop individual acts of student aggression, harassment and bullying and will give consequences if a school rule has been broken.
- Staff shall immediately inform the appropriate classroom teacher whenever they suspect or become aware of a pattern of bullying i.e. that a student has been involved in bullying more than once and that without adult intervention this behavior is likely to continue.
- Volunteers have the same responsibility as teachers to intervene and stop physical aggression, verbal putdowns and bullying, both during practice and games, and to give consequences where appropriate. They shall refer incidents that have not been resolved to the classroom teacher.
- The classroom teacher will meet separately with any of their students that have been involved in a pattern of bullying and will attempt to resolve the situation.
 - If a student is bullying, the teacher will check in briefly with the student and without shaming the student ask them what is happening and help uncover their underlying motivation. The teacher will give consequences if the student had broken a school rule, give empathy for what the student is *feeling* and explore how the student can *act* differently in the future.
 - If a student is the target of repeated bullying, the classroom teacher makes the time to check in with them to address the following points.
 - **Reassure the target** that they deserve respect and do not have to put up with bullying. Find out the names of the students involved, the type of bullying or harassment and where it happens.
 - **Give empathy for what the target is going through.** Most students experience bullying as deeply upsetting.
 - **Plan for safety.** Assess whether the target is safe. If not, make a plan with them to keep them safe.
 - **Refer.** Let the student know that a staff member will follow up with them later and help them to find a solution and a way to regain their power.
- The classroom teacher shall inform the principal or Student Assistance Program (SAP) by completing a Behavior Referral form whenever any of their students has been involved in a pattern of bullying and shall state whether the bullying has stopped or whether further action is required.
- If further action is required, the principal will consult the Student Assistance Program (SAP) and other relevant adults and may initiate a Solution Team response. (See below.) The principal keeps a record of incidents of bullying and asks relevant staff and parents to track their successful resolution.

Solution Team

- The Solution Team® response to bullying was created by *No Bully* as a non-punitive way of addressing bullying dynamics that may have arisen within a class or group of students. Under the Solution Team response, an adult team leader pulls together a team of students to solve the bullying of one of their peers. Solution Team offers a simple six-step procedure that includes an initial meeting and two follow-up meetings.
- Solution Team is an opportunity for students to learn and apply empathy on behalf of their peers. It helps stop bullying dynamics in most cases.
- The Principal ensures that sufficient staff members are trained as team leaders in this approach.
- A team leader initiates a Solution Team response when requested by the Principal or classroom teacher by meeting with the student that is being bullied (“the target”).
- The team leader explains the Solution Team response to the target and asks the target whether they would like this to be used on their behalf.
- The team leader informs the parents of the target if their child has asked for the help of the Solution Team response.

THE SOLUTION TEAM RESPONSE TO BULLYING

1. Staff member, student or parent fills out a “Solution Team Referral Form” and gives it to the LSP or the Principal
2. A Solution Team leader meets with the target and asks if they want help.
3. The team leader selects the members of the Solution Team.
4. The team leader convenes the first meeting of the Solution Team. Team Leader coordinates with classroom teacher(s) to arrange meeting times.
5. The team leader checks in with the target.
6. One week later the team leader convenes the second meeting of the Solution Team.
7. A second week later the team leader convenes the final meeting of the Solution Team, this time with the target present.

SOLUTION COACHING

If in the course of the Solution Team, it becomes clear that the “bully” or others involved require more direct intervention:

1. Team leader identifies individuals requiring direct support.
2. Team leader meets with those individuals. This may happen informally, e.g. on the yard during recess, or more formally.
3. Leader provides space to listen to the individuals’ thoughts, concerns and feelings and validates them.
4. Leader helps the child identify points of empathy towards others.
5. Leader asks for buy-in and commitment to the Solution Team process and thanks the individual for his/her participation.

Students

Our school is a community of kindness, empathy, and inclusiveness. All students need to get along and be friendly, whether or not they are actually friends. We all show respect for the feelings and needs of others. Here are things that students can do to keep our school bully-free.

- Be kind to all students. Never bother or bully another student or be a bully-follower.
- Think how other students might view your actions or words. It is not okay to say “only kidding” after you have teased or bullied another student.
- Talk the same on your cell phone or online to others as you would face to face. Remember that talking badly about your friends is a form of bullying. If you wouldn’t say it F2F, don’t say it online, on the phone, or to anyone else.
- If you see bullying, be a friend to the student that is being bullied. Ask the bully to stop or immediately find an adult if you cannot stop the bullying yourself.
- If you are bullied by other students, stand up for yourself and speak out! Do not give your power away and become a victim. Remember that you have the right to respect and ask students to stop.
- If the bullying continues, seek help. Our school encourages you to tell any adult on campus that you trust.
- Our school takes a problem-solving approach to bullying. Sometimes we bring together a solution team of students in your grade and ask them to solve the bullying. Many Solution Teams have successfully stopped the bullying after one or two meetings without punishing anybody.
- Never take revenge or ask someone to strike back against a student that has reported bullying.

Remember to SHINE!

Stand up to put-downs

Help those who are being bullied

Inform adults when I need to

Never use my computer or cell phone to hurt others

Encourage my friends to stand up to bullying too.

Parents: How parents can help us support our culture of kindness, empathy, and inclusiveness

- In this section, references to parents include guardians, volunteers and coaches.
- We ask that parents support our school’s values of empathy and respect in all their interactions with other parents, faculty, staff, and students.
- Encourage your child to show respect and care for the dignity and worth in our school community.
- A peaceful, respectful environment at home leads to less bullying at school.
- Do not allow your children to intimidate or bully each other.
- Have conversations with your children about diversity. Reinforce the message that everyone is different and that diversity brings our school many gifts.
- Be mindful of how you talk about others in front of your child. If you exclude or put down others, you are teaching your children to do the same.
- Teach your children what happens when friendships go wrong. Tell them that feelings of anger, sadness, jealousy and confusion are normal. Explain that – whatever they might be feeling – bullying, retaliation and revenge are never acceptable responses.
- Have a conversation with your child about the use of technology both in and out of school. Limit your child’s Internet access to computers in the shared areas of your house. Discuss the

responsibility to show respect when online and the effect of texting or posting threatening words, rumors and hurtful images. If your child wants to join a social networking site, ask that they friend you to give you access to their page and encourage them to restrict access to “friends only”.

- Please participate in Inclusiveness Week and Alvarado Week and other awareness programs throughout the year.

Recommendations for what a parent can do if their child engages in bullying

- Be open to the possibility that your child is bullying. Empathy, kindness and respect are learned behaviors and we rely on adults to reinforce these values.
- Explore what happened without shaming your child.
- Help your child understand their underlying motivation and what they might be gaining from the bully role (e.g. power, popularity, attention, revenge).
- Empathize with your child’s *feelings*, while helping them find alternative ways to *act*.
- Partner with the school in establishing consequences that promote positive behavior and are appropriate to what your child has done.

Recommendations for what a parent can do if their child is bullied

- Raise the subject of bullying indirectly and give your child space to answer. Thank them for trusting you, empathize with their experience and reassure them of their value.
- Discuss potential solutions with your child or you could lose your child’s trust.
- Frame the problem as how your child can take their power back without using aggression. Role-play what your child might do or say in a peaceful manner in the future. Find activities outside school where they are valued and can succeed.
- Do not confront the student that is bullying or the parents of the student that is bullying. Generally such confrontations are high-conflict and can make your child’s situation worse.
- If you know or suspect that your child is being bullied, please contact your child’s teacher immediately. If our intervention does not resolve the bullying, please let us know. The school can only help you if you entrust us with the problem and tell us what is happening.