

Bullying

Behavior that infringes on the safety of students, staff or volunteers will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law ([O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4](#)), is strictly prohibited. The Student Code of Conduct for CACS expressly prohibits bullying.

If parents believe their student is being bullied please report it to a school staff member or administrator immediately.

Bullying is defined as an act that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so,
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm,
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate that:
 - A. Causes another person substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm;
 - B. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - C. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or,
 - D. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term “**bullying**” applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer networks, or other electronic technology of a local school system.

The term “**bullying**” also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment if the electronic communication:

1. Is directed specifically at students or school personnel;
2. Is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school; and
3. Creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students or school personnel’s person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.

Professional development and training opportunities for school staff on how to respond appropriately to acts of bullying, victims of bullying, and by-standers, who report bullying, shall be in place. All students and /or staff shall immediately report incidents of bullying, harassment, and intimidation to the school principal, assistant principal or principal’s designee. School staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. Each complaint of bullying shall be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, at and during a school-

sponsored activity. Any report of retaliation for reporting bullying will also be investigated and addressed in accordance with school procedures.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. Such consequences shall include, at the minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling, as appropriate under the circumstances. However, upon a finding by the Disciplinary Hearing Officer that a student in grades 6-8 has committed the offense of bullying for the third (3rd) time in a school year, the student shall be suspended, placed in an alternative school program or may be expelled from Cirrus Academy.

Depending on the severity of the bullying allegation, school administrators have the discretion to send a student to a Disciplinary Hearing for the first (1st) or second (2nd) bullying offense. If found guilty, the student will be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Conduct, including but not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

1. Bullying Level 1 - First incident of bullying
2. Bullying Level 2 - Second incident of bullying
3. Bullying Level 3 - Repeated acts occurring on school property or school equipment that is a willful attempt or threat to inflict injury, or apparent means to do so, any display of force that puts victim at fear of harm, any written, verbal or physical act that threatens, harasses, or intimidates; causes another person physical harm; interferes with a student's education; so severe and pervasive intimidates or threatens educational environment.

For Grades PreK-5: Punishment at the discretion of the administrator. The student's age/level of maturity or development should be considered in relation to the offense.

For Grades 6-8:

1. 1st Offense – parent conference, referral to school counselor and three (3) days suspension or other appropriate Code of Conduct/Student Handbook /Code of Conduct/ punishment at the discretion of the administrator
2. 2nd Offense – five (5) days suspension
3. 3rd Offense – assignment to alternative school program More severe punishment may be necessary in some cases.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which maybe done electronically.

Students and parents will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.

Cyber-bullying

The National Crime Prevention Council defines cyber-bullying as: "When the Internet, cell phones, or other devices are used to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person."

Types of Cyber-bullying - Cyber-bullying can take many forms. Properly identifying and preventing cyberbullying requires an understanding of the different ways technology can be used to hurt others:

1. Flaming- Online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar language.
2. Harassment- Repeatedly sending nasty, mean, and insulting messages.
3. Denigration- "Dissing" someone online. Sending or posting gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships.
4. Impersonation- Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material to get that person in trouble or damage his or her reputation.
5. Outing- Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online.
6. Trickery- Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information and then sharing it online.
7. Exclusion- Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone.
8. Cyberstalking- Repeated, intense harassment and/or denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

Source: "An Educator's Guide to Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats," by Nancy Willard

DCS Position on Cyber-bullying and Digital Citizenship

1. Students shall receive education including, but not limited to appropriate online behavior in social networking sites, chat rooms, electronic communications, etc.; the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally identifiable information; and, consequences of unlawful activities, including cyber-bullying awareness and response, other unlawful or inappropriate online activities by students.
2. Cyber-bullying will not be tolerated and is strictly forbidden.
3. Engaging in cyber-bullying to harm (physically or emotionally) another person will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges.
4. In some cases, cyber-bullying can be a crime.
5. The user should remember that digital activities are monitored and retained.
6. Report cyber-bullying immediately to school personnel.