

Promesa Academy Bullying Policy for Parents

At Promesa Academy, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students. Bullying, in any form, is strictly prohibited and taken seriously. Bullying includes a single significant act or repeated acts by one or more students that harm or intimidate another student, exploit a power imbalance, and disrupt the learning environment. This can be verbal, physical, written, or through digital communication (cyberbullying). Our policy extends to all school grounds, events, transportation, and even online actions that substantially impact the school experience. If your child is experiencing or witnessing bullying, please reach out immediately so we can investigate and provide support to all students involved.

If you need to report an incident of bullying, you can email Principal Justin Arnsworth directly at jarnsworth@promesaacademy.org. We will investigate every report thoroughly and confidentially, and we will take appropriate action in alignment with our Student Code of Conduct. Parents of both the victim and the accused will be notified, and all students involved will be offered counseling services. Promesa prohibits any retaliation against those who report or participate in a bullying investigation, and we are committed to protecting the physical and emotional well-being of every student.

Full Bullying Policy

Promesa Academy prohibits bullying, as well as retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying means a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Physically harms a student, damages their property, or places them in reasonable fear of harm;
- Creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of Promesa Academy; or

- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.

Cyberbullying is bullying through any electronic communication device, including phones, computers, cameras, email, messaging, social media, or internet-based tools.

Applicability

This policy applies to:

- Bullying that occurs on school property or at school-related activities;
- Bullying on school transportation; and
- Cyberbullying that occurs off-campus if it interferes with a student’s education or substantially disrupts school operations.

Retaliation

Promesa Academy prohibits retaliation against anyone—including victims, witnesses, or others—who in good faith report or assist in addressing bullying.

Reporting Procedures

Reports should be made as soon as possible to the Principal or a teacher. Employees must immediately notify the Principal or designee of any suspected bullying. Reports may be made orally or in writing, and anonymous reports are accepted. Oral reports will be documented in writing by the Principal or designee.

False Claims

Students who knowingly make false claims or refuse to cooperate with investigations may face disciplinary action.

Parental Notification

Parents of both the victim and the alleged bully will be notified:

- Victim’s parent/guardian will be notified by the third school day after the report.
- Alleged bully’s parent/guardian will be notified within a reasonable time.

Investigation

The Principal will determine whether the report may constitute discrimination or harassment and respond accordingly.

The Principal or designee will conduct a thorough investigation, implementing interim protections if needed. Investigations should be completed within 10 school days, unless extended for thoroughness. A written decision will follow. If bullying is confirmed, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken. Promesa may also respond to conduct that doesn't meet the definition of bullying but is still inappropriate.

Students found to have used *reasonable self-defense* in response to bullying will not be disciplined. Disciplinary actions for students with disabilities will comply with federal law.

Confidentiality

Privacy of all parties will be protected to the extent possible during the investigation. Limited disclosures may be required to conduct a full investigation.

Appeal

If a parent or student is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal.

Support Services

Students who report bullying, are victims of bullying, or witness bullying will be notified of available counseling options.

Access to Policy

This policy is shared annually with staff, included in the Student Handbook, and available at each campus and the administrative offices.

Reporting to Law Enforcement

If a Principal or designee determines that a student's behavior may constitute assault or harassment under the Texas Penal Code, a report may be made to law enforcement, including student names and addresses. A Principal's designee may include any supervised staff member.