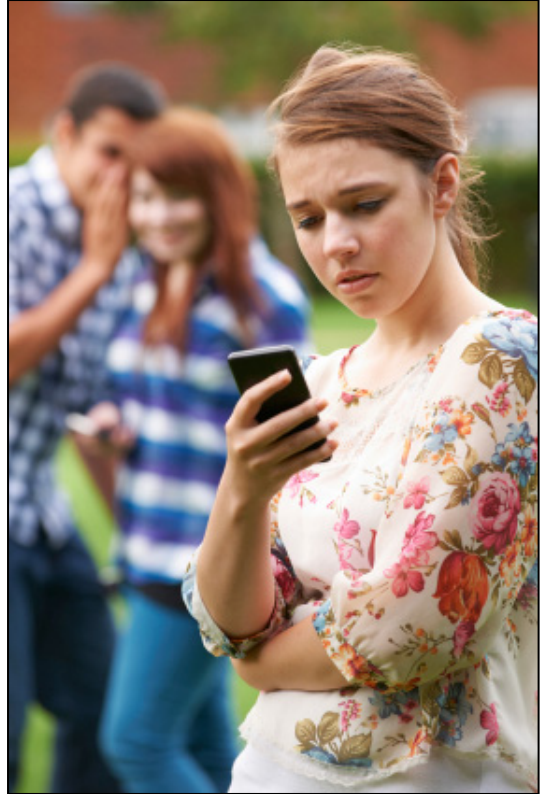


## A School Takes on Bullying

Each of the ten scenarios listed below involves an allegation of bullying at the hypothetical Fairville High School. The school has a policy on bullying:

The administration of Fairville High School believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The school will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate or harass another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation. Any student who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, during the lunch period, whether on or off campus, and during a school-sponsored activity.



In small groups, look at the scenarios and answer these questions:

- (1) Is this an example of bullying? Why or why not?
- (2) If so, what discipline should the school impose? Why?

1. Aldo is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Max is in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. In the school hallway during a passing period, Aldo shoves Max against a locker and says, "Step aside, punk!"
2. In Scenario #1 above, Aldo pulls his fist back, as if he is going to hit Max. In defense, Max kicks Aldo in the stomach.
3. Penelope and Rosetta work together on the Fairville High yearbook. They are usually friends, but have an argument over the artwork for the yearbook's cover. During lunch period, Penelope sends a text message to Rosetta. The message is "Don't talk to me today."
4. Marla is a new student at school. In the school computer lab, William sets up a page on Facebook called "Marla Go Home!" Several students post derogatory messages about Marla's appearance, calling her a "slob" and a "loser." Marla sees the page and leaves early. She stays at home for several days.

5. One Saturday, Herman and Stevie create a Facebook page impersonating Alex, a student they dislike. At Herman's home, the two use Alex's name and a photo of Alex to set up the page. In Alex's name, they post messages insulting other students. When Alex arrives at school on Monday, three students who believe they were insulted by Alex punch and kick him.
6. In a lesson in English class, the students are discussing a novel. Ben is in a group with Teresa. Many students have made fun of Ben before, believing he is gay. During the discussion, Teresa reads something in the novel she does not like and says, "That's so gay!" Ben stops discussing the novel and stays silent for the rest of the class.
7. In Scenario #4 above, Teresa's friend Giovanni looks over at Ben after Teresa says "That's so gay!" Giovanni points at Ben, laughs, and says, "Just like you, Ben!"
8. Robert is a popular "class clown" and often "roasts" other students by making fun of them in front of small audiences during passing periods and after school. One day, Robert sees two girls walking down the hallway side-by-side. He shouts, "Lesbians coming through!" Other students laugh.
9. Arnie and Edwin do not get along. One Sunday afternoon, Arnie sends threatening e-mails to Edwin. One e-mail reads, "I hate your guts! How about I put a bullet in you when I see you at school tomorrow? How do you like that?"
10. Lucy wears a t-shirt to school that has this message on it: "Homosexuals will burn in hell!"

NOTE: This lesson is adapted from the CRF lesson "Cyberbullying: Laws and Policies" included in the case materials for the 2010 mock trial *People v. Woodson*. The reading and activity has been modified.