Anti-Bullying Culture

CAC STUDY 2021-2022

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Objectives

▶ Provide Wyoming City Schools' definition(s) of Bullying

▶ Review current strategies

▶ Provide information about other school districts

▶ Common themes within the other schools

▶ Areas of potential improvement within Wyoming

▶ Recommendations

Definition Bullying

- Per WCS Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and other forms of aggressive behavior
  - Any intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) **more than once** and the behavior **causes both mental or physical harm** to the other student(s) and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.
  - Last revised December 16, 2013

Definition Bullying

- WCS Policy 5517 (revised April 16, 2021)

  - Bullying

    - Bullying rises to the level of unlawful harassment when one (1) or more persons systematically and chronically inflict physical hurt or psychological distress on one (1) or more students or employees and that bullying is based upon one (1) or more **Protected Classes**, that is, characteristics that are protected by Federal civil rights laws.

    - It is defined as any **unwanted and repeated** written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school or work performance or participation; and may involve:

    - A. teasing; B. threats; C. intimidation; D. stalking; E. cyberstalking; F. cyberbullying; G. physical violence; H. theft; I. sexual, religious, or racial harassment; J. public humiliation; or K. destruction of property.

Harassment

- Wyoming Policy 5517

  - Harassment

    - Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

      - A. places a student or school employee in **reasonable fear of harm** to his/her person or damage to his/her property;

      - B. has the effect of substantially **interfering** with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or an employee's work performance;

      - C. has the effect of substantially **disrupting the orderly operation** of a school.

Overarching Theme

Bullying, harassment, intimidation and mean behavior is what the student who receives the treatment believes it to be and therefore, it should be addressed.

Relevant Data

▶ In 2019, about 22 percent of students ages 12–18 reported being bullied at school during the school year, which was lower than the percentage reported in 2009 (28 percent).[1] Of students ages 12–18, about 15 percent reported being the subject of **rumors**; 14 percent reported **being made fun of, called names, or insulted**; 6 percent reported being **excluded from activities on purpose**; and 5 percent reported being **pushed**, shoved, tripped, or spit on. Additionally, 4 percent of students reported being **threatened with harm**, and 2 percent reported that others tried to **make them do things they did not want to do and that their property was destroyed by others on purpose.**

   ▶ https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=719 (National Center for Educational Statistics)

Wyoming Reported Cases

- **2020-2021 Second Semester Bullying Report**

  - "Wyoming City School District Board Policy 5517.01 is a State required policy and is based on 3313.666 Ohio Revised Code. This policy specifies that a report will be provided to the Board of Education President and published on the district website that reports the **verified** number of harassment/hazing/bullying incidents. Based on the definition from the Ohio Department of Education, **one** incident of verified harassment/hazing/bullying occurred during the second semester of the 2020-2021 school year."

- List of offenses that did not meet bullying criteria are not available at this site

Bullying Reports

	Academic Year	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		# Students	Per 1000 Per Year
	Calander Year	2017	2018		2019		2020		2021		
		Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer		
	Indian Hill Exempted									1900	
	Reported		2	3	1						2.11
	Addressed		2	3	1						2.11
	Madeira									1636	
	Reported			15	5	3	5	5	3		7.33
	Validated			1	2	1	1	3	2		2.04
	Cincinnati Pulbic Schools									36003	
	Reported	671		736		322		51			12.36
	Substantiated	121	171	139	123	42	15	4	9		4.33
	Unresolved	34		21		10		2			0.47
	Fairfield City Schools									9966	
	Reported				16	19	6	14	26		3.25
	Confirmed				6	5	2	0	6		0.76
	Oak Hills Local Schools									7690	
	Reported							22	28		6.50
	Confirmed							8	9		2.21
	Sycamore Community Schools									5567	
	Reported	52		47		24		5	7		6.06

Current Bullying Reporting Process

- Formal and informal complaint
  - Informal – provides a prompt resolution with a range of options
  - Formal – results in an investigation
  - Students, parents/guardians and/or staff members should submit information to school staff, teachers, assistant principal, principal, superintendent or board.
  - All confirmed complaints are entered into the student record; all other complaints are in the general disciplinary file
- Formal complaints should be made within 30 days of event

Recommendation #1

Provide public reports of all reported episodes of bullying, harassment and intimidation versus only those that are "the verified number of incidents" per WCS policy on the WCS website.

This will help determine the extent of the problem and improve areas where and to whom intervention will be most effective.

Safer Ohio Tip Hotline

▶ This tip line allows students and adults to anonymously share information with school officials and law enforcement about threats to student safety—whether that involves a threatened mass incident or harm to a single student.

▶ Monitored 24/7 by analysts within Homeland Security

▶ The Ohio School Safety Center partners with the Ohio Department of Education to follow up with affected school and law enforcement agencies to make sure that the incident is investigated, action is taken and resources and supports are provided when necessary.

▶ Initiated 2021-2022 school year

    ▶ Information sent out to families at the start of the school year

https://ohioschoolsafetycenter.ohio.gov/pre-k-12-schools/safer-ohio-school-tip-line

Recommendation #2

Increase awareness of Safety Tip Hotline by providing information to students and families at the start of the school year and the start of second semester.

Although the preference is for students and families to feel comfortable talking to school administration, for those who are not comfortable, this resource should be a well publicized option.

Information from other schools

- TRACKING
- TRAINING
- POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SYSTEMS
- ADDRESSING BULLYING
- RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Fairfield

- "Bullying and Sexual Harassment Officer" to handle concerns
- All reports are tracked in student record
- Required annual bullying and harassment training (online and individual)
- Hope Squad for both high school and middle school (introduced to 5th grades to prepare them for 6th grade implementation)
- Elementary school has a counselor who meets with students twice monthly regarding bullying
- PBIS is used to support positive behavior and reinforce expected behaviors
- Provide mental health conferences for the **entire Fairfield community**
- No current restorative practices plan

Forest Hills (Anderson)

- Tracking process unclear; handled by assistant principal
- Previously used Council on Child Abuse (COCA) for guided classroom lessons and to train staff on how to handle bullying and harassment.
- PBIS – "be respectful, responsible and safe!"
  - "Do the Right Thing Talks" at the beginning of each semester outlining how to do these 3 things in all areas of the building and student life.
  - Online PBIS bank system to reward students with SOAR points based on the 3 items.
  - Students have an app on their phone to then cash in the SOAR money at the SOAR store at lunch.
- **Anti-bullying lesson taught in 7th grade** for anywhere from 3-5 days by the counselors.
- Beginning conversations on restorative practices

Lakota

- Bullying form completed and followed by Ombudsman or Superintendent
- Remains in student's electronic file but also posted publicly
- PD days are used to support anti-bullying as needed by administration
- School policy of "See Something, Say Something"
- Hope Squad in high school for suicide prevention and mental health support
  - Similar program for junior high – "Source of Strength"
- Most important tactic is "**transparency** for students and families to promote open communication both ways".
- No widespread restorative practices program, but some staff are trained if needed

Mariemont

- Track bullying through Public School Works and communicated to teachers, students and parents
- PD days cover inclusive school climate and anti-bullying support
- PD days used to identify red flags in students regarding mental health and restorative practices
- Send out bullying surveys
- OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program – program to reduce and prevent bullying problems among school children and to improve peer relations at school
- **Mindful Moment each day**
- PBIS – awards, postcards for those supporting the values
- No restorative practices program

Reading

- Board-approved form for initial allegations
- Tracking through formal database on Ohio Work website
- At elementary level, they use a process called Responsive Classroom; PBIS is used for the other grade levels
- **Beginning of year video** addressing bullying for all students
- Ensure staff buy-in with trainings and educational sessions
- Mediation and counseling are available to students
- PBIS is used for restorative practices

Sycamore

▶ Tracking is completed with an internally created Google document and if they meet criteria for bullying, harassment or intimidation, that is tracked in a different database

▶ District training, including teachers and administrators on district-wide PD days.

▶ PBIS

▶ Interest Club – Speak up (similar to Hope Squad)

▶ Student ambassador committee – FASTTRACK program to empower students

▶ Lunch, homeroom or flex bell are used for student training

▶ **Safety Committee** – 8 counselors and 4 administrators support issues as they arise and provide training and student education as needed

▶ Restorative practices is in the code, but mostly subjective. Goal to keep students in school is foundational

Common Themes

- TRACKING IN STUDENT RECORD
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS
- PBIS IMPACT ON CULTURE
- SCHOOL PROGRAMS
- NO RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Current Wyoming Processes

	Method of reporting in student record	Classroom curriculum to include anti-bullying activities	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)	School Programs	Faculty training-Specific to bullying prevention
Primary	x	x	x	x	x
Middle	x	x	x	x	x
High	x		x	x	x

Wyoming PBIS

Primary	Middle	High

1. PBIS Committee- with regular meetings
 	
2. Building expectations:
  - I am Respectful
  - I am Responsible
  - I am Safe
 	
3. Clear expectations for school wide standards
 	
4. School wide strategies and incentives. "Caring Cowfolk"
 	
5. Use of **Second Step** curriculum around anti-bullying
	1. No Clear PBIS Committee
	
	2. Building Expectations:
	  - Integrity
	  - Community
	  - Engaged
	
	3. Procedures for teaching expectations
	
	4. School assembly conducted by school leadership (each semester)
	
	4. Use of **Lion's Quest** curriculum around anti-bullying
		1. PBIS Committee
		
		2. Building Expectations:
		  - Preparation
		  - Respect
		  - Integrity
		  - Diligence
		  - Engagement
		
		3. Procedures for teaching expectations
		
		4. School assembly conducted annually by school leadership
		
		5. Use of **Hope Squad** curriculum around anti-bullying

School Program: Hope Squad

- Suicide Prevention Initiative for high school students
- Adults are trained in a way that prepares them to train the students
  - Core group of students are chosen by their peers
  - Hope Squad student leaders are trained to support their peers with concerns related to their mood or experiences
- Options for middle schoolers with developmentally appropriate engagement strategies that may address bullying
- Fairfield, Lakota, Reading and Wyoming High School participate

Hope Squad

- Areas of Focus
  - Safety
  - Connectedness
  - Bullying Prevention
  - Mental Wellness
  - Reducing Stigma
  - Substance Abuse Prevention
- Unclear if program can be tailored to elementary age students

School Program: OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)

- Program designed for elementary, middle and junior high school
- Can be modified to support high school students
- All students are involved in the work
  - Specific support for those identified as bullies and those identified as targets
- All Inclusive Program
  - Recognize Bullying
  - Warning Signs of Bullying
  - Impact of Bullying
  - Bullying and Sexual Orientation
  - Cyberbullying
- Mariemont uses this program

Core Components
of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

Backed by thirty-five years of research and successful, worldwide implementation, the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* is a long-term, system-wide program for change involving program components at four levels:

School-Level Components

- Establish a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee.
- Conduct committee and staff trainings.
- Administer the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire schoolwide.
- Hold staff discussion group meetings.
- Introduce the school rules against bullying.
- Review and refine the school's supervisory system.
- Hold a school kick-off event to launch the program.
- Involve parents.

Classroom-Level Components

- Post and enforce schoolwide rules against bullying.
- Hold regular class meetings.
- Hold meetings with students' parents.

Individual-Level Components

- Supervise students' activities.
- Ensure that all staff intervene on the spot when bullying occurs.
- Hold meetings with students involved in bullying.
- Hold meetings with parents of involved students.
- Develop individual intervention plans for involved students.

Community-Level Components

- Involve community members on the Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee.
- Develop partnerships with community members to support your school's program.
- Help to spread anti-bullying messages and principles of best practice in the community.

For more information, download the **Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Scope and Sequence Report (PDF).**

Areas of Potential Improvement for Wyoming

- ➢ VOICE OF THE STUDENT
- ➢ BULLYING PREVENTION TRAINING OF STAFF
- ➢ STUDENT SURVEYS

Recommendation #3

Introduce and implement an Anti-Bullying Committee at each building, that includes a core group of students, at least 1 administrator and 1 staff member. This committee would review data trends from reports to drive topics for Professional Development sessions for staff and assemblies for students.

This allows for the voice of the student to be the catalyst for change, while supporting staff in handling situations with confidence.

Recommendation #4

Each building should hold at least 2 Professional Development sessions per semester and 2 student assemblies per semester that cover bullying-related topics for education of staff and students.

This allows for purposeful actions based off of reporting and the Anti-Bullying Committee recommendations in order to meet the needs directly related to the students at each school.

Anti-Bullying Culture Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Publish the number of bullying, harassment and intimidation incidents; not just those that reach the level of investigation

- May consider expanding the definition of bullying in order to cover all acts

Recommendation #2: Improve awareness of the Safety Tip Hotline to give students and families another option for reporting.

Recommendation #3: Acknowledge the voice of the student by including them in the discussion from the stage of reporting through to the interventions for change by implementing an Anti-Bullying Committee.

Recommendation #4: Provide an expanded environment for education and training students and staff surrounding bullying that is specific to the needs of each individual building by having 2 PD sessions and 2 student assemblies per semester.

References:

- National Center for Educational Statistics, https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=719

- Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation and Anti-Bullying Board Policy and Bullying Report - Wyoming City Schools

- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program | Violence Prevention Works

- Semiannual Report on Bullying Second Semester 2020-2021 (cps-k12.org)

References:

▶ Bonell, Allen ,Warren, McGowan, Bevilacqua 2018. Effects of Learning Together Interventions on Bullying and Aggression in English Secondary Schools (INCLUSIVE): A Cluster randomized trial. The Lancet 392:2452-64

▶ Limber, Olweus, Wang, Masiello, Breivik. 2018. Evaluation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program: A large scale study of US students in grades 3-11. Journal of School Psychology 69:56-72