

BULLYING AND RIVER RULES

Taylor's Falls Elementary addresses bullying through RIVER Rules. You'll frequently hear us refer to RIVER Rules. We teach our students the characteristics of:

Respect
Integrity
Value
Excellence
Responsibility

Students are taught these character traits in all areas of our school: Classroom, hallways, playground and cafeteria. Through carefully designed lessons each month, our students are taught the correct and positive characteristics expected at our school.

We also recognize the bus can be a challenging place for students, so our K-5 students participate in a program called the "Peaceful Bus". The *Peaceful Bus Program* is a whole-school program designed to decrease inappropriate behavior on school buses while creating a climate of respect and cooperation. The adults in school take the primary responsibility of educating and training students in the program so students can, in turn, act responsibly on school buses when staff members are not present. Twice per year our students meet with their bus driver, the other students on their bus, and Taylor's Falls Elementary staff members. Students, staff and bus drivers participate in activities to enhance a peaceful bus experience.

All schools in the Chisago Lakes School District support bullying prevention through our OLWEUS Bullying Prevention program. This program is designed to improve peer relations and make schools safer, more positive places for students to learn and develop. Goals of the program include:

- Reducing existing bullying problems among students
- Preventing the development of new bullying problems
- Achieving better peer relations at school

Through the supports of these frameworks and programs, our schools have the tools and resources to create safe school experiences for all our students.

River Rewards

Your child may be recognized through a River Rewards, which is a way to recognize desired behaviors tied to the RIVER rules. Staff members look for good behavior (i.e. try to "catch" a student exhibiting a RIVER rule) and submit slips to the office with the names of students who have displayed these attributes. The students get their name announced during the morning announcements and come to the principal's office to receive a small prize. Students then become eligible for the monthly root beer float party and awards at the end of the year for their positive behavior.

We are committed to providing a caring friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed, secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

What is bullying? At Taylors Falls Elementary, ***a person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself*** (OLWEUS definition).

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: excluding, tormenting
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racial: racial taunts, graffiti, and gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments/gestures
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing
- Cyber: all areas of internet, such as email and internet misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls

Why is it important to respond to bullying? Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have the responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Procedures:

1. Report bullying incidents to staff
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be reported to administration
3. Parents of students who are bullying will be informed
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behavior or threats of bullying must be investigated and stopped immediately
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behavior

Examples of consequences for bullying include: verbal/written warning, mediation, student/parent meeting, loss of privileges, detention, behavior contract, schedule modifications, suspension, expulsion, and parent/guardian notification.