

Middleborough Public Schools

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Information

October 2010

On Monday, May 3rd, 2010, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law a landmark anti-bullying bill for Massachusetts. Provisions of this new law include requirements for schools to create and implement bullying prevention plans which must include:

- Descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying;
- Clear procedures for school staff to report bullying or retaliation;
- Provision for anonymous reports;
- Clear procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation;
- Range of disciplinary sanctions for aggressors engaged in bullying or retaliation;
- Clear procedures to address the target's need for safety;
- Strategies for protecting students who report bullying;
- Procedures for notifying parents or guardians of both targets and aggressors;
- Procedures for reporting criminal activity to law enforcement;
- Disciplinary provisions for knowingly false reports of bullying;
- Strategies for counseling aggressors and targets; and
- Provision for ongoing professional development to build skills of all members of school staff.

A Bullying Prevention and Intervention Task Force was formed in June to develop a district-wide bullying prevention and intervention plan. This task force is comprised of school personnel, parents, and community members. The draft of the Middleborough Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is now available for public comment on the district website at www.middleboro.k12.ma.us. The draft of the plan will continue to be revised until the final submission to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on December 31, 2010.

The School Committee has approved an addition to the student handbook regarding bullying and is reviewing a policy, both of which will be used temporarily until the district's plan is completed. The handbook addendum is attached. The policy and handbook language will be revised as needed after the district's prevention and intervention plan is submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

An initial information session on the Bullying Prevention Law and opportunity for public comment on the Middleborough Public Schools' draft of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be offered on:

- Monday, November 1st at 6:30 PM in the John T. Nichols, Jr. Middle School auditorium and
- Wednesday, November 10, 2010 at 10:00 AM in the John T. Nichols, Jr. Middle School auditorium for families and community members.

Watch for further information and programs on bully prevention and intervention throughout the school year.