

OJR Prevention/Education Programs: Sexual Harassment, Personal Safety, Respectful Relationships

Owen J. Roberts School District actively works to structure environments based on respect and dignity in all interactions: adult-to-adult, adult-to-child, and child- to-child.

EMPLOYEES, STAFF AND WORKERS Comprehensive strategies and educational programs are in place regarding sexual harassment, personal safety, and respectful relationships. Owen J. Roberts requires training and professional development that exceeds state mandates (details below). Employees are trained to bring any matter in question to the attention of a supervisor and the district takes strong and affirmative action with any issue(s) that may arise.

HIRING AND VETTING Many processes are in place to ensure that job applicants are thoroughly screened including letters of recommendation, multiple reference checks (including at least one from a current supervisor) and updated certifications. Owen J. Roberts requires that all clearances be within one year of anticipated date of hire: FBI, Child Abuse, and State Police. The district also complies with [Act 168](#) Sexual Misconduct/Abuse Disclosure which requires disclosure from all past employers where an applicant may have interacted with children.

NEW HIRE ORIENTATION AND TRAINING All new employees must complete training that includes [Act 126](#) Mandated Reporting, Confidentiality, Cyber Bullying, two Diversity trainings, Ethics & Boundaries, Internet Safety, Student-to-Student Hazing and Harassment, Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Harassment and Misconduct. Additionally, our Child/Student Abuse Policy, Professional Educator Discipline Act Policy, and Professional Standards of Conduct Policies must be reviewed by the new hire and acknowledged.

ONGOING TRAINING An ongoing cycle of training is mandated and monitored including [Act 126](#) Mandated Reporting, Confidentiality, Cyber Bullying, two Diversity trainings, Ethics & Boundaries, Internet Safety, Student-to-Student Hazing and Harassment, Teen Dating Violence. Sexual Harassment and Misconduct trainings are conducted annually. We also conduct 4-hours of Suicide Awareness trainings every five years. These trainings are completed by every single employee of the Owen J. Roberts School District. These trainings currently exceed what is required by the state of Pennsylvania.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Examples include:

- Chester County District Attorney Tom Hogan, who presented specialized programs to separate groups of employees so that every adult working with students was empowered with knowledge on all types of harassment and a thorough understanding of adult-child boundaries.
- Jeffrey Litts, a member of the Kegel, Kelin, Almy & Lord LLP's Education Law Group, Litigation Group, and Labor and Employment Law Group provided education to administrators and supervisors on topics surrounding harassment, school compliance, and actions which may be expected from a legal perspective.
- As part of ongoing professional development for mandated reporters, all staff participate in *Stewards of Children* training.

STUDENTS K-12 Owen J. Roberts School District applies a developmental approach to child safety, K-12. Applicable information is delivered through the regular educational program. In addition, guidance counselors play a key role in providing students with developmentally appropriate information and are available when students need to talk. In

addition to internal resources, the district also partners with professional outside organizations such as the Crimes Victims' Center, Chester County District Attorney's Office, and the Department of Children, Youth & Family to provide evidence-based programs which seek to stop violence in any form before it happens.

GRADES K – 3 Students learn to recognize conflict and learn refusal skills, how to make “I” statements, and how to seek adult intervention. Guidance counselors visit all classes arming students with developmentally-appropriate tools and language. The Olweus Bully Prevention Program designed to improve peer relations and make schools safer, more positive places for students to learn and develop is in place K-8. As part of the Safe and Healthy Communities Initiative, Chester County Crime Victims' Center partnered with OJRSD to implement a program for 2nd graders called “*Safe Touches*.” Guidance Counselors use the evidence-based Second Step for self-regulation, bully prevention and child protection. As students begin to access the internet, media specialists teach age-appropriate cyber-safety so students know how to protect themselves and their identity when using electronic media.

GRADES 4 – 6 Health curriculum includes topics such as internet safety, personal cyber safety, and personal safety. The Olweus Bully Prevention Program is in place. Media specialists and guest speakers reinforce cyber safety and internet etiquette so students know how to practice good digital citizenship and continue to protect themselves and their personal identity online.

MIDDLE SCHOOL Guidance Counselors visit every class in both grades to familiarize students with the Students Assistance Program (SAP). Students learn what adverse childhood experiences are and how to seek assistance if ever in need. Students learn about all types of child abuse and about mandated reporting. Students are strongly encouraged to tell an adult about any feeling of threat to their emotional, physical, social or

intellectual well-being. Additionally, students receive training in the [Safe2Say](#) anonymous tip line and are provided with Childline of PA's 24-hour hotline and encouraged to call 911 for police assistance if needed. The media specialists and guest speakers reinforce cyber safety and internet protocols so students know how to practice good digital citizenship and continue to protect themselves and their personal identity when using digital media. The Olweus Bully Prevention Program is in place and students participate in meaningful class meetings. Students understand how to report issues and a trained discipline team is in place to investigate, intervene, and mediate lower-level referrals that are submitted by students or adults as part of the Olweus Bullying Prevention protocol. A licensed social worker is available for specific student needs.

HIGH SCHOOL The high school health curriculum topics begin to include contemporary social issues and information about personal relationship safety. Outside speakers from organizations such as the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County are utilized every year. The Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program at Owen J. Roberts, Roberts Assistance Program (RAP), provides a systematic team process used to mobilize school resources for any student experiencing barriers to learning which may include substance abuse, harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying. A discipline team is in place to handle all reports of harassment and licensed social workers are available for specific student needs. Students are also encouraged to utilize the [Safe2Say](#) anonymous tip line.

COMMUNITY Parents are encouraged to contact the principal of their child's school if ever they have a concern about the safety of their child or any child in our community. In 2020, Owen J. Roberts offered free workshops called *Stewards of Children*. This free program was developed by the national organization Darkness to Light to teach adults how to have open dialogue with their children; how to identify signs of abuse and how to report suspected abuse.