

Olean Intermediate-Middle School

Understanding and Preventing Bullying

What Schools, Students, and Families Can Do Together

Parent Workshop
September 17, 2026



Creating and Supporting a Positive Culture



Our Shared Commitment

Olean City School District is committed to providing a safe and orderly environment where all students can learn and thrive.

Order, discipline, and school climate are shared responsibilities among school, home, and community.

KEY MESSAGE

- This workshop is not about blame.
- It is about helping all of us use the same language, expectations, and procedures to support students.



What Is Bullying?

Bullying generally involves three elements:

1 Intentional

Behavior directed toward another student

2 Repeated

A pattern of behavior, or severe conduct

3 Power imbalance

Real or perceived advantage or vulnerability

The district Code also addresses conduct that creates a hostile environment or substantially interferes with a student's educational experience, emotional well-being, safety, or access to school.

Physical

Verbal

Social exclusion

Rumors

Cyberbullying



Conflict vs. Bullying

Not every hurtful interaction is bullying—and every concern still deserves to be heard.

CONFLICT

- Disagreement between peers
- Usually mutual
- Can often be addressed through problem-solving
- Happens occasionally

BULLYING

- Power imbalance
- One-sided targeting
- Requires adult intervention
- Repeated or severe

The district discipline system also distinguishes bullying from harassment, intimidation, discrimination, and defamation.

**Conflict =
Equal Power**

**Bullying =
Imbalance of
power**





Annoying Behavior vs Harassment

Students may experience behavior that is frustrating, disrespectful, or hurtful. While some concerns may be annoying behavior, others may rise to the level of harassment and require a different response.

ANNOYING BEHAVIOR

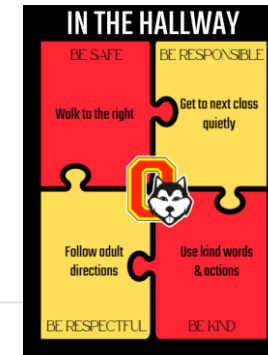
- Usually isolated or occasional.
- May be inconsiderate or immature.
- Causes frustration or irritation.
- Often addressed through coaching and problem-solving.

HARASSMENT

- Repeated or severe behavior.
- Targets a person or group.
- Creates a hostile or unsafe environment.
- Requires adult intervention and investigation.

Even when behavior does not meet the definition of harassment, it may still be inappropriate and should be addressed.

What Does OIMS Teach Students?



BE SAFE

- Keep hands and feet to self.
- Use spaces safely.
- Report safety concerns to adults.

BE RESPECTFUL

- Use appropriate language.
- Maintain personal space.
- Follow directions.
- Honor the privacy of others.

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Be prepared and ready to learn.
- Follow routines the first time.
- Take care of belongings and school property.
- Own your choices and actions.

BE KIND

- Include others.
- Invite others to participate.
- Encourage others.
- Help others feel welcomed.

Our goal is not simply to stop negative behaviors. It is to actively teach the positive behaviors we want students to display every day.



What Parents Should Watch For In Their Children

Potential indicators

- Avoiding school

- Mood changes

- Withdrawal from peers

- Increased anxiety

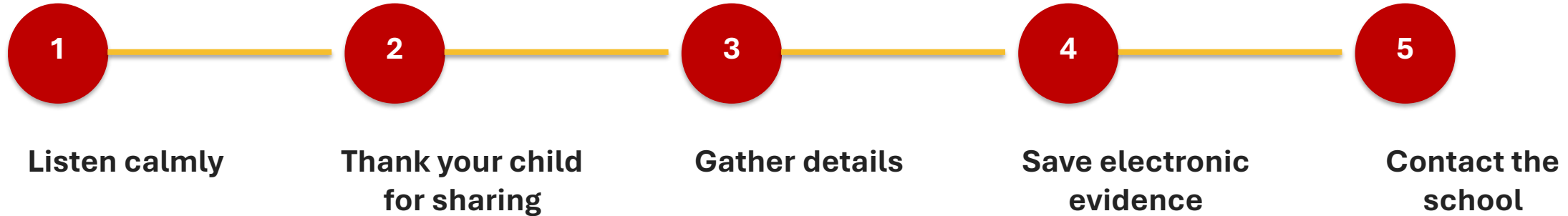
- Physical complaints

- Distress related to devices or social media

REMEMBER These signs do not automatically indicate bullying, but they may suggest a student needs support.



How Families Can Support Their Child



PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLE

- Avoid “fix it yourself” advice. The goal is to help the student feel heard, supported, and connected to adults who can help.



What Students Need to Hear

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING BULLYING

- “You deserve to feel safe.”
- “Reporting is asking for help, not tattling.”
- Tell a trusted adult. Keep asking until someone helps.

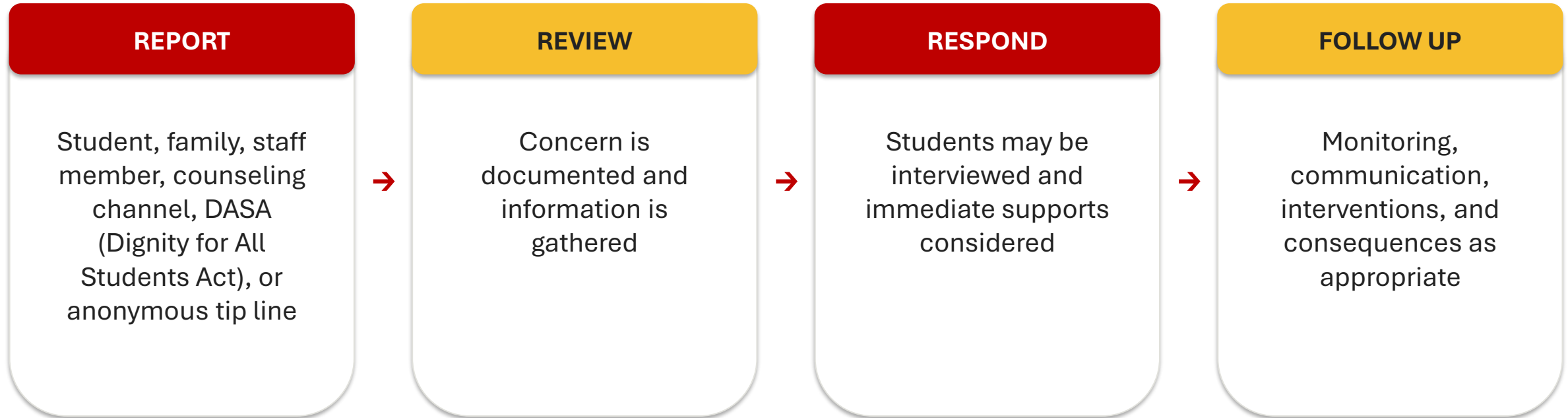
IF YOU WITNESS BULLYING

- “Be Kind.”
- Include others.
- Invite others to join.
- Support your peers.
- Tell an adult when someone needs help.

Parents can reinforce these same messages at home.



What Happens When Bullying Is Reported?



The process may look different depending on the concern, but the goal is consistent: understand what happened, support students, and respond appropriately.



What Parents Can Expect From the School

When concerns are reported, families can expect:

✓ **Concerns taken seriously**

✓ **Investigation of reports**

✓ **Student safety planning when needed**

✓ **Communication with families**

✓ **Monitoring and follow-up**

✓ **DASA procedures when applicable**

✓ **Interventions and consequences aligned with district policy**

Trust grows when families understand both what the school will do—and what the school cannot promise before facts are gathered.



School Systems Already Working Behind the Scenes

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

- Expectations are taught across hallways, cafeteria, bus, playground, bathroom, assemblies, arrival, dismissal, safety drills, etc.

DASA

- Procedures for reporting harassment, investigating complaints, protecting student dignity, and addressing discrimination and bullying.

STUDENT SUPPORTS

- Counselors, administrators, outside agencies, support staff, conflict resolution processes, and behavioral plans when needed.

Prevention is a system—not a single lesson or assembly.



The Social Media Question

Families can support students by carefully considering the developmental readiness for students to engage on social media platforms. Digital behavior can affect the school environment—even when it begins away from school.

SAVE

Keep screenshots, messages, usernames, dates, and other evidence.

REPORT

Use the platform's reporting tools for harmful or abusive content.

CONNECT

Tell the school when online behavior impacts a student's school experience.

BUILD HABITS

Encourage healthy boundaries, privacy, empathy, and responsible digital choices.

The district Code specifically addresses cyberbullying and electronic behavior that affects the school environment.



Our Shared Playbook

Students + Families + Schools

STUDENTS

- Use the expectations.
- Ask for help.
- Include and support peers.

FAMILIES

- Listen and document.
- Reinforce positive behavior.
- Partner with the school.

SCHOOLS

- Teach expectations.
- Respond consistently.
- Communicate and follow up.

Same language • Same expectations • Shared responsibility

TOGETHER, WE CAN CREATE A SAFER SCHOOL CLIMATE.

- Questions •
- Conversation •
- Next Steps •

Please complete the survey
to provide us feedback.

Thank you!

