



## **Bullying Awareness And Prevention**

Norwalk Public Schools is pleased to join others across the country in recognizing October as Bullying Awareness and Prevention month.

Anti-bullying activities will begin ahead of time with Norwalk's participation in "Start With Hello" Week taking place September 24<sup>th</sup> through the 28<sup>th</sup>. Norwalk Public Schools will join 13,000 schools across the country to participate in program developed by family members whose loved ones were killed in tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School. The purpose of the program is to help create a culture of inclusion and connectedness.

This program enables students to make a difference with their peers in a simple, fun, and impactful way by encouraging them to take small but powerful actions to promote connectedness and inclusion, and to identify social isolation. NPS students will participate in programming at their individual schools.

For example, at Wolfpit Elementary School, a student "greeter" will stand at the door and say hello to their peers in the morning. Students will also say hello in several different languages during morning announcements. Roton Middle School students will create "Say Hello" posters in art class and will be encouraged to give a compliment, or place a positive note on someone's locker. At Brien McMahon High School, students will participate in lessons based on stories of social isolation and "in my shoes" scenarios, fostering skills necessary to develop into empathetic and responsible members of society.

Throughout the month of October and beyond, the work will continue at Norwalk schools throughout the district with activities and events designed to prevent bullying.

Parents, educators and administrators are committed to working together to raise awareness, and to promote a positive culture that eliminates bullying. Norwalk schools implement a positive behavior strategy called "Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports," or PBIS. PBIS includes preventative and responsive approaches that may be utilized with all students in a classroom, small groups, or a few individual students.

At NPS, we encourage students to speak up when they see an issue or injustice happening, but know that this is not always easy. Students and parents have access to an anti-bullying app called Anonymous Alerts, giving them the ability to report bullying and safety issues quickly. Through the app, issues are anonymously reported to school administrators and counselors including reports of suspicious activity, safety threats, bullying, drug abuse, depression, harassment, family issues and self-harm issues.

By declaring "Start With Hello" Week in September and October Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month, the Board of Education encourages all Norwalk students, parents and members of the community to spread messages of kindness, acceptance and inclusion.