



A Community of Learners

Informational Memo: District 36 Bullying Prevention Plan Review

TO: School Board
Trisha Kocanda, *Superintendent*

FROM: Beth Martin, *Department of Student Services*
Linda Wehrheim, *Executive Assistant to Superintendent/School Board*

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Annually, the Parent Teacher Advisory Committee meets to review policies related to Student Behavior and Discipline. One such policy regularly reviewed is 7:180, Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment. Inclusive in this policy is the requirement that “*the Superintendent or designee shall develop and maintain a bullying prevention and response plan.*” Furthermore, School Districts are required to file an update to this Policy, every two years, with the Illinois State Board of Education. The District worked with a task force of students, parents, and staff to develop and pilot a Plan in fall 2015. In fall 2016, the revised Bullying Prevention Plan was implemented.

Desired outcomes included establishing a framework for identifying bullying behavior, developing common language and processes that would be communicated and utilized grades K-8, providing a safe learning environment for students.

The evaluation process has included surveying principals, meeting with school social workers, and including this topic as a recurring item on the Parent Teacher Advisory Committee agenda. Additionally, students have been included in focus groups and advisories as partners in creating videos unique to each school environment, and most recently, a team of Skokie students met with Superintendent Kocanda to discuss areas for improvement.

As a result of feedback received, the following refinements to the Bullying Prevention Plan have been agreed upon and will be implemented in the 2018-2019 school year.

1. Internal Communications: Establish an administrative, or designee, reporting feature in PowerSchool for the purpose of providing student support and improved communications from grade-grade and school-school transitions.
2. Reporting: All grades will be encouraged to talk with faculty members regarding concerns related to bullying, intimidation, and harassment. Awareness of electronic reporting will be emphasized (grades 5-8). Paper forms will be eliminated for grades 5-8. Grades K-4 will continue to educate students on multiple methods to identify and report incidents.
3. Identification: Data reported indicates that the framework utilized to identifying bullying behavior has been well received and helpful in working with parents and students when incidents are reported and preliminary investigation initiated. This framework will continue to be utilized and communicated annually to all students/grades.
4. Incidents: Less than 1% of incidents reported were validated as “bullying” followed by a full investigation. However, based on the 25+ reports received by students relating incidents that were described as bullying, school social workers will be working with students and teachers to broaden the scope of behavior expectations when establishing classroom and student norms at the beginning of the school year and throughout ongoing discussions.

Recommendation:

The Policy Subcommittee recommends that following a 2nd read, The School Board adopt recommended updates to Policy 7:180 Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment and revised Bullying Prevention Plan at its September 25, 2018, School Board meeting and submit to Illinois State Board of Education.