



BULLYING PREVENTION, TRACKING, AND MESSAGING

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INTRODUCTION

A Hanover Research (Hanover) member district in Michigan is interested in understanding trends and best practices regarding the prevention and tracking of and messaging around bullying. Hanover recently completed an Equity and Inclusion Diagnostic (survey) and Equity Scorecard (data analysis), the results of which supported leadership's perceptions that bullying is a problem in the district.

Based on these data and leadership's impressions, the member seeks to learn additional strategies for preventing and tracking bullying in their district and how they can optimize their messaging about bullying policies and practices to district stakeholders (e.g., staff, parents, and students).

In this report, Hanover reviews best practices regarding the prevention and tracking of and messaging around bullying based on peer-reviewed research literature, industry publications, and other relevant resources. The second section of the report also benchmarks the policies and practices among a selection of peer districts pertaining to prevention, tracking, and messaging around bullying.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings, Hanover Research suggests that member districts consider the following recommendations.



Ensure and communicate the fidelity of school-wide positive behavior programs to set the foundation for bullying prevention measures. Programs such as SWPBIS can take years to reach implementation fidelity and to create lasting change, necessitating long-term goals. Promote and support programs by setting positive behavioral standards in the school mission and goals to relay to students, parents, staff, and other stakeholders.



Provide a transparent, web-based bullying reporting system, and use data to track instances of bullying and inform decision-making. Examples of data include the results of a school climate survey conducted annually to track school climate and monitor improvements.



Provide and communicate extensive bullying prevention training for teachers and staff, and ensure they have the resources and skills to both implement bullying prevention and intervene in incidents that happen in the classroom. Ensure teachers and staff are building strong positive relationships with students and feel confident handling bullying or misbehavior.

KEY FINDINGS



Best practices for bullying prevention begin with creating a positive school climate, which requires a school-wide, multi-tiered approach that prioritizes modeling and reinforcing positive behaviors. Research shows that creating a positive school climate is crucial in preventing bullying from happening in the first place. Effective school-wide frameworks use a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for prevention and intervention. Research-based best practices for equitable discipline for grades K-8 include Positive Behavior Interventions (PBIS), Restorative Justice, and Social-Emotional Learning.



Exclusionary discipline (e.g., removing students from the classroom) is ineffective in addressing disruptive behaviors and bullying. It has negative short-term and long-term effects on student learning, well-being, and behavior. Schools should develop practices that address the root causes of behavior issues, when possible, through non-exclusionary discipline alternatives. These alternatives can include positive disciplinary practices such as restorative justice and teacher toolkits for action.



Strong student-teacher relationships and engagement practices support school climates and bullying prevention by developing trust within the school community and ensuring students feel heard. Teachers can leverage strategies to deepen relationships with students, including individual reflection, peer and coaching conversations, and intentional interactions with students. Effective anti-bullying and bullying-prevention training should be available to staff and teachers in order to equip them with the knowledge in prevention and appropriate intervention. Districts like Stockton Unified School District also provide teachers with extensive bullying prevention classroom resources.



Schools and districts should explicitly define bullying and should consider naming backgrounds and identities that may be targeted by bullying behavior in school policies. By doing so, districts may enable more intentional teacher intervention and lead to an environment that encourages reporting. Likewise, district messaging should also include positive behavior standards expected of the school community. Madison School District clearly defines actions of both bullying and cyberbullying and provides resources for students to guide them in responding to instances of bullying. Clarenceville School District and schools within Roseville Community Schools provide clear outlines of behavioral standards and goals for the whole school directly on their school homepage.



Anonymous reporting systems can be effective tools for schools to identify and track bullying and school violence. Research shows that students are more likely to report instances of violence or bullying if they can do so anonymously. Using web-based reporting systems can also help schools track cases and trends of bullying across the school year, providing crucial data. Model districts Appleton Area School District and Stockton Unified School District provide both bullying prevention resources and an online system for students, teachers, staff, and parents to report instances of bullying.

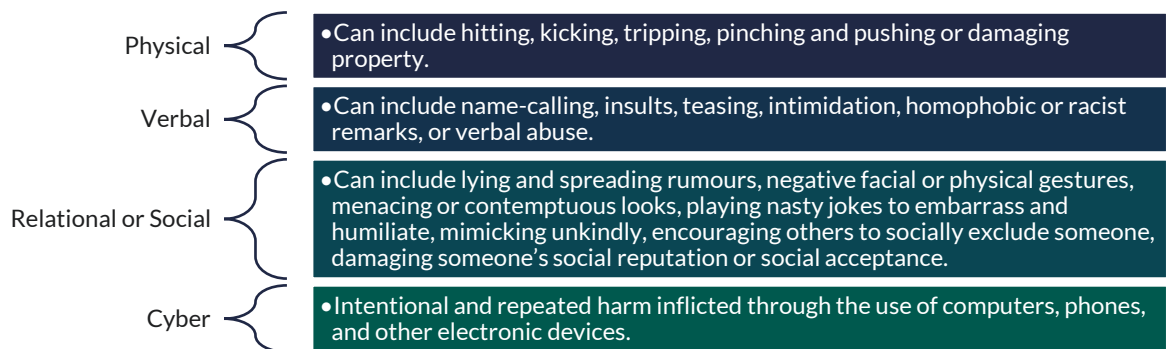
SECTION I: BEST PRACTICES

This section identifies key aspects of bullying and provides research-based methods for implementing whole school change.

IDENTIFYING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

The American Psychological Association defines bullying as “an aggressive behavior that is intended to cause distress or harm, involves an imbalance of power or strength between the aggressor and the victim, and occurs repeatedly over time.”¹ Bullying can take many forms, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 1.1: Forms of Bullying



Source: National Centre Against Bullying²

Bullying and harassment can have significant negative impacts on student development, including mental health challenges (e.g., depression, anxiety) and dropping out of school, and can be potentially life-threatening when interactions lead to suicide or violence.³

Challenges to Reporting and Tracking Bullying

Fear is a common reason for not reporting bullying, as students are often afraid of what bullies will do if they find out that an adult knows about the incident. Typically, the victim of an incident also wants to avoid being labeled, especially when the bully is a well-liked student.⁴ Conversely, students fear that once an adult becomes involved, the adult will engage in a way that further aggravates the situation or mistakenly punish the victim.⁵ Students may also be ashamed of being bullied, and some start feeling like they deserve it.⁶ **Therefore, anonymous surveys and reporting tools are key resources for gathering information on bullying**

Students often avoid telling others about bullying incidents, especially teachers, out of feelings of fear, shame, and helplessness.

and

¹ “Bullying and School Climate.” American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/advocacy/interpersonal-violence/bullying-school-climate>

² Text quoted verbatim from: “Types Of Bullying.” National Centre Against Bullying. <https://www.ncab.org.au/bullying-advice/bullying-for-parents/types-of-bullying/>

³ Affairs (ASPA), A.S. for P. “Effects of Bullying.” StopBullying.Gov, September 24, 2019. <https://www.stopbullying.gov/bullying/effects>

⁴ “Why Don’t Kids Report Bullying?” Committee for Children, September 7, 2016. <https://www.cfchildren.org/blog/2016/09/why-dont-kids-report-bullying/>

⁵ [1] “Frequently Asked Questions.” Nebraska Department of Education, September 8, 2017.

<https://www.education.ne.gov/safety/bullying-prevention/frequently-asked-questions/> [2] Fraser, J. “Why Don’t Kids Speak up about Bullying?” The Advocate, February 21, 2016. <https://www.theadvocate.org/why-dont-kids-speak-up-about-bullying/>

⁶ “Why Don’t Kids Report Bullying?” Op. cit.

harassment incidents.⁷ However, students do not always recognize actions as bullying and therefore do not report more indirect or subtle forms of inappropriate behavior. For example, students may not report exclusion from groups or activities or rumors spreading.⁸

Additionally, many students feel powerless in bullying situations. Victims of bullying may feel powerless against their bullies due to their inability to stand up to bullies and adults' lack of intervention.⁹ When adults do not believe victims of bullying or intervene, students may begin to think that adults do not care about them and that perpetrators can escape accountability and disciplinary consequences.¹⁰



Additional Information: Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying introduces additional reasons why students do not report bullying incidents. Five reasons identified by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center and published by the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI) include:¹¹

- Students worry that adults will take away their devices;
- Students may see their online interactions as minor conflicts or drama rather than cyberbullying;
- Students do not know how to talk about cyberbullying issues with adults;
- Students feel embarrassed or guilty about the reasons they experience bullying, and the situation feels too personal to share; and
- Students believe they should be able to resolve the situation without adults.

CREATING SOLUTIONS TO PREVENT BULLYING

This section reviews best practices districts can utilize to prevent bullying from happening in the first place, including creating a school-wide positive behavior framework and intentionally crafting district policies to relay the district's definition of bullying and expectations for behavior.

DEVELOPING A SCHOOL-WIDE FRAMEWORK

School-wide prevention programs to create a positive school environment, increase safety, and increase the quality of relationships are the first steps to preventing instances of bullying. At its core, school climate is about supporting healthy, positive, and connected relationships, which by definition are not supportive of any mean-spirited behaviors, including but not limited to bullying and harassment.¹² In the last decade, the U.S. Department of Education and a growing number of State Departments of Education have endorsed school climate renewal strategies to prevent bullying.¹³ Figure 1.2 lists the essential elements of a school climate oriented to prevent bullying behaviors.

⁷ [1] "Best Practices in Bullying Prevention." Center for Safe Schools and Highmark Foundation. <https://bptoolkit.safeschools.info/best-practices/> [2] Hester, J., Y. Bolen, and L. Hyde. "Involving Community to Strengthen a Successful Middle School Bullying Program." *Review of Higher Education & Self-Learning*, 7:25, September 2014. p. 76.

<https://web.s.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=b7ae1f98-12e0-4cae-8065-f80150b91f7f%40redis>

⁸ "Why Don't Kids Report Bullying?," Op. cit.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ [1] "Frequently Asked Questions," Op. cit. [2] "Why Don't Kids Report Bullying?," Op. cit.

¹¹ Bulleted text adapted from: "5 Reasons Youth Don't Report Cyberbullying—and What Parents Can Do About It." Family Online Safety Institute, November 23, 2020. <https://www.fosi.org/good-digital-parenting/5-reasons-youth-dont-report-cyberbullying-and-what-parents-can-do-about-it>

¹² "School Climate and Bullying Prevention." National School Climate Center, Updated 2021. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED584442.pdf>

¹³ Ibid.

Figure 1.2: Essential Elements of School Climate Reform

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP	District and building leaders must fully endorse and lead effective school reform efforts, including school climate improvement. These leaders must publicly and authentically support comprehensive efforts to prevent mean, cruel, and/or bullying behaviors and commit to creating and maintaining safe, supportive, respectful, and engaging climates for learning and development.
ENGAGING THE WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY	Students, parents/guardians, school personnel, and community members/leaders must be co-learners and co-leaders in effective school climate improvement efforts. A lack of engagement is one of the most common reasons why so many school reform efforts fail.
CONTINUAL ASSESSMENT	<p>Assessment is important not only as an engagement strategy but also to establish “baselines” to gauge progress over time. There are three levels of assessment that are helpful to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Readiness assessments that support school leaders’ understanding of how ready or not they are to embark on a school-wide reform effort to prevent mean, cruel, and/or bullying and promote a climate for learning. ▪ Comprehensive school climate assessments. ▪ More targeted bully-victim-witness assessments via student-led participatory action research and/or other surveys.
POLICIES, LAWS, RULES, AND SUPPORTS	<p>Helpful policies and district-level supports, as well as related codes of conduct, need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhance the whole school community learning and working together to understand their shared vision for what kind of school they most want. ▪ Develop rules, supports, and standards (e.g., laws and/or policies) and educational practices (e.g., school-wide improvement efforts, instructional and one-one practices) that support this vision. ▪ Be aligned with research-based findings about what helps to reduce mean, cruel, and/or bullying behaviors

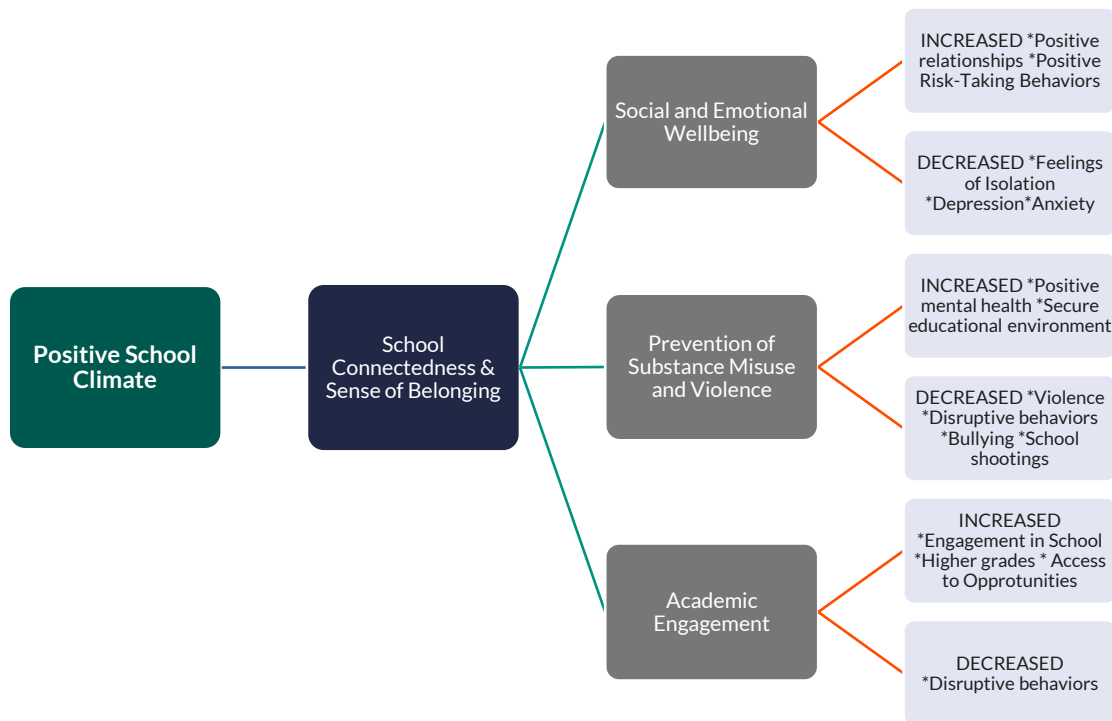
Source: National School Climate Center¹⁴

School climate reform is a well-supported strategy to increase student learning and achievement, enhance school connectedness, reduce high school dropout rates, and prevent bullying and other forms of violence (Figure 1.3). Recent research from the Harvard School of Graduate Education also recommends involving students in the process of building a better, positive school environment, which can help them take ownership of their actions and outcomes.¹⁵

¹⁴ Contents adapted from: Ibid.

¹⁵ “School Culture and Bullying.” Harvard Graduate School of Education. <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/22/05/school-culture-and-bullying>

Figure 1.3: Associated Outcomes of Improving School Climate



Source: CDE¹⁶

Creating a positive school-wide climate helps schools focus on prevention rather than solely intervention for instances of misbehavior and bullying.¹⁷ There are several research-based programs that can provide a framework for whole-school change. These are reviewed briefly in the following subsections.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS)

The School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is an established framework incorporating a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) with universal preventive measures and targeted interventions to implement equitable discipline reform in every level of the school system.¹⁸ The SWPBIS framework utilizes evidence-based positive reinforcement and restorative practices rather than punitive disciplinary practices that typically lead to disparities and poor student outcomes.¹⁹

SWPBIS utilizes a three-tier system based on the MTSS framework to provide different levels of behavior support for all students (Figure 1.4).²⁰

Figure 1.4: Tiers of Support

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL
Tier 1 supports are delivered to all students and emphasize teaching prosocial skills and behavior expectations. Schools acknowledge appropriate student behavior across all school settings. Tier 1 PBIS builds a social culture where students expect, prompt, and reinforce appropriate behavior for each other. When implemented with fidelity, Tier 1 PBIS systems and practices meet the needs of 80% or more of all students' needs.

¹⁶ Contents reproduced and adapted from: "School Culture and Climate." Colorado Department of Education. p. 7. <https://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolclimate>

¹⁷ "School Culture and Climate," Op. cit.

¹⁸ Gregory, A., R.J. Skiba, and K. Mediratta. "Eliminating Disparities in School Discipline: A Framework for Intervention." *Review of Research in Education*, 41:1, March 2017.

¹⁹ "School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports." Center on PBIS. <https://www.pbis.org/topics/school-wide>

²⁰ Ibid.

TIER 2: TARGETED
<p>Tier 2 supports focus on students who are not successful with Tier 1 supports alone. Students receiving Tier 2 support require additional teaching and practice opportunities to increase their likelihood of success. Tier 2 supports are often successful when provided within groups. At this level, systems and practices are efficient. This means they are similar across students and can be quickly accessed. Schools monitor fidelity and outcome data regularly to adjust implementation as needed. The typical range of Tier 2 supports include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-management ▪ Check-In, Check-Out ▪ Small group social skill instruction ▪ Targeted academic supports. <p>Typically, schools deliver Tier 2 supports to 5-15% of the student body.</p>
TIER 3: INTENSIVE, INDIVIDUALIZED
<p>Tier 3 is more intensive and individualized. Schools use more formalized assessments to match interventions to the behavior's function. They create individualized plans incorporating the student's academic strengths and deficits, physical and medical status, mental health needs, and family/community support. Support plans emphasize:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prevention of problem situations ▪ Active instruction of new, replacement, and adaptive behaviors ▪ Formal strategies to acknowledge desired behavior ▪ Systematic procedures to reduce the likelihood that problem behaviors are reinforced ▪ Safety routines ▪ Accurate and sustained implementation ▪ Data collection procedures to measure fidelity and impact ▪ Coordination of family, agency, and other systems of care. ▪ Tier 3 supports target the 3-5% of students with the highest support needs in the school.

Source: Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports²¹

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports describes five steps and corresponding details for reducing bullying behavior through PBIS, which appear in Figure 1.5.²²

Figure 1.5: How to Apply PBIS in Schools with Bullying Concerns

STEP	DETAILS
<p>Step 1: PBIS school leadership teams (teams) examine their discipline data to determine the following:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How often specific bullying behaviors (e.g., verbal or physical aggression, intimidation, teasing) occur ▪ Where bullying behaviors reportedly take place (e.g., hallways, parking lots, online) ▪ How many and which students partake in bullying behavior (including students who are targets or bystanders) ▪ Which staff members have been involved in bullying behavior incidents

²¹ Quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

²² Sugai, G., R. Horner, and B. Algozzine. "Reducing the Effectiveness of Bullying Behavior in Schools." OSEP Center On Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, April 19, 2011. https://assets-global.website-files.com/5d3725188825e071f1670246/5d6ff558d558a518da7a2e06_pbis_bullying_behavior_apr19_2011.pdf

STEP	DETAILS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When during the day (i.e., time, period) and week, bullying behavior is reported
<p>Step 2: Teams examine the extent to which Tier I practices and systems are implemented accurately, fluently, and school-wide. The focus is on the extent to which staff members:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach, provide practices for, and acknowledge the behaviors that represent three to five positive school-wide behavioral expectations (e.g., “respecting self, others, and the environment;” “safety, responsibility, and honor”) Actively and positively supervise all students across school settings Have high rates of positive interactions and contact with all students Arrange their instruction, so all students are actively academically engaged, successful, and challenged
<p>Step 3: To address bullying behaviors at Tier I, all students and staff are taught a common strategy for preventing and responding to bullying behavior, including:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to avoid situations where bullying behavior is likely How to intervene and respond early and quickly to interrupt bullying behavior, remove the social rewards for bullying behavior, and prevent bullying behavior from escalating How to remove what triggers and maintains bullying behavior How to improve the accuracy, fluency, and sustainability of implementation efforts What to do when prevention efforts do not work How and what to report and record when a bullying behavior incident occurs
<p>Step 4: If teams implement Steps 1 through 3 well, a relatively small proportion of students require more than Tier I support. These students should not receive more of the same ineffective strategies, especially with more severe consequences. Instead, for students whose bullying behavior does not improve, teams should consider these students for Tiers II and III supports, where:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports are initiated by increasing consideration of behavioral function or purpose (e.g., “bully behavior results in access to bystander, target, and/or adult attention”) Based on the function of a student’s behavior, students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin the day with a check-in or reminder about the daily expectations Be more overtly and actively supervised Receive more frequent, regular, and positive performance feedback each day Conclude each day with a checkout or debriefing with an adult More intensive supports are highly individualized, multi-disciplinary, trans-situational (i.e., school, family, community), and long-term
<p>Step 5: Teams improve and sustain the implementation of an effective intervention or practice by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring accuracy and fluency of implementation frequently and regularly Reviewing behavioral data regularly Adapting intervention features to improve outcomes and sustain implementation Establishing efficient and expert capacity to enable consideration of new or other behavioral concerns (e.g., scaling, continuous regeneration)

Source: OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports²³

²³ Figure reproduced verbatim with modifications from: Ibid., pp. 5–6.

It is important to note that implementation of SWPBIS takes time and effort on behalf of all members involved and may take years to reach full implementation fidelity. **The stages of implementation involve six distinct phases, highlighting that it “will not happen all at once or proceed smoothly, at least not at first.”**²⁴ A study by the University of South Florida synthesized the extensive research on SWPBIS systems and indicated these six phases of implementation, outlined in Figure 1.6.

Figure 1.6: Stages of SWPBIS Implementation

EXPLORATION & ADOPTION	This stage aims to assess the potential match between community needs, evidence-based practice and program needs, community resources, and a decision to proceed or not.
PROGRAM INSTALLATION	After a decision to implement an evidence-based program, structural supports necessary to initiate the program are put in place, and resources are allocated to begin the program.
INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION	Implementation requires change; this change will not occur simultaneously or evenly across an organization. Such changes require education, practice, and time to mature.
FULL OPERATION	Full implementation can occur once the new learning integrates into organizational and community practices, policies, and procedures. Over time, the program should become an accepted practice as staff members become skillful and procedures become routinized.
INNOVATION	Each implementation stage offers opportunities to learn more about the program and what conditions are necessary for success. This stage presents opportunities to refine and expand practices and programs.
SUSTAINABILITY	After establishing a fully-implemented new program (which can require two to four years), the program needs to be sustained in the years following. The program must keep up with staff turnover and changes in external systems.

Source: University of South Florida²⁵

Social and Emotional Learning Frameworks

Schools can implement Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) practices into their discipline frameworks to prevent and reduce disruptive behaviors and gain tools for effective interventions at the school-wide level. Behavior issues may arise because students lack the social and emotional skills necessary to self-regulate their behavior, especially in grades K-8, as students are still developing these skills. Recent studies have shown that implementing SEL in schools can effectively reduce violence and aggressive behavior, especially bullying.²⁶

The CASEL framework developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, illustrated in

Figure 1.7, outlines the five key areas of social and emotional competence (the CASEL 5) and the four key environments in which students develop these SEL skills.²⁷

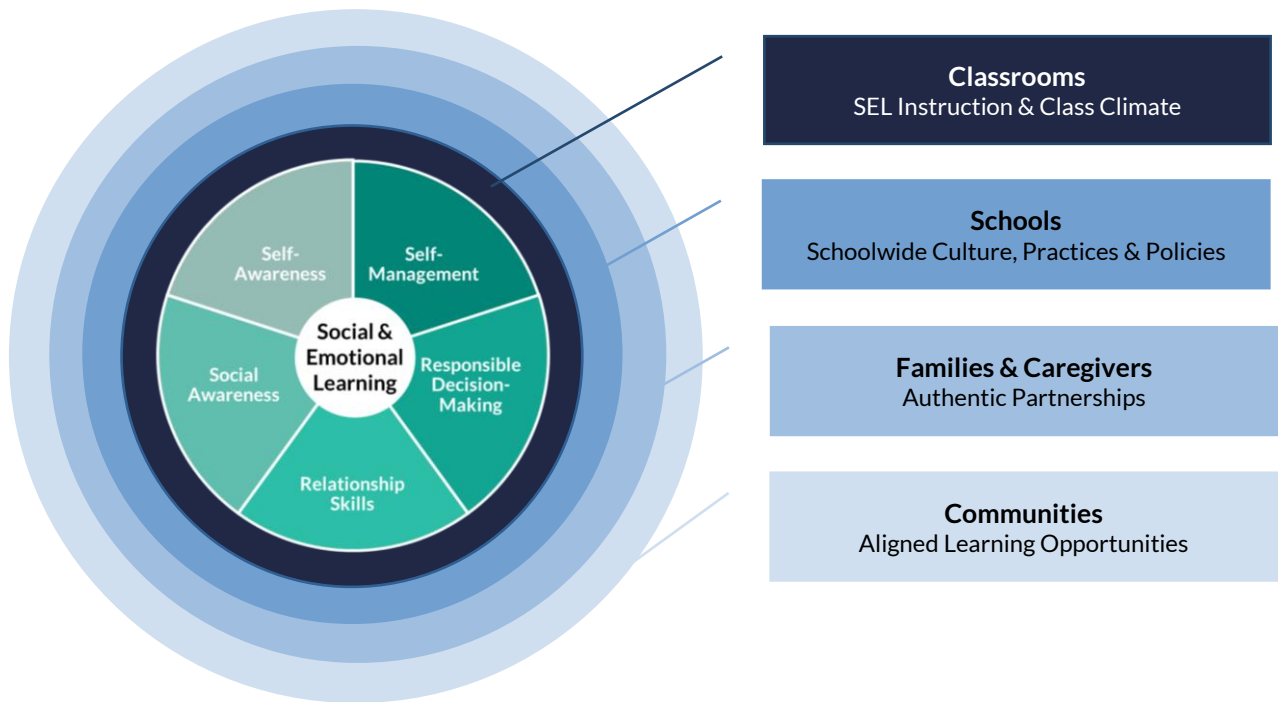
²⁴ Schaper, A., K. McIntosh, and R. Hoselton. “Within-Year Fidelity Growth of SWPBIS during Installation and Initial Implementation.” *School Psychology Quarterly: The Official Journal of the Division of School Psychology, American Psychological Association*, 31:3, September 2016. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4791219/>

²⁵ Steps adapted from: Fixsen, D. and Et. al. “Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature.” University of South Florida. <https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nirn.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NIRN-MonographFull-01-2005.pdf>

²⁶ [1] “Social Emotional Learning Helps Prevent Bullying.” StopBullying.Gov, March 26, 2020. <https://www.stopbullying.gov/blog/2020/03/25/social-emotional-learning-helps-prevent-bullying> [2] “The Effectiveness of Universal School-Based Programs for the Prevention of Violent and Aggressive Behavior: A Report on Recommendations of the Task Force on Community Preventive Services.” National Center for Health, 2007. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5607a1.htm>

²⁷ “What Is the CASEL Framework?” CASEL. <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/>

Figure 1.7: The CASEL SEL Framework



Source: CASEL²⁸

Hanover has developed toolkits for SEL implementation, including the [SEL Program Planning Guide](#) and the [Planning Workbook](#) for Implementing SEL in K-12 Schools. The Michigan Department of Education also collaborated with the American Institutes for Research to develop an [Implementation Guide](#) for connecting SEL to Michigan's School Improvement Framework.²⁹

To establish school discipline policies and practices that promote SEL, CASEL recommends employing the questions outlined in Figure 1.8 to identify areas for improvement.

Figure 1.8: Questions to Align Discipline Policies with SEL

- *Do discipline Policies and Practices provide opportunities for students to reflect, problem solve, and build positive relationships?*
- *Do these policies and practices take into account students' developmental stages, cultural backgrounds, and individual differences?*
- *Does data demonstrate that these practices are used consistently and equitably in the classroom and throughout the school?*
- *Are teachers supported using student-centered discipline strategies in their classrooms?*

Source: CASEL Guide to Schoolwide SEL³⁰

²⁸ Figure contents quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

²⁹ "Connecting Social and Emotional Learning to Michigan's School Improvement Framework: Guidance and Resources for K-12 and Early Childhood Settings." Great Lakes Comprehensive Center, 2016. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED588813>

³⁰ Figure contents quoted verbatim from: "Establish Discipline Policies That Promote SEL." CASEL Guide to Schoolwide SEL. <https://schoolguide.casel.org/focus-area-3/school/establish-discipline-policies-that-promote-sel/>

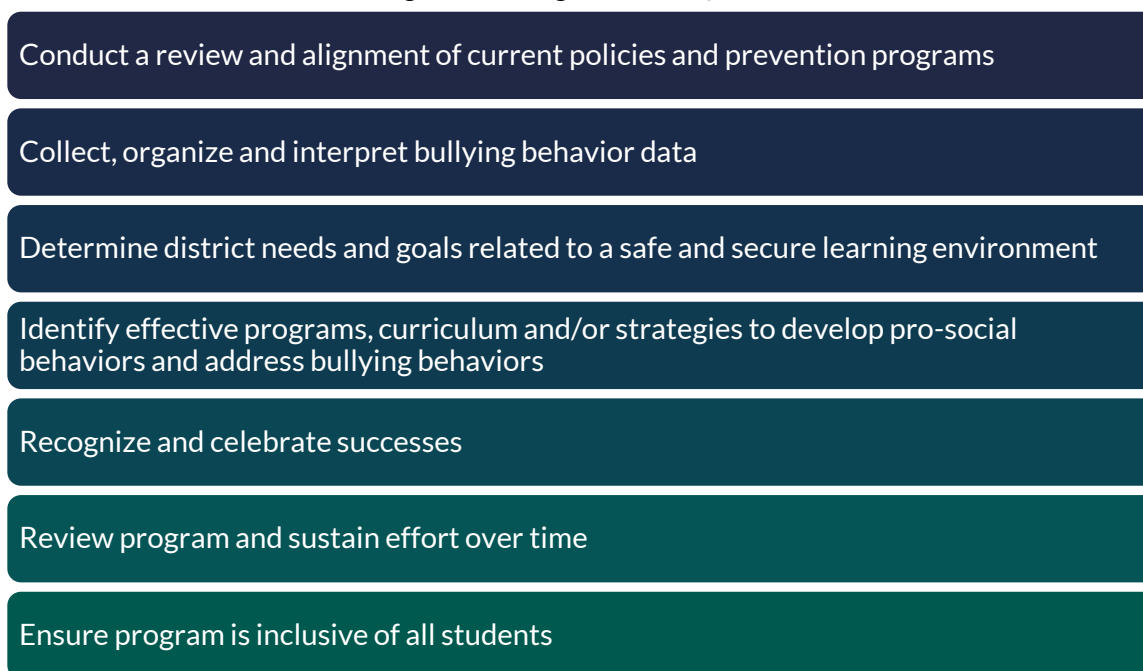
PLANNING DISTRICT POLICY

Research shows that district policies that “prioritize a school environment based on order, fairness, certainty of punishment, and positive teacher-student relationships” are, on the whole, more successful in deterring bullying and harassment than those that prioritize security and violence prevention.³¹ Districts should then focus on first improving the school environment, identifying and addressing problem areas, and effectively planning how to intervene in bullying behaviors.³²

At the district level, policies and procedures (e.g., those dictating student discipline around bullying) directly impact students’ and stakeholders’ school experiences and performance indicators (e.g., attendance, referrals); these experiences and outcomes illustrate school climate.³³

In redirecting school climate and outcomes, districts should seek to evaluate and modify existing bullying prevention plans through the following steps:

Figure 1.9: Program Development



Source: Nebraska Department of Education³⁴

Leaders can also consider modifying high-level policies to improve and reframe school climate.³⁵ The following figure presents types of policies and statements that can support positive school climates and reduce bullying.

³¹ Gerlinger, J. and J.C. Wo. “Preventing School Bullying: Should Schools Prioritize an Authoritative School Discipline Approach Over Security Measures?” *Journal of School Violence*, 15:2, April 2016. p. 134.

<https://web.s.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=2&sid=6fd3ba5f-9671-443f-b45f-6f49757f9901%40redis&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWVhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=113740290&db=eue>

³² “Bullying Prevention and Intervention Strategies.” Nebraska Department of Education.

<https://www.education.ne.gov/safety/bullying-prevention-and-intervention-strategies/>

³³ “A Parent and Educator Guide to School Climate Resources.” U.S. Department of Education, April 10, 2019. p. 3.

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaguidetoschoolclimate041019.pdf>

³⁴ “Bullying Prevention and Intervention Strategies,” Op. cit.

³⁵ “A Parent and Educator Guide to School Climate Resources,” Op. cit., p. 3.

Figure 1.10: Policies to Support Positive School Climates

Mission Statement	Code of Conduct	Student Bill of Rights
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A district or school mission statement establishes the vision for the school. Everyone should know how they personally help the school achieve this shared goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A code of conduct describes the positive behaviors expected of the school community. The code of conduct applies to all, sets standards for behavior, and covers a focused set of expected positive behaviors. State laws sometimes specify what must be included in a school's code of conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ A student bill of rights includes positive things students can expect at school. Keep it short and easy to remember, so it is useful in day-to-day school life.

Source: StopBullying.Gov ³⁶

Regarding school policies on bullying, leaders must use language to identify bullying as aggression, forbid such behavior, and explicitly express that the school will not tolerate bullying that targets any aspect of students' backgrounds or identities, including:³⁷

- Race
- Religion
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Gender expression

The Michigan Department of Education provides a [model](#) for districts' anti-bullying policies.³⁸ The model recommendations include clearly defining bullying and harassment, outlining the district's approach and mission statement to prevent bullying, and providing information on the training available to educators. The model policy indicates that districts should be as transparent as possible about the process of reporting, monitoring, and disciplining bullying, and should outline the processes for each.³⁹

IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS

Extensive research demonstrates that exclusionary discipline policies used for bullying intervention are ineffective in reducing disruptive behaviors and can result in disproportionate and inconsistent outcomes that perpetuate inequalities.⁴⁰ Exclusionary discipline refers to disciplinary actions that remove students from the learning environment.⁴¹ In contrast, non-exclusionary discipline practices intend to reduce the amount of time students spend outside the learning environment. Figure 1.11 provides examples of exclusionary and non-exclusionary discipline practices identified in a 2021 study that examined exclusionary and non-exclusionary discipline practices for K-5 students.⁴²

³⁶ Bulleted text reproduced nearly verbatim from: "Set Policies & Rules." StopBullying.Gov, September 28, 2017. <https://www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/rules>

³⁷ Preceding text adapted and bulleted text reproduced verbatim from: Stuart-Cassel, V., M. Terzian, and C. Bradshaw. "Social Bullying: Correlates, Consequences, and Prevention." National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, May 2013. pp. 6–7. https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/1315%20NCSSLE%20Social%20Bullying%20d7_lvr_0.pdf

³⁸ "Michigan State Board of Education Model Anti-Bullying Policy." Michigan Department of Education, 2021.

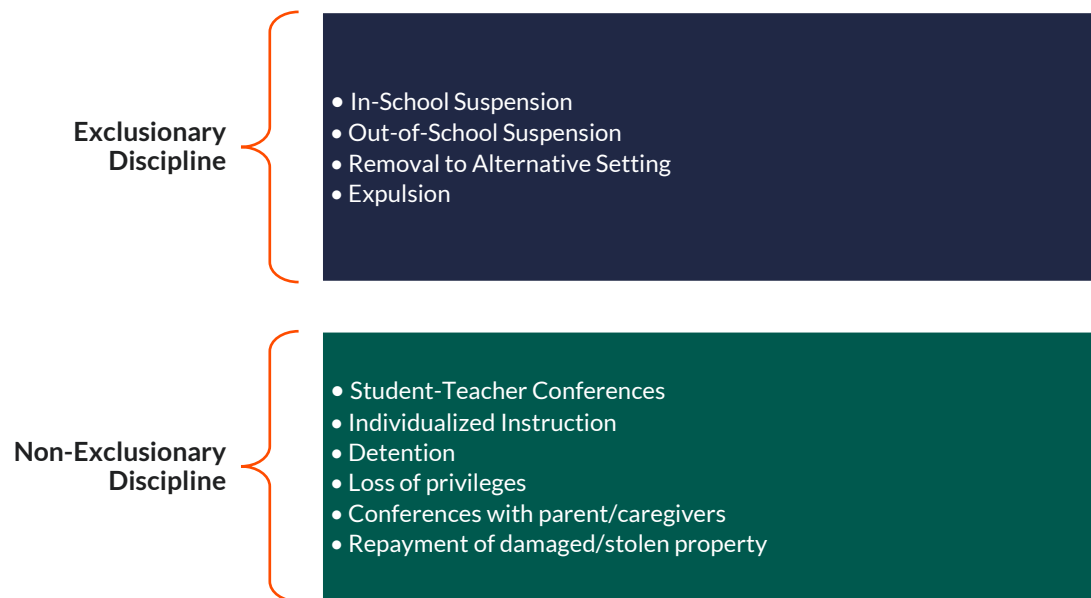
³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ "APA Zero Tolerance Task Force Report." American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/pubs/reports/zero-tolerance>

⁴¹ Nishioka, V., B. Merrill, and H. Hanson. "Changes in Exclusionary and Nonexclusionary Discipline in Grades K–5 Following State Policy Reform in Oregon." *Institute of Education Sciences*, 2021. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/news/changes-in-discipline.asp>

⁴² Ibid.

Figure 1.11: Exclusionary and Non-Exclusionary Discipline Practices



Source: Institute of Education Sciences⁴³

Evidence suggests that suspensions do not reduce behavioral incidents of the disciplined student. Instead, suspensions in middle school exacerbate the student's disruptive behaviors and increase the likelihood of future disciplinary actions.⁴⁴ Removing students from the classroom also disrupts learning, causing students to fall behind academically and become disconnected from their peers and school community.⁴⁵ Research also links exclusionary punishments with increased risk for delinquent behaviors⁴⁶ and increased risk of arrest or imprisonment in adulthood.⁴⁷ Further, research demonstrates that suspensions and expulsions are linked to aggressive behaviors in elementary school students⁴⁸ and that students who attend middle schools with strict disciplinary policies are at greater risk of arrest or incarceration as adults.⁴⁹

Instead, positive and effective discipline in response to bullying requires a comprehensive, multitiered approach that prioritizes teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) identified seven key components of positive and effective discipline, shown in Figure 1.12. The following subsections offer research-based best practices and considerations regarding these key components that can be used to implement equitable discipline practices.

⁴³ Figure contents quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

⁴⁴ LiCalsi, C., D. Osher, and P. Bailey. "An Empirical Examination of the Effects of Suspension and Suspension Severity on Behavioral and Academic Outcomes." *American Institutes for Research*, 2021. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/NYC-Suspension-Effects-Behavioral-Academic-Outcomes-August-2021.pdf>

⁴⁵ Jones, E.P. et al. "Disciplined and Disconnected." *Center for Promise*, 2018. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED586336.pdf>

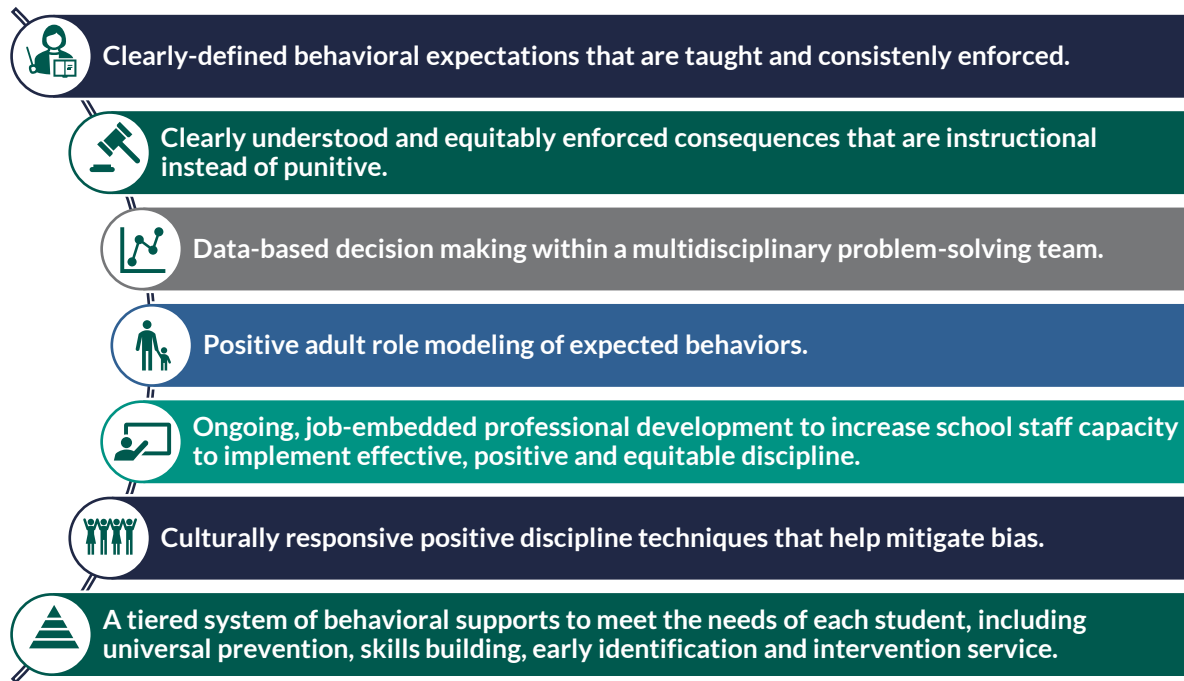
⁴⁶ Gerlinger, J. et al. "Exclusionary School Discipline and Delinquent Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 50:8, 2021. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34117607/>

⁴⁷ [1] Rosenbaum, J.E. "Educational and Criminal Justice Outcomes 12 Years after School Suspension." *Youth & Society*, 52:4, 2020. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32528191/> [2] Mowen, T.J., J.J. Brent, and J.H. Boman. "The Effect of School Discipline on Offending across Time." *Justice Quarterly*, 37:4, June 6, 2020. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8277153/>

⁴⁸ Jacobsen, W.C., G.T. Pace, and N.G. Ramirez. "Punishment and Inequality at an Early Age: Exclusionary Discipline in Elementary School." *Social Forces*, 97:3, 2019. <https://academic.oup.com/sf/article-abstract/97/3/973/5049855?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

⁴⁹ Bacher-Hicks, A. "Proving the School-to-Prison Pipeline." *Education Next*, 2021. <https://www.educationnext.org/proving-school-to-prison-pipeline-stricter-middle-schools-raise-risk-of-adult-arrests/>

Figure 1.12: The Key Components of Effective Discipline



Source: National Association of School Psychologists⁵⁰

Implement Positive Disciplinary Tactics and Tools

School-wide programs to promote a positive school climate can minimize the risk of early disruptive or aggressive behaviors from becoming more severe disciplinary issues. However, when students do not respond to prevention plans or MTSS behavior interventions, schools should have an intervention plan or toolkit in place to respond appropriately. When choosing an intervention, schools should consider the unique components and targeted skills of each instead of adopting a “one size fits all” approach.⁵¹

Restorative justice techniques can provide districts with the tools to implement more equitable and positive disciplinary measures. Restorative justice is a mindset that can help re-frame disciplinary actions and provide a framework for response and practices.⁵² Reframing disruptive behaviors such as bullying through a restorative framework is shown in the figure below.

Figure 1.13: Approaches to Discipline

TRADITIONAL/PUNITIVE APPROACH	RESTORATIVE APPROACH
Rule-breaking	Harm done to individuals
Blame or guilt	Responsibility and problem-solving
Adversarial processes	Dialogue and negotiation
Punishment to deter	Repair, apology, and reparation
Impersonal processes	Interpersonal processes
and, as a result;	and, as a result;
The needs of those affected are often ignored.	The needs of those affected are addressed.

⁵⁰ “A Framework for Effective School Discipline.” National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). <https://www.nasponline.org/disciplineframework>

⁵¹ “Bullying Prevention and Intervention Strategies,” Op. cit.

⁵² “TSDC Toolkit for Transformation.” Transforming School Discipline Collaborative. sec. The Restorative Approach and It’s Strategies. https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8d8PTyuz_W_RVR4cVRDemNMNUU/view?resourcekey=0-wOHXsINWxp9PHAIZS4rWcQ

TRADITIONAL/PUNITIVE APPROACH	RESTORATIVE APPROACH
The unmet needs behind the behavior are ignored.	The unmet needs behind the behavior are addressed.
Accountability = being punished	Accountability = putting things right

Source: Transforming School Discipline Collaborative⁵³

Restorative justice practices are meant to help maintain and strengthen interpersonal relationships within the school community rather than excluding perpetrators. Restorative practices also facilitate students in learning how to take responsibility for their actions and address the impact of their actions. Restorative Justice for Schools delineates several strategies for responding to behavioral issues. The table below is a non-exhaustive list of some of those strategies:

Figure 1.14: Restorative Justice Practices

RESTORATIVE DISCUSSION	One-on-one informal conversations to help the student correct the behavior in the present and the future are held as an immediate response or follow-up to an action that has somehow caused harm.
RESTORATIVE MEETINGS/ PEACE CIRCLES	<p>Spaces in which participants take turns speaking on a topic. The discussion is guided by at least one circle keeper using a talking piece that goes around to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to speak. Many types of circles can be used to promote a positive learning environment and address issues as they arise. Some of the main circles that schools can utilize for discipline include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discipline Circles to address what occurred, repair the harm and develop solutions to prevent reoccurrence, involving relevant parties and support people if helpful. Proactive Behavior Management circles are used to role-play and work with students to develop positive behavioral models.
FAIRNESS COMMITTEES	<p>A Fairness Committee comprises students, teachers, and other school staff trained in restorative practices to work with students or staff who have violated core community norms and values. The Committee creates appropriate consequences for violations through dialogue and consensus.</p> <p>The committee takes referrals from staff or students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspire empathic and critical self-reflections by confronting a member of the community with his or her actions and how they have affected others; Collectively determine how best to restore and mend the community in the wake of actions inconsistent with its values; and Determine how to reintegrate the community member who has violated the shared values back into the fabric and culture of the school.
RESTORATIVE GROUP CONFERENCING	A facilitator leads those involved in an incident, whether they were harmed or did harm, and their supporters in a face-to-face process. This process aims to address the harm, make things right and prevent reoccurrence. It is based on the ideas of restorative practices and mutual accountability.
IMPACT PANELS	A forum for students or adults who were harmed by an incident to tell other students who have caused harm about the impact of the incident on their lives and the lives of their families, friends, and neighbors. Panels typically involve three or four speakers who have experienced harm. Each speaker spends about 15 minutes telling their story in a non-judgmental, non-blaming manner. These forums are used to educate other students about the impacts of harm in the school community. While some time is usually dedicated to questions and answers, the panel's purpose is for those impacted by the harm to speak rather than for those who have caused harm to engage in a dialogue.
RESTORATIVE PEER	The peer jury is about creating a space where students can be respected and heard and engage in a corrective behavior process. Juries shall be convened for restorative

⁵³ Ibid.

CONFERENCING (FORMERLY KNOWN AS PEER JURIES)	purposes as an alternative to other interventions or consequences and shall not be conducted adversarial (restorative Peer Conferences are different from student courts). The Peer Conferences may be held in the school attended by the student who caused harm. To appear before a school Peer Conference, the student who caused the harm must admit to committing the misconduct; the student and parent/guardian must agree to abide by the decisions of the school Peer Conference; and they must complete the corrective actions it recommends.
MEDIATED CONFERENCING	A process that provides those harmed by an incident an opportunity to meet the person who caused the harm in a safe and structured setting and engage in a mediated discussion of the offense. With the assistance of a trained mediator, those who were harmed can (1) tell the person who caused the harm about the incident's physical, emotional, and other impacts, (2) receive answers to lingering questions about the incident, and (3) be directly involved in developing a plan for the harm to be repaired.

Source: Transforming School Discipline Collaborative⁵⁴

In another example, the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) is a school-wide model that can help teachers address behavior issues such as bullying before they escalate into violence that requires more severe discipline.⁵⁵ The model in figure 1.15 is expressed in a five-step decision tree:

⁵⁴ Figure contents quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

⁵⁵ "The Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines." University of Virginia. <https://education.virginia.edu/faculty-research/centers-labs-projects/research-labs/youth-violence-project/comprehensive-school>

Figure 1.15: School Threat Assessment Decision Tree



Source: University of Virginia⁵⁶

Other tools may be helpful for teachers as the first line of defense in combatting bullying and harassment in school. The Violence Prevention Works Foundation outlines similar steps in figure 1.16 teachers can take to create a safe classroom environment prepared to respond to instances of bullying:

⁵⁶ Figure contents quoted verbatim from: Cornell, D. "Overview of the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG)." University of Virginia, May 26, 2020. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333894588_Overview_of_the_Comprehensive_School_Threat_Assessment_Guidelines_CSTAG

Figure 1.16: Tips for Teachers and Staff to Address Bullying

Develop, post, and discuss rules and sanctions related to bullying.
Treat students and each other with warmth and respect. Demonstrate positive interest and involvement in your students.
Establish yourself as a clear and visible authority responsible for making the school experience safe and positive.
Reward students for positive, inclusive behavior.
Take immediate action when bullying is observed and consistently use nonphysical, non-hostile negative consequences when rules are broken.
Listen to parents and students who report bullying in your classroom. Quickly and effectively resolve the issue to avoid the perpetuation of bullying behaviors.
Notify parents of all involved students when a bullying incident occurs, and resolve the problem expeditiously, according to discipline plans at school.
Refer students affected by bullying to school counseling or mental health staff if needed.
Protect students who are bullied with a safety plan.
Hold class meetings during which students can talk about bullying and peer relations.
Inform parents about bullying behaviors and encourage their involvement and support in addressing bullying issues.

Source: Violence Prevention Works⁵⁷

Report and Track Instances of Bullying

Anonymous reporting systems can be effective tools for schools to identify and track bullying and school violence. A study by the University of Michigan in 2021 found that middle school students are more likely to report warning signs of potentially threatening behavior if an anonymous reporting system is available.⁵⁸ Systems such as Stopit and the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System can give students agency to intervene in bullying or violence and provide critical information to school leaders.

Using such reporting systems can also help schools track instances and trends of bullying across the school year, providing crucial data. In hand with anonymous reporting, schools should develop a logical and timely reporting system for teachers to use when documenting instances of bullying.⁵⁹ Such data collection can be invaluable for continually assessing school climate and identifying areas needing improvement. Similarly, the National Association of School Psychologists recommends conducting a climate survey in schools annually to track progress and identify improvement areas.⁶⁰ A comprehensive school climate survey includes the following interrelated domains shown in Figure 1.17.

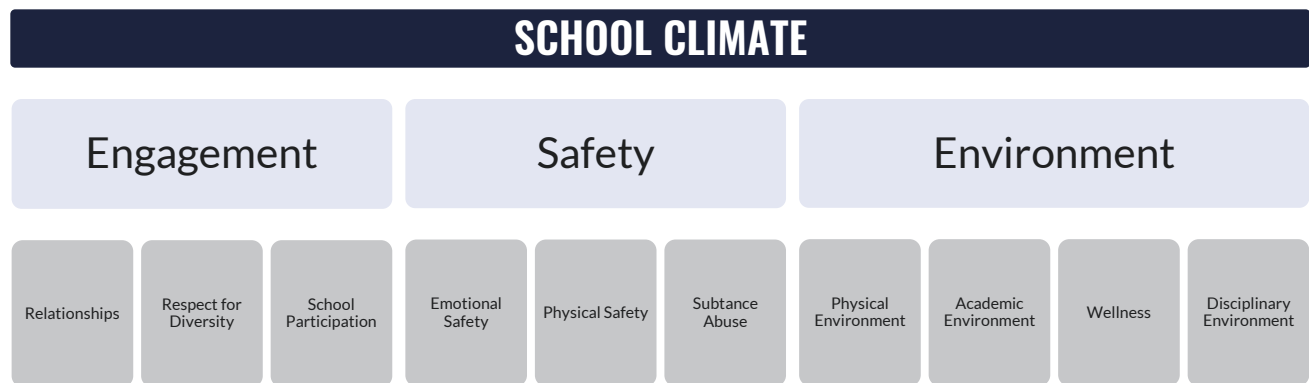
⁵⁷ Adapted from: "Tips for Teachers to Address Bullying." Violence Prevention Works. https://www.violencepreventionworks.org/public/bullying_tips_for_teachers.page

⁵⁸ "Anonymous Reporting Systems in Schools Can Reduce Violence, Increase Student Connectedness." University of Michigan Public Health, August 2022. <https://sph.umich.edu/news/2022posts/anonymous-reporting-systems-in-schools-can-reduce-violence-increase-student-connectedness.html>

⁵⁹ "School Administrators: Steps to Address Bullying at Your School." GLSEN. <https://www.glsen.org/activity/school-administrators-steps-address-bullying-your-school>

⁶⁰ "Guidance for Measuring and Using School Climate Data." National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/systems-level-prevention/guidance-for-measuring-and-using-school-climate-data>

Figure 1.17: Domains of a School Climate Survey



National Association of School Psychologists⁶¹

Gain Teacher and Staff Buy-In

Effective implementation also requires engaging teachers and staff to address skepticism about discipline policies or alternative practices.⁶² Teachers can be skeptical of new discipline approaches and may fear that reducing exclusionary punishments means tolerating more disruptive, disrespectful, or dangerous behaviors that distract other students from learning.⁶³ Research demonstrates that a lack of buy-in from teachers and staff can become a barrier to effectively implementing alternative discipline practices as well as positive behavior programs.⁶⁴ Addressing the concerns of teachers and staff and gaining buy-in from all stakeholders is crucial for ensuring that equitable discipline practices will be implemented effectively and consistently.⁶⁵ This can be accomplished through in-depth discussion, follow-up questions with stakeholders, and soliciting program participation and feedback.

Likewise, positive student-teacher relationships are key components of positive school climates and students' emotional safety. Students in these relationships demonstrate fewer problematic behaviors and other behavioral and academic improvements. Recent studies show that positive teacher-student relationships can provide a protective and positive environment, and increased positive relationships may lessen instances of bullying in the classroom.⁶⁶ Through positive interactions with teachers, students have opportunities to learn morals and social skills from those they trust and expand their social and emotional capacities.⁶⁷

To develop stronger relationships with students, teachers may engage in development practices individually, with coaches and colleagues, or with students. When considering how to engage in strong relationships, teachers may consider the features in Figure 1.18.

⁶¹ Figure reproduced and adapted from: Ibid.

⁶² Jones et al., Op. cit.

⁶³ Griffith, D. and A. Tyner. "Discipline Reform through the Eyes of Teachers." *Thomas B Fordham Institute*, 2019.

⁶⁴ Wassink-de Stigter, R. et al. "Facilitators and Barriers in the Implementation of Trauma-Informed Approaches in Schools: A Scoping Review." *School Mental Health*, 2022.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358109502_Facilitators_and_Barriers_in_the_Implementation_of_Trauma-Informed_Approaches_in_Schools_A_Scoping_Review

⁶⁵ Furjanic, D. et al. "Examining the Social Validity of a Universal Intervention for Reducing Exclusionary Discipline through Stakeholder Voice." *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 2021.

https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/27085/Furjanic%20et.al.%20Final_Examining%20the%20Social%20Validity%20of%20a%20Universal%20Intervention%20for%20Reducing%20Exclusionary%20Discipline%20through%20Stakeholder%20Voice.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

⁶⁶ [1]Huang, F.L. et al. "Bullying Involvement, Teacher-Student Relationships, and Psychosocial Outcomes." *School Psychology Quarterly*, 33, 2018. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED594868.pdf> [2] Thornberg, R. et al. "Associations between Student-Teacher Relationship Quality, Class Climate, and Bullying Roles: A Bayesian Multilevel Multinomial Logit Analysis." *Victims & Offenders*, 17:8, November 17, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15564886.2022.2051107>

⁶⁷ Weissbourd, R., S.M. Bouffard, and S.M. Jones. "School Climate and Moral and Social Development." National School Climate Center, February 2013. p. 1. <https://schoolclimate.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/sc-brief-moral-social.pdf>

Figure 1.18: Elements for Building Strong Relationships

ELEMENTS	SAMPLE ACTIONS (AND EXPLANATIONS)
Express Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be dependable (Be someone I can trust) Listen (Really pay attention) Encourage (Praise my efforts and achievements) Believe in me (Make me feel known and valued)
Challenge Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect my best (Expect me to live up to my potential) Hold me accountable (Insist I take responsibility for my actions) Help me reflect on failures (Help me learn from my mistakes) Stretch me (Push me to go further)
Provide Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigate (Guide me through hard situations) Empower me (Build my confidence to take charge of my life) Advocate (Defend me when I need it) Set boundaries (Establish limits to keep me on track)
Share Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect me (Take me seriously and treat me fairly) Include me (Involve me in decisions that affect me) Collaborate (Work with me to solve problems and reach goals) Let me lead (Create opportunities for me to take action)
Expand Possibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspire (Inspire me to see possibilities for my future) Broaden horizons (Expose me to new experiences, ideas, and places) Connect (Introduce me to more people who can help me)

Source: The Education Trust and MDRC⁶⁸

Research shows that when students believe that adults will intervene, they are more likely to report incidents. Specifically, a study published in *School Psychology Quarterly* analyzes the students' willingness to report incidents as a measure of teachers' success in cultivating supportive environments. Using a sample of 278 students in Grades 3 through 5, researchers found that teachers are critical in "creating classroom climates that encourage the reporting of bullying and convey[ing] to students that such reports would be taken seriously and direct action would be taken."⁶⁹ Notably, when teachers feel confident in their ability to intervene, they do so more frequently and effectively, thus lowering the frequency of bullying.⁷⁰

Provide Training and Professional Development

Ongoing staff training is necessary to effectively implement non-exclusionary discipline policies, reduce bias in disciplinary outcomes, and increase the fidelity of implementation. Teachers and school staff often report a lack of knowledge about the purpose, procedures, and skills for implementing non-exclusionary discipline.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Figure reproduced verbatim from: Patrick, K. et al. "Strategies to Solve Unfinished Learning: The Importance of Strong Relationships." The Education Trust and MDRC, March 2021. p. 3. <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/The-Importance-of-Strong-Relationships-as-a-Strategy-to-Solve-Unfinished-Learning-March-2021.pdf>

⁶⁹ Cortes, K. and B. Ladd. "To Tell or Not to Tell: What Influences Children's Decisions to Report Bullying to Their Teachers?" *School Psychology Quarterly*, 29, September 1, 2014, pp. 2, 9, 26. Downloaded from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265419530_To_Tell_or_Not_to_Tell_What_Influences_Children's_Decisions_to_Report_Bullying_to_Their_Teachers

⁷⁰ De Luca, L., A. Nocentini, and E. Menesini. "The Teacher's Role in Preventing Bullying." *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, August 14, 2019. <https://www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01830>

⁷¹ Gahungu, A. "Adopting Non-Exclusionary Discipline Practices: The First Steps Are the Most Confusing." *International Journal on Social and Education Sciences*, 3:2, 2021. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1294675.pdf>

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) recommends that training opportunities equip teachers and staff with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to engage with their students. Specifically, NASBE emphasizes the topics in Figure 1.19 as areas in which schools and districts must prepare teachers.⁷²

Figure 1.19: Professional Learning Topics to Support Positive School Climate

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Child Development	Teachers must understand child development pathways, progressions, and support strategies in multiple developmental areas (e.g., social, emotional, physical, cognitive) and be aware that children naturally progress at different rates.
Trauma and Social Identity Threat	Teachers must prepare to support students with adverse childhood experiences, associated trauma, and social identity threat (i.e., internalizing messages from adults, peers, or the media that one is unworthy because of their identity). This training discusses conscious and unconscious biases, trauma-informed practices, and other concepts that facilitate interactions and support.
Cultural Competence	Teachers must be able to implement culturally competent practices that use an asset-based lens, elevate student voices, and incorporate students' cultures and diverse experiences. Professional learning may discuss learning about students' cultural communities, student and family engagement practices, and other strategies.
Social and Emotional Learning	Teachers must support SEL development and, therefore, receive professional learning on teaching, modeling, and encouraging SEL competencies in the classroom. Teachers must also know how to identify challenging behavior as warning indicators that certain students require additional SEL support.
Wellness	Teachers must receive professional learning and support regarding their wellness and stress-management strategies to prevent burnout. This training may focus on mindfulness, which cultivates one's awareness and attention to their surroundings in a controlled way and positively affects one's physical and mental health.
Self-Efficacy	Teachers must develop self-efficacy as this confidence correlates with improved student-teacher relationships, student performance, and teacher engagement. Self-efficacy may increase through feelings of belonging, professional learning communities, leadership opportunities, and other means.

Source: National Association of State Boards of Education⁷³

Teachers and staff must also receive guidance and feel confident in identifying bullying and problematic behavior, intervening, and resolving situations.⁷⁴ Highlighting the importance of teacher professional learning and competence in intervening is a 2019 study published in *Frontiers in Psychology*. This study analyzes the connection between teacher characteristics (i.e., competence, self-efficacy, job satisfaction) and teachers' intervention in bullying situations. Using a sample of 120 teachers and 1,056 middle and high school students, researchers test their hypothesis that greater teacher self-efficacy, competence, and satisfaction increase bullying interventions, which decreases student reporting of victimization. **Results show that teachers who perceive themselves as competent in intervening in bullying interactions are more likely to do so, and "competence can be fostered through specific training aimed to define the [bullying] phenomenon, to underline the dynamics of the problem, and to present the best intervention strategies."**⁷⁵

⁷² Darling-Hammond, L. and J. DePaoli. "Why School Climate Matters and What Can Be Done to Improve It." National Association of State Boards of Education, May 2020. pp. 8–10. https://nasbe.nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/2020/05/Darling-Hammond-DePaoli_May-2020-Standard.pdf

⁷³ Text quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

⁷⁴ Stuart-Cassel, Terzian, and Bradshaw, Op. cit., p. 7.

⁷⁵ De Luca, Nocentini, and Menesini, Op. cit.

SECTION II: BENCHMARKING

This section of the report benchmarks Michigan peer districts and exemplar districts. To create this section, Hanover developed a sample of peers by using the [Peer Generator Tool](#) in Hanover Digital. Hanover identifies peer districts using: enrollment size, percentage of minority students, percentage of English Learners (% EL), percentage of students enrolled in Special Education (% SPED), percentage of children living in poverty, and median household income.

Hanover identified a list of 20 peer districts within Michigan and identified three with substantial information on their bullying prevention or tracking practices and anti-bullying messaging. **Districts do not publish information pertaining to the success of these measures, so profiles should be read as examples of different policies rather than an endorsement of particular policies.** Not all peer districts adhere to all best practices for bullying prevention or intervention. This section also includes two exemplar districts to provide examples of successful anti-bullying policies. Hanover identified these districts through secondary and scholarly sources analyzing the success of the district's programs.

Figure 2.1 lists the demographic information of each peer and exemplar district. Districts are listed in alphabetical order in each category, and individual profiles of each district directly follow the table.

Figure 2.1: Peer and Exemplar Districts

DISTRICT NAME	STATE	ENROLLMENT	% STUDENTS OF COLOR	% EL	% SPED	% CHILDREN IN POVERTY	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
PEER DISTRICTS							
Clarenceville School District	MI	1,863	50%	4%	11%	19%	\$ 56,201.00
Madison District Public Schools	MI	1,028	53%	10%	14%	18%	\$ 52,245.00
Roseville Community Schools	MI	4,392	52%	3%	16%	17%	\$ 49,826.00
EXEMPLAR DISTRICTS							
Appleton Area School District	WI	15,745	33%	9%	17%	8%	\$ 63,764.00
Stockton Unified School District	CA	36,190	95%	23%	11%	25%	\$ 47,081.00

Source: Hanover Peer Generator⁷⁶

CLARENCEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Clarenceville School District (CSD) has a clear vision of an inclusive, positive school environment in their mission statement,⁷⁷ and defines both acts of bullying and how students and staff should report or process

⁷⁶ District demographic information mined from: "Peer Generator." Hanover Research.

<https://hanoverresearch.secure.force.com/customerportal/ToolDetail?toolId=a0r1T00000oYCnuQAG&active=dl&embed=t>

⁷⁷ "About Us." Clarenceville School District. <https://www.clarenceville.k12.mi.us/district/about-us/>

violations of the policy through an official report.⁷⁸ Each individual school in the district also provides guidelines for anti-bullying prevention and intervention policies.

Clarenceville Middle School

Clarenceville Middle School (CMS), the district's middle school, provides a clear vision for a positive environment in the school on its website homepage. The language used in this statement positively frames behavioral standards while setting goals and expectations for all members of the school community. This type of statement aligns with best practices for renewing school climate by providing a framework to re-orient the school climate in a positive manner. CMS's vision and goal for their school climate are comprised of these key components:

Figure 2.2: CMS Vision for School Climate

Provide a school that is safe to all who enter.

Provide a climate that is an emotionally and physically safe and supportive environment.

Promote procedures and high expectations by modeling desired behavior among staff.

Communicate in a positive, timely, and efficient manner.

Have a collaborative dialogue and respectful conversation.

Respect others' rights, values, and individuality.

Maintain an inviting environment.

Foster meaningful relationships between students, staff, parents, and our school community.

Foster a thinking culture among staff, students, and our school community.

Source: Clarenceville School District⁷⁹

CMS also follows best practices in maintaining suspension or expulsion policies as a last resort in disciplinary measures, further contributing to a positive school climate and one oriented towards community and justice.⁸⁰ Instead, CMS's policies seek first to utilize preventative measures that encourage positive behavior, including:⁸¹

- Providing a positive, caring environment that values the contributions of all students,
- Constructing meaningful lessons that provide for and expect the engagement of all students,
- Communicating clear expectations early and often,
- Including students in the process of setting expectations,
- Modeling appropriate behavior, and
- Addressing inappropriate behaviors in a timely and caring fashion.

⁷⁸ "Bylaws and Policies: Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior Toward Students." Clarenceville School District. <https://files.neola.com/clarenceville-mi/search/policies/po5517.01.htm>

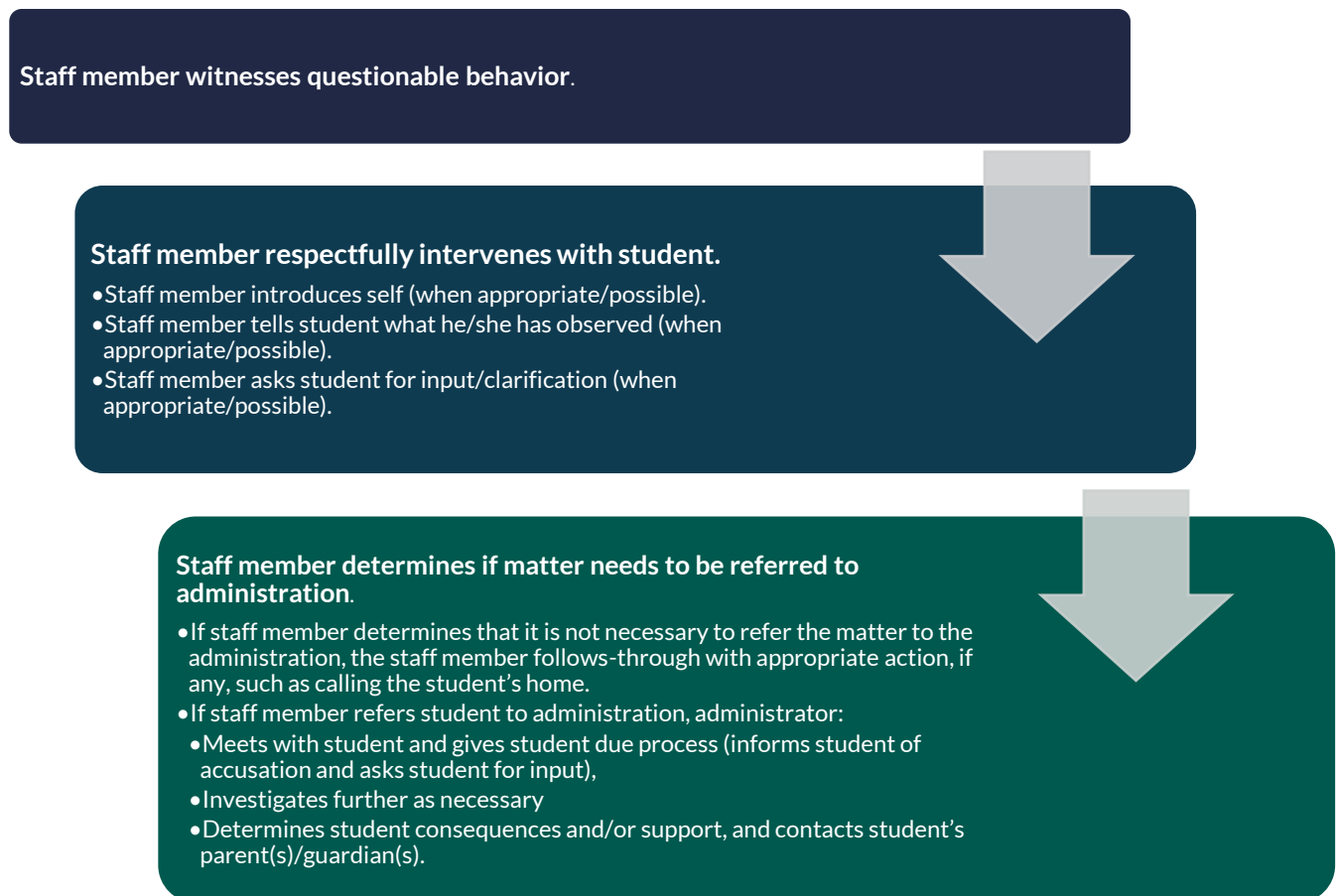
⁷⁹ Quoted verbatim from: "About Our School: Clarenceville Middle School." Clarenceville School District. <https://www.clarenceville.k12.mi.us/middle-school/about-our-school/>

⁸⁰ "CMS Student Handbook 2021-22." Clarenceville School District. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1X5KoHz9JcqLCzAUpsWiDJxqjXtyt6CHjFyONIIIItGA/edit?usp=sharing&usp=embed_face

⁸¹ Ibid.

When violations occur, CMS' disciplinary code also provides steps of action for staff intervention in behavioral misconduct, including bullying (Figure 2.3). Having a plan of action is important in equipping teachers and staff to address issues as they arise and have confidence in their ability to intervene.

Figure 2.3: Behavior Intervention Process



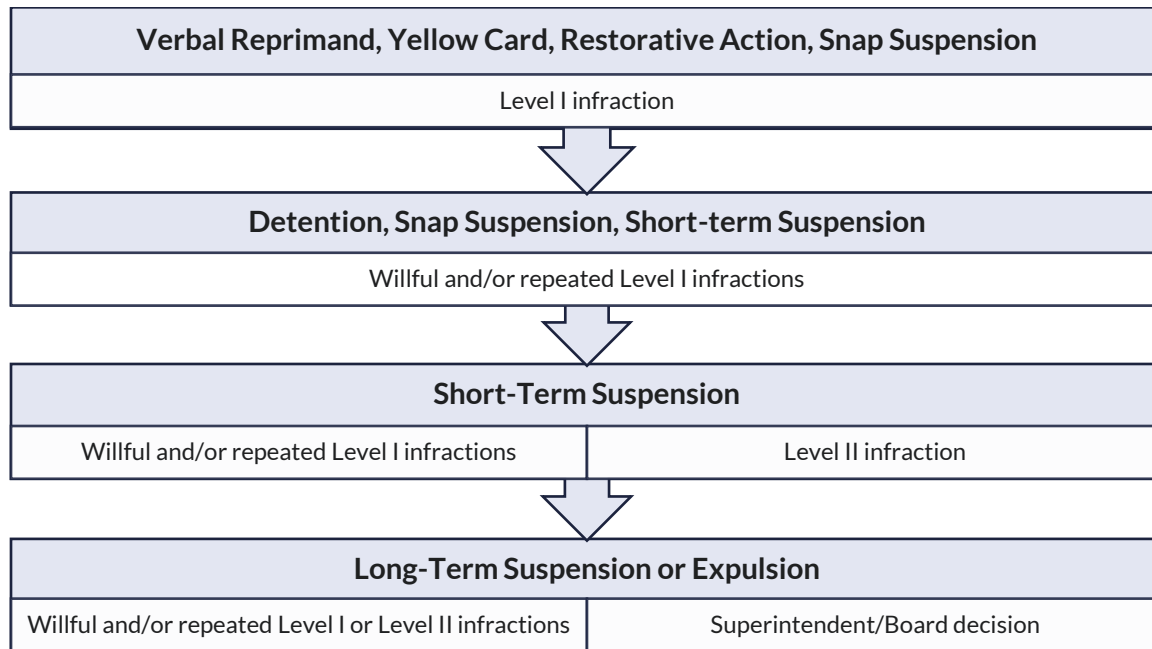
Source: Clarenceville School District⁸²

However, CSD defines bullying as a Level II infraction, and its disciplinary actions can be severe.⁸³ While Level I infractions include code of conduct violations such as phone use, or disruptive behavior, which can be addressed by restorative action, Level II infractions include bullying, physical assault, and possession of a weapon and have more severe penalties. The disciplinary flow chart used by the district follows more traditional punitive measures rather than best practices and is outlined in Figure 2.4 below.

⁸² Quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 30.

Figure 2.4: CMS Disciplinary Measures



Source: Clarenceville School District ⁸⁴

MADISON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Madison School District (Madison) is located in Michigan and utilizes a Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS) in its elementary and secondary schools. The goal of this program is to decrease negative student behaviors throughout all areas of the school and to increase students' comfort levels and feelings of support.⁸⁵ **The district includes guiding principles for its PBIS program throughout its schools (Figure 2.5).**

⁸⁴ Quoted verbatim from: Ibid., p. 26.

⁸⁵ "Middle School PBIS." Madison School District. <https://www.madisonk12.us/middle-school-pbis/>

Figure 2.5: Social & Emotional Learning Core Competencies



Source: Madison School District⁸⁶

In hand with seeking to provide a positive school culture, Madison’s middle school student handbook explicitly defines bullying and cyberbullying for the sake of identifying and reporting such behaviors.⁸⁷ By providing messaging like this, Madison communicates clearly what bullying can look like to all stakeholders, including parents, students, and staff. Identifying and naming instances of bullying in detail can equip staff and students to recognize and intervene in cases of bullying more easily.

Figure 2.6 below states the handbook’s definitions:

Figure 2.6: Handbook Definitions of Bullying

<p>BULLYING</p>	<p>Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact. ▪ Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name-calling, making threats. ▪ Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in several different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.
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⁸⁶ Figure reproduced verbatim from: Ibid.

⁸⁷ “Madison Middle School Student Handbook.” Madison School District. p. 15. <https://www.madisonk12.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022-23-Madison-Middle-School-Handbook.pdf>

CYBERBULLYING	<p>"Cyberbullying" is defined as any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils. ▪ Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the district's or public school's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress. ▪ Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health. ▪ Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.
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Source: Madison School District⁸⁸

While identifying acts of bullying explicitly for students and parents, Madison also provides two student resources for responding to acts of aggression or bullying. These resources illustrate example scenarios that students may encounter and provide example responses to help diffuse or report instances of bullying. A few highlights from these are outlined in the figure below:

Figure 2.7: Student Handbook Resources

BE A GOOD BYSTANDER	RESPONDING TO AGGRESSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the moment, try to distract the aggressive student (ask an unrelated question, change the subject, say or do something humorous to break the tension). ▪ Make up an excuse to get the target away from the aggressive person. Interrupt the aggressive person. "Hey Sara, come here a minute. I need to ask you something (show you something)." "Hey Sam, Mrs. Smith (teacher/coach/adult) is looking for you. Come on." ▪ Be friendly to the target during free time outside of class. Smile and talk to the target at different free times during the day, or even before or after school. Invite them to walk with you in the hallway or sit with you at lunch. ▪ Tell friends who are acting mean to "chill" before they get reported. Do it in a nice way, in a friendly way: "You could get in major trouble if you keep that up. Chill out before someone reports it. I don't want you to get in trouble. What you are doing is not OK. It's getting old." ▪ Privately support the target at a later time: "I saw what happened. That was really mean and rude. Are you all right?" "What they just did/said was really messed up. Are you ok?" "I wanted you to know that most people don't agree with them at all." ▪ Encourage friends who are being mistreated to report it. Offer to go with your friend. "You shouldn't have to put up with that all the time. I can go with you to report it. It's the right thing to do. If 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If someone is putting you down or mocking you, smile and use your sense of humor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Excellent insult! I'll have to remember that one! ○ (Smile) Sweet! Thanks for sharing! ○ Thanks! I appreciate that! ○ (Laugh) Good one! Did you come up with that all on your own? ▪ If you're dealing with a hothead...respond with neutrality, a calm voice, and a poker face: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sorry you feel that way. ○ You're welcome to your opinion. ○ It's good to know how you see it. ▪ Stand up for yourself if the behavior continues. Confront assertively in the moment (eye contact, poker face, calm voice) and then walk away: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That's getting old. If you do it again, I'm reporting it. ○ That's weak. Give it up. If you do/say it again, I'm reporting it. ○ What you are doing is harassment. If you don't stop, I'll be forced to report it ▪ Confront the ringleader privately later if it's safe. Stay four feet away. Use a calm voice and maintain a neutral expression. Maintain eye contact the entire time you are speaking. Have a script in your head beforehand and stick to it:

⁸⁸ Quoted verbatim from: "Madison Middle School Student Handbook," Op. cit.

<p>you don't report it, he/she will just keep doing it to you."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report it yourself (as a bystander) to an adult quietly and privately: Email, write a note, leave a voicemail phone message, or tell an adult what is going on privately. [After reporting, DO NOT tell even one friend that you reported it. The word will most certainly get back to the aggressive person if you tell another student! Go back IMMEDIATELY to the same adult if it happens again.] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I need to talk to you. You have been doing ___ to me. I would never do that to you, and it's not okay that you're doing it to me. You need to stop. If you don't stop, I'm reporting it. It's harassment, and I'm not going to put up with it. (Immediately walk away when you are done speaking. Don't look back. Keep moving. If the behavior continues, report it.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If direct confrontation is too difficult or dangerous, report to an adult privately. Use email, write a note, leave a voicemail, or talk to an adult before or after school or during lunch.
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Source: Madison School District⁸⁹

Roseville Community Schools

Roseville Community School (RCS) in Roseville, Michigan, has created several programs within the district to help prevent bullying in their schools. Their schools also have their own specific programs.

Across the district, RCS utilizes restorative practices to “create relationships, manage conflict, and repair harm” in instances of conflict between students or conflict between students and staff.⁹⁰ RCS defines restorative practices as a proactive approach that builds relationships and a community of respect.⁹¹ The district outlines aspects of the program that are expected to occur daily in school, embodied by both students and staff:

Figure 2.8: Restoratives Practices in RCS



Source: Roseville Community Schools⁹²

Roseville Middle School

Roseville Middle School provides a high standard of behavior norms for their students and staff, which is provided directly on their homepage. The standards of behavior (Figure 2.9) set the tone for the learning environment and provide a foundation for further positive programs.

⁸⁹Table quoted with omissions from: Ibid., app. A,B.

⁹⁰“Restorative Practices.” Roseville Community School District. <https://rosevillepride.org/our-schools/programs/restorative/>

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Text quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

Figure 2.9: Roseville Middle School Behavioral Standards

RESPECT PEERS, STAFF, AND SELF		
Peers	Staff	Self
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kind language Personal Space Accept Differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow directions Show up on time Honor class time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know your self-worth Make positive choices
SUPPORT A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT		
Class	Halls	Cafeteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible learner Personal space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk on the right Walk and talk Personal space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal space Clean up after yourself Wait your turn

Source: Roseville Middle Schools⁹³

Roseville Middle School's Hallway Hero Program is an anti-bullying program meant to help decrease incidences of bullying in the school.⁹⁴ The program encourages students to stand up and speak out about bullying and holds students to a higher standard of behavior. Staff members can also nominate Hero's in the Hallways when they see a student demonstrating positive behavior in helping other students.⁹⁵

Roseville Middle School also practices restorative justice in response to bullying or other harmful behaviors. The middle school uses the following practices to help resolve conflict and hold students accountable for their actions and to their peers:



Peacemaking Circles

- Students come together to resolve conflict through listening and respect.



Responsibility Room

- Give students a space to examine how their behavior affects others and guides them in doing the right thing.



Hallway Conversations

- Informal opportunities for teachers to re-focus a student's behavior without removing them from the learning environment

Source: Roseville Community Schools⁹⁶

The school also implements Restorative Justice Conferences and Restorative Services for students to take accountability for their actions. The Conferences engage students, parents, teachers, and other relevant staff around a behavioral situation where the student can take accountability and make reparations. Restorative Service allows students who have violated the Code of Conduct to account for and reflect on their

⁹³ Reproduced verbatim from: "Roseville Middle School." Roseville Community School District. <https://rosevillepride.org/our-schools/secondary-schools/roseville-middle-school/>

⁹⁴ "Hallway Hero Program." Roseville Community School District. <https://rosevillepride.org/our-schools/secondary-schools/roseville-middle-school/hallway-hero-program/>

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Summarized from: "Roseville Middle School Restorative Justice." Roseville Community Schools. https://rosevillepride.org/downloads/roseville_middle_school/restorative_practices_brochure.pdf

actions through service instead of receiving conventional school discipline.⁹⁷ In implementing all these programs, the school employs a Restorative Practices Facilitator and a Restorative Practices Aide.⁹⁸

APPLETON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Appleton Area School District (AASD) is located in Appleton, Wisconsin and experienced improvements in school climate and behavioral incidents in 2019 after implementing a multi-tiered behavioral support framework.⁹⁹ The district likewise has implemented several successful anti-bullying programs for intervention.

AASD employs a *Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)*, also known as Character Education, as "[a] deliberate effort by schools, families, and communities to help young people understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values."¹⁰⁰ This multi-tiered system of support allows schools to provide behavioral interventions for students based on where students fall within the tiers.

Tiered support includes the following guidelines:¹⁰¹

- Try multiple interventions.
- Each intervention should be tried for a minimum of four weeks, & more than one intervention may be implemented simultaneously.
- Collect and track specific data on each intervention tried & its effect.
- If your data indicates no progress after a minimum of six months, you may consider moving to Tier 2 interventions.

Figure 2.10 illustrates the types of tiered interventions for instances of aggression/bullying, outlined by a PBIS resource used by AASD. [The PBIS webpage](#) itself provides further descriptions for each of these tactics.

Figure 2.10: Tiered Interventions for Aggression/Bullying

TIER 1		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Call parent or note home ■ Card Flip ■ Move to a new location in the classroom ■ STOP WALK TALK strategy ■ Take away privileges ■ Take away unstructured or free time 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk one on one with student ■ Teach conflict resolution skills ■ Teach coping skills ■ Teach relationship skills ■ Teach relaxation techniques ■ Teach social skills
TIER 2		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Alternatives To Suspension ■ Behavior Contract ■ Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) ■ Structured Breaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) ■ Individual & Visual Schedules ■ Mentoring ■ Non-Verbal Cues & Signals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sensory Tools ■ Social Stories ■ Teach Conflict Resolution Skills ■ Teach Coping Skills

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ "Roseville Middle School Improvement Plan." Roseville Community Schools. p. 59.
https://rosevillepride.org/downloads/roseville_middle_school/roseville_middle_sip.pdf

⁹⁹ "A Parent and Educator Guide to School Climate Resources." U.S. Department of Education, April 10, 2019. p. 14.
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaguidetoschoolclimate041019.pdf>

¹⁰⁰ "Bullying & PBIS." Appleton Area School District. https://www.aasd.k12.wi.us/families/bullying__pbis

¹⁰¹ Bullets quoted verbatim from: "Aggressive/Bullying Tiered Support." PBIS World. <https://www.pbisworld.com/tier-1/interventions-by-behavior/aggressive-bullying/>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check In Check Out (CICO) Classroom Management Support Counselor Referral Daily Behavior Form Forced Choice Reinforcement Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Tutoring Response To Intervention (RTI) Reward System Self-Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach Organizational Skills Teach Relationship Skills Teach Relaxation Techniques Teach Social Skills The Praise Game
TIER 3		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternatives To Suspension Behavior Contract Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) Behavior Meetings Structured Breaks Check In Check Out (CICO) Collaboration With Student's Physician And/Or Mental Health Provider Counselor Referral Daily Behavior Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual & Visual Schedules Mentoring Non-Verbal Cues & Signals No Passing Time Peer Tutoring Response To Intervention (RTI) Reward System Seclusion & Restraint Self Monitoring Sensory Tools Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Stories Teach Conflict Resolution Skills Teach Coping Skills Teach Organizational Skills Teach Relationship Skills Teach Relaxation Techniques Teach Social Skills The Praise Game Time Out (Structured Time Out) Forced Choice Reinforcement Survey

Source: PBISWorld¹⁰²

In addition to school-wide multi-tiered support for behavioral issues such as bullying, AASD also provides many district-wide resources and tools to combat bullying. **AASD directly defines bullying behavior on their website, as well as [resources](#) that provide further education on bullying, covering the following topics:**

Figure 2.11: AASD Resource Topics for Students



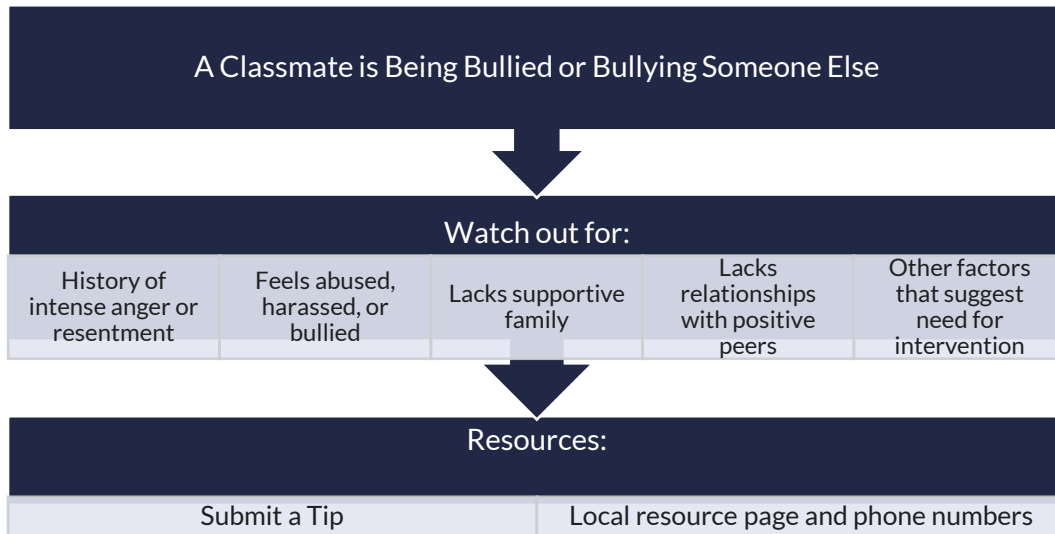
Source: Appleton Area School District¹⁰³

These resource topics help students identify an issue and provide suggestions to help their classmates. For example, under the first topic “A Classmate is Being Bullied or Bullying Someone Else,” AASD provides these series of questions and resources through the Speak Up Wisconsin resource website:

¹⁰² List of interventions quoted verbatim from: “Tier 1 Positive Behavior Interventions And Supports.” PBIS World.
<https://www.pbisworld.com/tier-1/>

¹⁰³ Topics quoted verbatim from: “Bully & Incident Reporting.” Appleton Area School District.
https://www.aasd.k12.wi.us/families/bullying__pbis/bully__incident_reporting_

Figure 2.12: Figure Description of Resource Page



Source: Wisconsin Department of Justice¹⁰⁴

AASD provides an anonymous tip line for students, parents, school staff, or any community members to submit a school safety concern or threat. The tip line can also be used for safety concerns for students, such as bullying and other dangerous or potentially harmful situations.¹⁰⁵ The tip line also includes an app that students and staff can access on their mobile devices.

Finally, AASD provides staff training on anti-bullying practices and provides transparency on their website regarding the training. All staff participates in Bullying Prevention training which focuses on the pre-correction of inappropriate behavior, rewarding the use of a three-step response, and responding to reports of disrespectful behavior.¹⁰⁶

STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) is located in Stockton, California and provides a variety of anti-bullying and bullying prevention programs for its students, parents, and staff. The district was recognized as providing a robust character education program to help combat bullying and negative behaviors in its schools.¹⁰⁷

Throughout the district, all students received holistic character education, including anti-gang teacher and student training and drug/alcohol/substance abuse prevention.¹⁰⁸ Students receive quarterly awards for character traits, outlined in the figure below.

¹⁰⁴ Reproduced verbatim from: "Student Resources." SPEAK UP, SPEAK OUT Wisconsin.

<https://speakup.wisconsin.gov/resources/student-resources>

¹⁰⁵ "Bully & Incident Reporting," Op. cit.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ "How Are Districts Embracing Character Education to Counter Bullying?" K-12 Dive. <https://www.k12dive.com/news/how-are-districts-embracing-character-education-to-counter-bullying/633423/>

¹⁰⁸ "Student Information." San Joaquin Elementary School. <https://www.stocktonusd.net/domain/1010>

Figure 2.13: Character Awards

RESPECT (Aug.): “I treat others the way I want to be treated.”

RESPONSIBILITY (Sept): “I take ownership of my thoughts words & actions. I am dependable. I come to school prepared, complete assignments, and follow directions.”

COOPERATION (Oct): “I work with others for the common good of all. I do my part to ensure that my group meets all goals and expectations for success.”

CHEERFULNESS (Nov): “My positive attitude positively affects those around me. I see the good in others. People feel better when they are around me.”

DETERMINATION (Dec): “I am determined to be the best that I can in all areas of my life. I am focused on my goals, and will never give up on meeting them.”

KINDNESS (Jan): “I show care, compassion & concern for others. I help those in need.

INTEGRITY (Feb): “I do the right thing under all circumstances.” I treat others fairly. I stand up for what is right.

TRUSTWORTHINESS (March): “I am honest and truthful, even if it means that I will face consequences.

LEADERSHIP (April): “I am a positive role model for others. I help others make fair and intelligent decisions. I take an active role in decision making as needed.

OBEDIENCE (May): “I follow directions on a consistent basis, while at the same time maintaining a positive attitude.”

Source: Stockton Unified School District¹⁰⁹

In addition to character education, SUSD provides district-wide resources to prevent bullying, including a [Bullying Prevention Handbook](#) containing district policies on bullying, the district’s definition of bullying and harassment, and resources for students on “what to do.”¹¹⁰ The district also hosts multiple awareness days at its schools, including a Unity Day,¹¹¹ and a No One Eats Alone Day.¹¹²

SUSD also provides comprehensive anti-bullying training for its teachers and staff. Teachers also have access to a rich resource page on Bullying Prevention, including the following:

Figure 2.14: Classroom Resource for Teachers on Anti-Bullying

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Classroom Lessons▪ Prevention Activities▪ Unity Day Information▪ SUSD is Bully Free- Implementation Guide▪ Staff Training and Documentation▪ Parent Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Tattling vs. Reporting▪ Cyber Safety & Anti-Cyber Bullying information▪ Bucket Filling▪ PowerPoints on Anti-bullying▪ Conflict Resolution |
|--|---|

Source: Stockton Unified School District¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Text quoted verbatim from: Ibid.

¹¹⁰ “Bullying Prevention Information.” Stockton Unified School District.

<https://www.stocktonusd.net/cms/lib/CA01902791/Centricity/Domain/791/Website-Bullying%20Prevention-Guide2018.pdf>

¹¹¹ “Anti-Bullying & Unity Day.” Stockton Unified School District. <https://www.stocktonusd.net/Page/2290>

¹¹² “How Are Districts Embracing Character Education to Counter Bullying?,” Op. cit.

¹¹³ “Bullying Prevention Information for Staff.” Stockton Unified School District. <https://www.stocktonusd.net/Page/2300>

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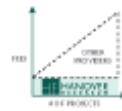
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