



Oswegatchie School
SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN
May 2015

OSWEGATCHIE SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE COMMITTEE:

Christopher Ozmun, Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist

Robert Cillino, Instructional Coach

Isabella Podeszwa, School Psychologist

Mark Lord, Grade 5 Teacher

Lynn Getty, Grade 1 Teacher

Rationale:

An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws, Public Act No. 11-232 makes significant changes in the bullying statute effective July 1, 2012 and imposes significant new responsibilities on school personnel.

Oswegatchie School is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Definition of Bullying:

“The repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyber-bullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student attending school in that same school district that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property;
- Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his property;
- Creates a hostile environment (a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the condition of the school climate) at school for such student;
- Infringes on the rights of such student at school;
- Substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic

status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical or developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

- A. **"Cyberbullying"** means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.
- B. **"Electronic communication"** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.
- C. **"Hostile environment"** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate;
- D. **"Mobile electronic device"** means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted;
- E. **"Outside of the school setting"** means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education;

Our School Responsibilities:

- Safe School Climate District-wide Coordinator appointed by July 1, 2012
- Safe School Climate Specialist (Building level) by July 1, 2012
- Establish a Safe School Climate Committee (include one parent, Fall of 2012)
- Develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan
- Complete a Safe School Climate Assessment biennially on or after July 1, 2012

Committee Responsibilities:

- Receive and review copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying;
- Identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the school;
- Review and amend school policies relating to bullying;
- Review and make recommendations to the district safe school climate coordinator;
- Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying;
- Collaborate with the district safe school coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying.

PROGRAMS for PREVENTION and INTERVENTION:

Oswegatchie School has various programs and interventions in place for building positive school climate, as well as educating students and staff in bullying prevention and intervention. Some examples include:

- Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support
- Bully Prevention in Positive Behavior Support Curriculum
- School Counseling Curriculum
- Student Council
- Small group and Individual Counseling sessions
- School Wide Bullying Prevention assemblies
- Town Meetings

ACTION PLAN:

- 2014-15 School year: Plan and implement PBIS (Positive Behavioral Supports) Phase 1 – Universal Interventions and Introduce Bullying Prevention Curriculum in grades 4 & 5.
- 2015-16- Continue training and implementation of PBIS-Phase 2.
- September-October 2015: Share Safe School Climate Plan and Bullying Prevention Curriculum to Staff and Parents.
- September 2015- December 2015:- Implement Bullying Prevention Curriculum at All grade levels.
- Administer School Climate Surveys to Staff and Families each spring.

- Use the data provided through Surveys, SAS, SET, and SWIS to assess school climate and develop a plan of action and set school goals.
- Schedule regular monthly meetings of the Safe School Climate Team.

PROCESS AND PROCEDURES:

As per Waterford Board of Education Policy 5131.911(a) reports of bullying may be received from students, school personnel, parents/guardians or may be made anonymously. Students and parents/guardians may file written reports of bullying with the building administrator or Safe School Climate Specialist.

Students may request anonymity when making a report to a school employee or the Safe School Climate Specialist. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action taken to address the situation, while maintaining confidentiality of the source of the complaint. Note that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.

School Employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying **must** orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or school administrator **not later than one school day** after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying. The same school employee **must** file a written report **not later than two school days** after making the oral report.

All reports of bullying will be reviewed and investigated.

The process for reporting, investigating, and responding to complaints of bullying are outlined in detail in Board Policy Regulation 5131.911