

Recommendation to the Board of Education on Bullying Program

At the request of Dr. Richey, a committee was formed to evaluate bullying prevention programs and make a recommendation to the Board of Education for adoption of a district-wide bullying program. The committee met in March and April.

Darrell Daigle and Jamie Like chose the following committee members to work on this task: Mary Beth Bean, Carla Church, Jeff Coursey, Lisa Crook, Tony Fanok, Bruce Farley, Nancy Gibson, Martie Gregory, Chandra Hagan, Ryan Reusch, Laura Scott, Kristen Shifflett.

Prior to the first committee meeting, possible bullying prevention programs were researched. It was decided by the committee to further research *Bully Prevention in Positive Behavior Support*, better known as “*Stop, Walk and Talk*”; *Botvin Life Skills*; *Owning Up*; *Second Step*; and *Olweus*.

The criteria for choosing a program to recommend included strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, structure of units of study, grade levels covered, and cost of the program.

Of these five programs, the committee recommends two for consideration by the Board of Education.

Stop, Walk and Talk

Rationale: Aligned with PBIS supports we are already using in our schools. Separate curriculum for elementary, middle and high schools. Curriculum organized by lessons connected to bullying behaviors. **Strengths:** Students taught to use three simple steps when bullying occurs. Program goals include empowering students, promoting self-advocacy and self-determination, decreasing bullying and bullying related issues in school, promoting a more self-reliant, responsible, and safe climate and atmosphere, removing barriers that interfere with positive peer interactions and academics, creating a positive school climate. **Weaknesses:** Limited research on effectiveness nationwide. Teacher PD consists of one webinar.

Cost: Free

Olweus

Rationale: Not a classroom curriculum. It is a whole-school, systems-change program at four different levels: school wide, classroom, individual, and community. Program goals include addressing those who bully, those who are bullied and those who are bystanders, reducing the prevalence of bully/victim problems that exist within the school, shifting attitudes away from acceptance and/or support of bullying behavior by bystanders to one of the support of those being bullied. **Strengths** include changing the culture and climate of the school, reaching out to individual students, interventions at multiple levels: individual, classroom, school-wide (K-12 curriculum) and community. Olweus has shown through evidence based research to significantly reduce the incidence of bullying in schools and is recognized by the American Academy of Pediatrics as a successful school based bullying program. **Weaknesses** include that the program is time consuming (questionnaires, training, consultation bi-weekly new supervision patterns), requires staff training yearly and can cause burnout by school staff, an increase in reporting can happen initially before students can accurately identify bullying, Olweus does not have any data supporting cyberbullying effectiveness, limited US based research on its effectiveness, requires significant commitment from both staff and parents together.

Cost: \$42,000-\$92,000 depending on package.

Concern of the committee: Members of the committee expressed a concern that in schools that have already implemented anti-bullying or character building programs such as *The Leader in Me* would be duplicating efforts if a district-wide program was adopted.