

(Minutes are unofficial until approved by Task Force)

## Blue Ribbon Task Force on Bullying

11/6/2019  
Greenbush North  
Lawrence, KS

Call to Order: 10:05 AM

### Roll Call –

#### Members Present:

Angie Salava  
David Benson  
Dottie Schuckman  
James Reiger  
Jean Clifford  
Judy Hughey  
Lindsay Buck  
Pat Happer  
Rhonda White  
Susan McMahan

Brenda Dietrich  
Dinah Sykes  
Donna Whiteman  
Jane Groff  
Joe Coles  
Karen Kroh  
Lori Blake  
Paula Fite  
Sara Hortenstine  
Whitney Morgan

Camille Straub  
Dinah Sykes  
Irvin Parga  
Jim Persinger  
Jose Cornejo  
Kyle Griffitts  
Molly Baumgardner  
Rick Ginsberg  
Stephanie Litton  
Stephanie Anderson

#### KSDE Staff Present:

Pat Bone  
Trevor Huffman

Myron Melton  
Randy Watson

Kent Reed

### Approval of the Minutes

Motion to approve: Lori Blake

Seconded: Paula Fite

Passed

Comments: Correction to minutes under Evidence and Current Practice CASEL correct spelling  
Research spelling at bottom of page

### Public Comment

**Doug Bowman KDADS** – creating youth groups. YLink Youth Leaders in Kansas. Looking beyond the boundaries that go beyond those who have been diagnosis. Youth lead with adult supervision. Trying to grow opportunities across the state. Bullying is a common topic. Materials will be sent to Pat to share with the council.

## Beloit Jr/Sr High Presentation

PowerPoint – Fix slides that don't align well.

Presenters: Stephanie Litton and Brenda

Beloit program is built on relationships and culture.

Character Education is a focus to shift culture.

Changed from Counselor based school with Counselor doing everything to an Advisory based school where teachers were tasked with advising in small groups.

Use Boys Town system for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

Social skills must be explicitly taught.

100% involved – they must choose something. They get choice but are not allowed to not choose to participate.

## Bullying Prevention

- Culture is our Foundation
- Programs cannot be used in isolation but must be used in a system effort.
- 4 pillars of PRIDE, SEL, PBIS, and service Learning strengthen the culture and relationships.
- Social skills and competencies are explicitly taught and modeled.
- Resources – 2 counselors, 2 administrators, 1 social worker, 1 SRO
- Constant Communication
- Community Support and buy-in
- Open dialogue with students and staff and community members

## Questions/Comments

- What can this committee provide for you to assist with what you are already doing?

Randy Watson – Beloit is doing great in every measure the state measures them on. They do not view this as another thing but what they do.

Realize that all schools are different and recommend guidelines to there is choice about what fits them. It is a continual process. Value of Social Emotional learning as equal to academic. Being intentional on skill building and utilizing the skills. They are not an add on but the basis of student functioning. This is a huge shift in culture change.

- Meshing of Character Ed and PBIS.

Common language from elementary through high school. Both sides of student behavior need a voice. The bully is often reacting. You must get to the bottom of what is causing bullying behavior. It is beautiful to watch kids work through their own problems and learn to apologize on their own, not forced by an adult. Teaching skills of how to disagree appropriately.

- Creating a healthy culture – this a critical component. Love the idea of PRIDE time. Boys Town curriculum – is it expensive? Community asking for the schools support. How did you involve community and Parents?

- Cost – It is pricey. Two staff went to Boys Town to be trained. They have trainer of trainers and coaches. Price is worth it. All new staff are trained. It is consistent and done with fidelity.
- Community/parent involvement. We knew this was a vital component. Used the 11 principals of character education. Implementing these values into all aspects of school, sports, and other areas. Parent nights where parents are invited to the school. Student led conferences with their advisor. Coffee Shop – bring in a community group once a month.
- Examine your culture and break it down.
- Culture – address from the bottom up and lead from the top down. Eliminates the victim mentality in bullying situations.
- Advisory time – pride time – advisor remains the same all 4 years of high school. Advisors do contact graduates and check in with them.
- What data do you have and what should we be looking at? How do you induct new staff?
- Data – qualitative from the past 15 years. Quantitative data is difficult but you can look at office referrals, feedback from advisors, attendance, attendance at activities like student led conferences, parent nights, etc. Beloit is now collecting this type of data for accreditation (KESA).
- Induction of new staff. Boys Town training for all. Core values are discussed during the interview process to match new staff with the school values. Building staff morale is a key component of success also. We play together.

### Wichita Public School Resources and Trainings to Address Bullying

PowerPoint

Stephanie Anderson

Over 50,000 students

9000 employees

98 buildings

Wichita Public schools' website

Counseling Services: <https://www.usd259.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=1611>

1 counselor for 400-600 students

- Beginning of school year video
- Bullying and Harassment
- Brochure
- Sign off for every students to see the video
- Pamphlet that counselor uses with student goes home for parent signature for students having problems
- Services for employees available as well.
- High school video was written and performed by High school students.

- Brochures developed that are sent out as problems occur.
- Cyberbullying is a hot topic in the district at this time. Staff/student/parent resources.
- Trying to be preventive however they are often reactive.
- Relationship building is a key and Wichita is working to develop that.
- Speak Up – anonymous tip program Visible in every single building. This is an app for phones and a box to leave notes. Very successful.
- Safety Services pages links to national resources.
- Choose PEACE link on KSDE site.
- District wide – purchased and implemented the Second Step program. Elementary has lessons every single day.
- Starting Restorative Practices in the high school
- Mediator/Parent Liaison for parent and community support for the last 6 years. = 700 calls per year. Bullying is not in the top 5 of these calls for help. Behavior was at the top of her list of calls.
- Staff members are empowered to build relationships with students, community, and parents. We are working hard to improve our district.
- Definition of bullying has had a big impact on what is being called bullying.
- Speak up has saved lives in Wichita. These help lines are really working.

Randy Watson – awesome work is ongoing in Wichita. One bold action is a competency based elementary grade card. That is one of many things happening in Wichita.

#### Questions

- Second Step – digital does data reporting come along with that? Digital is middle school only. Wichita has created its own pre and posttest.
- Parent Liaison – what were the top 5, Behavior and discipline, special transfers, transportation, special education,
- Office phone calls and subjects brought up in calls. Good resource for collecting data.
- Brochure for families to sign – does that go home only when there is an issue. That is a site-based decision. Each administrator makes the decision on when it goes to parents
- Speak up program – how long have you had it. The app just started this year. F The program has been in the district for some time.
- Any sense of how many responses have been received.
- Bullying training – counselors go in to each classroom during the first 6 weeks of school.
- At the high school level they bring several classes together and deliver it in a group auditorium setting.
- Definition – this is statutory. What are you suggesting the task force do? Would like to see that parents understand what a bully is. Opportunity for parents to be heard. They need to share their story. Definition – the vocabulary needs to be taught so we can address it appropriately.
- Speak Up – data is reviewed every single day to see what needs to be addressed. Will have to research the numbers.

- Thoughts on Cyber bullying – this is a very hard area to address because of the range of no phones ever in class – to meet kids where they are and teach using the phones. If you don't push delete on a phone it doesn't go away where a note can be thrown away and the situation begins to go away.
- How can we educate parents the definition of bullying? The importance of building resilience to situations. What avenue would work in Wichita. We have a variety of systems to communicate. Robo calls, face book, twitter, communication department is going above and beyond to reach parents. Over 60 languages spoken in the district. Robo call seems to be the most effective.
- Training for students – every single year.

Wichita is also award building Wichita South received a counseling award also.

**Lunch Break** 30 minutes.

### **Public Comment**

Written Public Comment from Brett White Andover

### **Discussion**

KNEA is holding a webinar on Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> to allow teachers to share their comments. KNEA in Topeka

Next Meeting December 2, in Topeka at the Kansas Health Foundation.

Please send sub committee reports to Pat as soon as possible so the writing committee can start framing their final response.

Anchors for recommendations – Rick

- Definition
- Data to collect as a state
- Measure we use.
- Fidelity of implementation
- Climate culture and relationships.
- Bank of model programs with variety of school sizes.
- KCTC survey – think about other data collection options.
- Culture subgroups
- Communication of information and options available.
- How this work can move forward when the task force is complete.
- Please consider parental involvement through education and communication.
- Anticipate executive summary of one page with recommendations and supplemental information following

## Panel of Students from Lawrence, KS

Thank you to Lindsay Buck, Jose Cornejo and others for pulling these students together here today. What do you as students think about this work on bullying.

Eli – Free State High

Mattie = Free State

Leslie = LHS

Braden = LHS

Ashley LHS

Dierra – LHS

### How common is bullying in your school?

- LH – see it every day. Especially in the younger classes. They don't have as much filter. Very common. The group of people you are around matter. Some don't know how to cope with it so they laugh about.
- Cliques and gossiping are the big issues.
- Commenting on others Instagram posts
- More aimed toward younger groups. We're older than you. We know better.
- LGBTQ STUDENTS ARE TARGETED. Poor students are targeted.
- Click environment is more pervasive in the younger groups.
- It's acceptable to talk about other students.
- Maturity is an issue at the high school
- Physical fighting isn't as common as it used to be. It comes through with sarcastic negative comments. Social media posts and not thinking about how the comment will affect others.
- Groups (different schools) get thrown together and judge each other.
- LGBTQ are often targets.
- Latin community feels judged. Too scared to report don't want to tell. Don't know who to speak to?
- Seeing adults mistreat other adults in the building. Staff and parents both. We get told not to do it but we see it everywhere.
- Cliques, middle schools arriving in high school have a large culture shock. Racial slurs were prevalent in middle school but they are at the high school.
- Get referred to as that new Mexican girl and I don't have a name.
- More emphasis on those white kids acting like gangster. They think they are being cool.
- Pretending to be gangster helps then not feel like the target person anymore.
- Stereo typing of minority. People were more respectful in New York than they are here as to culture difference

### Staff Responding to bullying situations

- Often feel ignored

- Student reports to teacher and the teacher doesn't really do anything about it which makes the situation feel worse and you get labeled as someone who tells. Consequences are severe to the child's mental and physical state.
- Teachers tend to brush things off or ignore them. Trans students being targeted. Teacher told the students to just not get caught. Don't know if the protectors received any guidance or punishment
- Bullying situations need the teachers to step in and address the issues. Suspensions and other action need to take place. Detrimental to people.
- At this point, suspension should be immediate after one warning. Multiple warnings don't work. Don't tolerate it at all.
- Fights do occur and they result in ISS or OSS but bullies just get a warning and don't get much backlash for their actions.
- Ripple effect to actions – led to student dropping out because she just couldn't cope anymore.
- Teachers often are not equipped to handle the experiences that arise. Options needs to be available for removing yourself from a situation that is bad for you. Teach how to respond.
- Hang out in student services often. I can see that they are doing more and bring in students who may be in a toxic situation with other students when it's affecting their school life.
- Wait to address after class and keep just students involved.
- Some teachers are trying to understand the students who are different's perspective and then educate other students. Sometimes students just don't know they are being hurtful.

### How can we build resiliency?

- Some teachers appear to not care about bullying in their classroom. You need to go talk to someone else.
- Need a way to communicate immediately to make teacher or counselor aware of situations that need to be dealt with.
- Build student self-worth. Remove self-doubt and relieve depression.
- Students have low expectations of themselves. Need to build every students self-worth. Students with low self esteem lash out at other students as a way to get attention.
- Look at the person who is inflicting the pain on others and find out what is happening in the bully's life.
- Bullies can be victims too in other situations.
- To prevent – transitioning phase from middle to high. Anxiety is not understood and gets students made fun of. They know these things are hot topics but don't know what is good or bad. Mental health issues are not address.
- Can we talk Council – student led. We want people to not feel like they will be judged. Everyone should be listened too.

- Staff have a level of ignorance of mental health, gender recognizing, transphobic, homophobic issues can arise.
- Teachers talk relationships, not knowing the student well enough
- Training teachers, substitutes, and paras is a key

#### Council Questions

Have you seen the states definition?

Not very aware. Outdated. Lots of things are left out.

Thank you for your honesty today. Being a teenager is tough. What kind of training are you getting about interpersonal training?

- It's very rudimentary. Don't be mean to other people.
- There are groups that say just don't do it. That's not enough.

Do kids try to respond when they see others that bully or are making poor decisions?

- When they try, they get labeled a try harder or do gooder, teacher's pet, snitch.
- If you are stuck in a situation you can't get out of if it when you are in school.
- Open mindedness of career pathways if needed. College isn't the only choice.

What is your definition of bullying?

- Harassment,
- Putting people down to build yourself up with false sense of secreting
- Gas lighting, self-deprecation, making others
- Systematic targeting of groups to lift themselves up
- Harassment of harming
- Harassment
- Harassment, harming, hating,

Would it be helpful to have high school students talk to middle schoolers coming up?

- Yes, it would be helpful. Point out how the schools will be different. Right group of friends through sports helped him cope.
- Yes, – 100% this should happen. You go from being the oldest kids in the building to the youngest. My worst experience in bullying occurred in elementary school.
- Yes, your perspective must change between buildings.
- This is where your grades really start to matter. Your life is going to change.

What would you like the task force to do?

- Will teachers hear about your findings?
  - Yes, we hope so. Be more fun and involved.
- The promise behind attending school is being a productive person. Prepare us for the culture we are actually entering. Teach us how to be civil to one another. Educate people on actual life.



- Hearing that people actually care and want to make things better is amazing. One thing that should be done is having school be a safe place where you feel nurtured. That feeling has gone away in a lot of schools.
- Teachers need more thorough training on the diversity of issues students are dealing with. Make training more engaging for them so they look forward to it and learn from it. I hear them talk about training as something they have to do with a negative tone of voice. Most of our teachers have never been the victim of bullying and don't know how to respond.
- Teachers need to realize their value. Asking the simple questions, like how was your day can reach a kid who feels left out. Make classroom topics more personal and engaging with the students.
- Teachers who care about what they are doing and not just there to draw a paycheck.
- Can we make this a thing like every week? Get teachers who have experienced these things. More community interaction.

Thank you students for sharing with us today!