Kansas Blue Ribbon Task Force on Bullying,

The elementary principals at USD #385 Andover met to discuss this very important issue. A key focus for us is to be preventative. With that in mind, we have focused upon the following:

- **Capturing Kids' Hearts:** In summary it focuses on building relationships among everyone within a school. We empower students to manage and regulate their emotions and behaviors with support. The most powerful part is the relationship between student and teacher, which allows for early intervention.
- **Trauma Informed:** We provide staff professional developed on Trauma Informed Practices and partner with Butler County Special Education, KSDE and area service centers giving us access to behavioral specialists and other experts.
- **Counselors:** Each building has a **full time** counselor focusing on a variety of topics including managing emotions and how we treat each other.
- **Public and student understanding:** As administrators, we are committed to investigating all reports of bullying. We experience students and the public not understanding how bullying is defined. An obstacle that creates a lack of trust at times is a parent assuming no action has taken place when a principal contacts them to share their findings. Due to FERPA, we cannot disclose information about another child. This can cause a parent to think nothing has been done. Instead, we are not simply able to share details about the other child such as consequences.
- **Frequency of Bullying Incidents:** Situations are commonly reported as "bullying" while often it is not based on the definition and the investigation that takes place. Regardless of whether it is technically bullying or if it is teasing, etc..., we thoroughly investigate, communicate with those involved, set consequences if warranted and log referrals to identify a possible pattern of behavior.

Thank you for your efforts to support the child of Kansas!

Sincerely,
Elton Armbrister, Wheatland Elementary
Traci Holder, Robert Martin Elementary
Shari Rooks, Cottonwood Elementary
Dana Matheny, Meadowlark Elementary
Molly Nespor, Sunflower Elementary
Shelley Jonas, Prairie Creek Elementary

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