

Bullying: Peer Abuse

The following is excerpted from the newly-drafted Board of Education policy on bullying. To view the complete policy, please go to www.lancasterschools.org/boardpolicy.

In accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) the Lancaster Central School District Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and productive learning environment within its schools. Bullying of a student by another student is strictly prohibited on school property, in school buildings, on school buses, and at school sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off campus.

The term 'bullying' is defined, in general, as: a variety of negative acts carried out repeatedly over time. It involves a real or perceived imbalance of power, with a more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful.

Bullying can take three forms:

- 1.) Physical, including, but not limited to: hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, taking personal belongings;
- 2.) Verbal, including, but not limited to: taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, making threats;
- 3.) Psychological, including, but not limited to: spreading rumors; manipulating social relationships; or engaging in social exclusion, extortion, or intimidation.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is an attempt to display power and control over someone perceived as weaker. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings.

Prevention and Intervention

Personnel at all levels are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent bullying behavior and/or reporting such behavior to their immediate supervisor. Staff training shall be provided to raise awareness of bullying within the schools and to facilitate staff identification and response to bullying behavior among students.

Prevention and intervention techniques within the district to prevent against bullying behavior and to support and protect victims shall include building and classroom-level strategies and activities.

What is the Lancaster Bullyproof Partnership?

Formed in 2010, the Lancaster Bullyproof Partnership is comprised of faculty, administrative and support staff from each of Lancaster's schools. The partnership currently represents the committee responsible for introducing the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program to Lancaster. Ultimately, we hope parents, community members, and all students embrace, and become a part of, the Bullyproof Partnership!

About the Olweus Program

Funded in part by a grant from G4S Secure Solutions and alumnus, Richard Amoroso, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP, pronounced Ol-vay-us) training will begin in Lancaster schools this fall.

The Olweus program is in use in more than 6,000 schools around the country and in countries around the world. OBPP is the most researched and best-known bullying prevention program available, with more than 35 years of research and successful implementation.

The goals of the program are:

- ***to reduce existing bullying problems among students;***
- ***to prevent the development of new bullying problems;***
- ***to achieve better peer relations at school.***

Schools that have used the Olweus program have seen reductions of 50 percent or more in student reports of being bullied and/or bullying others. The program has also been shown to reduce other antisocial behaviors such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy. Hazelden Publishing, the non-profit organization that publishes the Olweus program, notes the program results in improvements in classroom social climate and more positive attitudes among students in school.

