Anti-Bullying Policy and Program Development Discussion Guide

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Anti-Bullying Policy and Program Development Discussion Guide

The process of developing a school anti-bullying policy and program is enriched through discussion among various groups. Consider involving representatives of these groups on a planning team to engage in discussions and decision-making toward adoption or revision of an anti-bullying policy and program.

- Students
- Certified and non-certified staff
- Local board of education
- Contracted services employees
- Volunteers
- Substitute teachers
- Parents
- Community members or agency representatives

This document provides some guiding questions for initial discussions by a planning team to establish an anti-bullying program or in the process to evaluate an existing program. Additional topics and/or discussion questions may be developed by the school or district to address issues specific to local policy or program plans.

Discussion Guide Topics:

- Determine the goal
- Define bullying
- Identify, review and align policies, practices, and procedures
- Collect, organize and analyze data
- Identify and review programs
- Planning guide

Note: Space is provided on the discussion pages for discussion notes.
Discussion Topic: Determine the goal

- What is our district goal which relates to the issue of bullying?
- Does our goal represent a deficit-based (what we want to eliminate) or strength-based model (what we want to create)? (Examples: Reduce bullying. OR Promote a safe learning environment for all students and staff.)
- How did we arrive at this goal?
- Does our goal align with the Nebraska Department of Education Anti-Bullying policy?
- Would staff, students and parents in our district support this goal? How do we know?
Discussion Topic: Define bullying

- What is our definition for bullying?

- Is this definition used across all grade levels? If not, should we develop a common language and a common district definition?

- How are staff, students, parents and/or community members involved in the discussions about a definition of bullying?

- How will the definition be communicated to students, staff, parents, others?
Discussion Topic: Policies, practices, and procedures

- What are the existing policies, practices, and procedures related to bullying in our district?
- Where are the policies located?
- Does our policy reflect the thinking of our district?
- Have available model policies been reviewed to help determine essential elements for our local anti-bullying policy? What, if anything, is missing from our district policies?
- Are our district policies that relate to bullying behaviors aligned and across printed documents? (board policy, school handbooks, websites, etc.)? across grade levels? across locations (school day, extra-curricular activities, transportation, etc.)
- Has our policy been reviewed by legal counsel?
- How are bullying and related policies, practices, and procedures communicated to all staff, students, parents, and the community?
- Are our district policies implemented consistently across grade levels, locations, etc.?
Discussion Topic: Collect, organize and analyze data

- Do we have sources that would give us information about bullying and related behaviors in our school?
  - Attendance
  - Surveys
  - Focus groups
  - Office referrals/discipline reports
  - Demographic information
  - Other…….

- What information do we want to collect about the incidence of bullying behaviors in our school? the perceived level of safety? the impact on student academic achievement? other?
  - Gender/Age/Grade
  - Other subgroups
  - Time of day
  - Time of year
  - Location
  - Types of behaviors
  - Frequency
  - Support/intervention
  - Attitudes
  - Student information – social alienation; academic performance; etc.
  - Perception: staff, students, parents, community
  - Other…..

- Who is responsible for collection and organization of data? For analysis of the data?

- Is there a plan for ongoing collection and analysis of the data?

- Who has access to the information gleaned from the analysis of data? How and when is this information shared? Is the data used for discussions and to inform decisions?

- How we will collect additional data to improve our anti-bullying program?
Discussion Topic: Identify and review programs

- What programs or procedures are already in place to offer support for bullying prevention or intervention? Are they school-wide? classroom-based? individual interventions?

- Is there evidence of the program(s) implementation from elementary through middle and into high school?

- Are current programs research-based? Has there been a review of program effectiveness?

- Has the school implemented a plan that addresses issues that are noted in analysis of local data?

- Where might teachers, parents, and others locate resources and support?

- What training have staff participated in regarding bullying prevention and intervention? Have all staff (certified and non-certified) been trained?

- Is there a plan for annual review of data, bullying policy and prevention and intervention strategies? For ongoing staff development?
Planning Guide: Based on discussions, identify the immediate needs for action, including who is responsible, when the task should be completed and any related notes such as resources that will be accessed.

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