

Bullying Task Force Notes: May 21, 2012

Members Present: Willie Bridges, Brenda Cassellius, Vangie Castro; Rep. Jim Davnie; Sen. Scott Dibble, Philip Duran; Alana Friedman Julie Hertzog; Kevin Lindsey; Lyn Mitchell; Walter Roberts, Thomas Scott
Ex officio Members: Curt Carpenter; Mary Mackbee; Kirk Schneidawind; Kelly Smith

Agenda was accepted as written

Listening session's summary notes

Bemidji : First and tested 4 questions. Parents from School craft shared their excitement with the social emotional learning their students' activities.

Rochester: how much anger that was expressed, but not sure where the anger came from—bullying or some other session. Themes were the same between Rochester and St. Cloud. Felt there was sincere, open and honest sessions. Mankato—lots of bullying on the bus, felt as though nothing else could be done. Inconsistent follow-through.

Think about family and community based solutions. Range of family circumstances that we see—people with mental health issues that they struggle with, to a family that had children who addressed the circle group. Know impact of cyberbullying, want consistency and options. People are very genuine, speak from the heart, and tell stories that may be painful, that are not easy to listen to. Everyone has a story to tell, and people need to hear it. Sessions have been very powerful, and we got a lot of information. Re-iterate: this is a community issue.

Mankato—75 members (more than who signed in).

Duluth: Scheduled for June 12, 6:30-8:00 pm at the Public Safety Building. Arlington Avenue,

June 18, MDE: metro area listening session before the meeting: students' session. Children Congress, want diversity. Discussion regarding parental permission, safety and practicality.

Also want to hear from the educators in the schools: at the taskforce. Set up a website and take more comment. Also, take testimony from students on cyberspace--.

Issue #1: definitions

Establish a subcommittee to work on a definition.

Rose reviewed definitions.

Discussion: is there language that helps to address cyberbullying? The language needs to be specific to be helpful and needs to take care to check on first amendment rights.

Language needs to be broader than in school—need to include the community.

Have other folks outside the taskforce participate in the subcommittee for making definition.

Enumeration of certain groups and “not limited to” is important.

Harassment, bullying, intimidation together or separate? Do we change the harassment policy as well as the bullying policy? Harassment is a higher standard. Should we make recommend changes to the harassment policy, so that it is clear regarding the protective classes and the MN Human rights law?

Easier to teach them separately, kids seem to understand the difference from the focus group.

In essence the objective conduct is essentially the same. The difference is that I am doing this BECAUSE of your group or affiliation or trait.

Intimidation: do we need to include this? Intimidation is a facet of bullying, not in need of another definition.

If the subcommittee thinks there is a reason to change, they will bring forth that recommendation.

Think of how kids will receive these languages.

The intent is that this will apply to any school or to services for schools. All policy will apply to all school sanctioned activities.

Is less more in a statue? Be careful of too many adjectives. Others are also concerned about length. Try for a balance.

Start policy with positive language. It is the public policy of the state of Minnesota that all students be able to attend a school that is safe, (the preambles rarely survive the legislative process.)

Include electronic means of bullying in the statute, wrap it in.

Panel: Best Practices in Prevention and Support

Justin Patchin: PP available. Cyberbullying: Shared research on issue of bullying

Julie Young Burns: Minneapolis Public Schools: SEL, Restorative practices, equity; direct instruction taught during the school day; youth lead conversations on bullying and harassment; social skill acquisition as a literacy tool. Tie issues together. Need to keep this at the front of our mind, that this is a societal issue, that a safe welcoming environment is important across the district.

Char Myklebust: District 287; optimistic psychology model, uses CASEL’s work re: SEL: PP available.

Marion London: Olweus Bullying Prevention Program,. Bullying is the adults’ problem. PP available.

Public Testimony:

Phoebe and Mother

Kate Houghton, MPS. SEL, restorative measures, training for staff on what to say.