

DRAFT—For July 9, 2012 Meeting

“Freedom from Fear”

Making Minnesota’s Schools Safe and Supportive

“There needs to be more than just tape behind the posters.” *Student—Metro Listening Session*

Prevention of School Bullying

Task Force Report

Findings and Recommendations

August 1, 2012

Executive Summary

(To be written)

Prevention of School Bullying

On February 21, 2012, Governor Mark Dayton established a Task Force on the Prevention of School Bullying by executive order 12-01. A high priority of the Dayton Administration is to assure that all students in Minnesota have a safe and welcoming environment in their schools conducive to and supportive of learning. The task force was to examine best practice and policies that currently exist in order to make recommendations to inform the group's recommendations to the Governor and legislature (Executive Order—See Appendix A)

Membership

Fifteen members were appointed to the task force through the open appointments process. Besides the Commissioners of Education and Human Rights the task force include four legislators — two from the House and two from the Senate—and nine public members. In addition four ex-officio members representing school boards, superintendents and principals were added. Two co-chairs were selected by the task force. The Co-chairs were Julie Herzog and Walter Roberts. (See Appendix B for the list of task force members.)

Charge

The Task Force was directed to examine the state of bullying, harassment and intimidation in Minnesota's schools and in doing so do the following:

1. Study best practices and policies from available literature and experts;
2. Analyze existing statutes and policies, resources, reported levels of bullying, and consequences of bullying intimidation and harassment;
3. Solicit and obtain input from the public, experts, professionals and victims of bullying, intimidation and harassment;
4. Clearly define bullying, harassment and intimidation;
5. Provide recommendations for policy initiatives to the Governor and the Legislature based upon its findings.

The task force was directed to complete its work by August 1, 2012

The Process

Seven Task Force meetings were held beginning on March 19th with the last one on July 30.

At its first meeting the task force did a SWOT analysis and developed a list of experts they wanted to hear from, items for further study and areas of concern to be explored in subsequent meetings.

The first order of business was looking at current Minnesota's statutes related to bullying and harassment. This was followed by a review of model policies developed by the Minnesota School

Board's Association and the Department of Education. Policies, practices, materials, and research articles from districts, professional organizations and other entities were considered. In addition, communications, studies and reports from federal sources such as the Secret Service, courts and the US Government Accountability Office were reviewed. The committee also dialogued with practitioners and experts who presented as part of a panel on a variety of areas from best practice and prevent to data protection and enforcement options. The elements of mental health, community involvement, out-of-school activities and parental support and responsibility were part of the discussions.

One of the first issues tackled by the task force was how to define bullying, harassment and intimidation. It soon became apparent that the common understanding of these terms are confusing and lack clear distinctions to the general public and are not well understood by school personnel.

Although the courts have more consistently and clearly made decisions in the area of harassment, in particular sexual harassment, there is less clarity around the term bullying. This lack of clarity is also evident at the federal level as it related to federal legislation. However, the federal OCR (Office of Civil Rights) is increasingly taking corrective actions against school districts in this area and has issued a "Dear Colleague" letter to provide guidance to schools. A copy of this letter can be found on the task force web page.

Many different definitions for bullying and harassment were analyzed including those enacted into law from other states as well as definitions used by experts and professional organizations.

Expert Panels:

Several expert panels presented to the committee on a variety of issues from best practice, intervention and support, to federal initiatives and data privacy issues. Below is a list of experts who presented to the committee.

- **Dr. Bridget Biggs:** Mayo Clinic Department of Psychiatry and Psychology-Evidenced-Based Approaches to Bullying Intervention
- **Phyllis Brashler:** Minnesota Department of Health, Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Coordinator—Suicide Issue Brief
- **Don Gemberling:** *Data Practices considerations/Data collection*
- **Marikay Litzau:** MDE Compliance Specialist in Due Process & Student Discipline - Dear Colleague Letter; Office of Civil Rights Investigations/Settlements in Minnesota
- **Marion London:** *M. Ed. Independent Education and Training Consultant. Certified trainer for the Olweus Bully Prevention program. Co-author of several prevention/social skill curricula.*
- **Cathy Miller:** Minnesota School Boards Association Director of Legal & Policy Services—School District Policies
- **Dr. Char Myklebust:** *Director of Professional Learning; Intermediate School District 287, Adolescent Development, Bullying and Prevention.*
- **Jamie Nabozny:** *Plaintiff in Nabozny v. Podlesny (1996), successful lawsuit against a school district relating to harassment*

- **Justin Patchin, Ph. D:** *Co-director, Cyberbullying Research Center, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice Department of Political Science University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire*
- **Nancy Reistenberg:** *MDE School Climate Specialist--Student Surveys and Feedback*
- **Wade Setter:** *Superintendent of MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension; Former Director of the MN School Safety Center*
- **Dan Solomon:** *Field Representative to Senator. Al Franken; Proposed Federal Legislation*
- **Brian Stoll:** *Probation Officer from Wright County—Wright County Safe Schools Program*
- **Dr. Stuart Green:** *Director, New Jersey Coalition for Bullying Awareness and Prevention*
- **Julie Young-Burns:** *Minneapolis Public Schools-Student Support Services. Integrating bullying prevention and intervention into a Whole School, Whole District Program.*

Public Testimony

Opportunity for public testimony was provided at the end of each meeting. Several individuals, organizations, practitioners, victims and interested parties took this opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas with the committee. Written comments were also shared with the committee.

Listening Sessions

To gather views and feedback from students, educators, parents and community members, task force members convened listening sessions at seven different locations across the state. Hundreds of Minnesotans attended the listening session and shared their experiences, suggestions and reactions to the issue of bullying and school climate. The sessions were structured to provide an opportunity for everyone to be heard by using a feedback circle. Specific protocols were outlined for participants and the participants were presented with questions to respond to within the circles.

Listening Sessions Format: The sessions were held in a circle, with the facilitator using a talking piece to ensure that all voices are heard. An overview of the taskforce and its task was given along with a request for input to the taskforce.

Introductions: Name, grade, reason for attending listening session, favorite subject in school.

Sample Questions:

1. *What's working: What are your schools doing that helps address bullying effectively?*
1. *What are the issues that are of most concern to you when it comes to school safety, bullying and harassment issues in schools?*
2. *What can you do or what do you do to make a safer school? How can other students be helpful in preventing bullying?*
3. *We know that not everyone reports when they are being bullied to adults in school or at home. What can adults do to make it more likely for youth, who are either being bullied or who see the bullying, to report it?*

4. *If there was one piece of advice you would give to Task Force members as to what can be done to create safe schools -- ones where every student feels they belong, feels they are valued, and feels physically and emotionally safe so that they can focus on learning -- what would it be?*

Listening sessions were held in Bemidji, Rochester, St. Cloud, Mankato, Duluth and two Metro locations. In Bemidji, Rochester, St. Cloud and in the metro area two separate listening sessions were held-- one for students and the other for adults. (See Appendix C for Listening Session Themes)

Documents and Research

The Task Force review a wide range of documents and research on it deliberations. There were several significant documents of note. These included

1. *USDE Dear Colleague Letter*
2. *Government Accountability Office Bullying-Report*
3. *Bullying Definitions from Other States*
4. *Minnesota 2010 Student Survey*
5. *Summary of US Department of Education and Office Civil Rights and Department of Justice Settlements with Minnesota*
6. *Model Bullying, Harassment and Violence Prevention Policies (MSBA, MDE & others)*
7. *Listening to Youth Voices - American Indian Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender*

Documents from the task force meetings can be found on the MDE website at

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Welcome/AdvBCT/PrevSchBully/index.html>

TASK FORCE DEFINITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF SCHOOL BULLING

Definitions of bullying, harassment and intimidation along with recommendations for how to reduce and prevent school bullying will be presented to Governor Mark Dayton and the legislature for their consideration.

The issues around bullying are varied, complex and contextual. Although actions against vulnerable groups were clearly apparent and identifiable, testimony before the task force indicated that students were also severely impacted by actions separate from these identifiable groups.

2. *"My child was harassed because she was a good student."*
3. *"We were new to the neighborhood and so we were considered outsiders. Our children were shunned and picked on."*
4. *"It was the way I dressed...I was ridiculed."*

In the end the paramount issue for the task force in developing these recommendations was to ensure that each and every child in Minnesota's schools has a safe and nurturing school environment conducive to assuring academic success and healthy social and emotional development.

The task force looked at definitions from several sources including other state statutes, professional literature, definitions in current Minnesota policies and state statute. The task force is recommending the following definitions. In addition glossary for the terms used in the definitions can be found in Appendix D.

Definitions

Bullying

(a) "Bullying" means a student's use of words, images, or actions, in a -- single significant incident or a -- series of incidents, either through direct or indirect interactions between students or through technology, that a reasonable person would or should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of interfering with the right of one or more other students, including students who observe the conduct, to an education in a safe and supportive environment, by:

- I. is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it substantially interferes with the student(s) educational opportunities;
- II. placing one or more other students in reasonable fear of harm to person or property, including through intimidation;
- III. having a detrimental effect on the physical or mental health of one or more other students;
- IV. interfering with the ability of one or more other students to participate in or benefit from, or encouraging the deliberate exclusion of one or more other students from, the services, activities, or privileges provided by or occurring at a school;

- V. creating or promoting an ongoing perceived imbalance of power between students; or
- VI. defaming, or violating the reasonable expectation of privacy of, one or more other students.

(b) "Bullying" includes, but is not limited to, conduct directed by a student toward one or more other students in a school or on school-district premises, in a school or school-district-owned or -leased vehicle, at any school or school district sanctioned or sponsored activity or event, or in electronic forums in which at least one of the parties participates in school-related activities.

Harassment:

Harassment is a student's use of words, images, or actions, in a single significant incident or a series of incidents, either through direct or indirect interactions between students or through technology, relating to an individual's or group of individuals' actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation (including gender identity), or disability when the conduct:

- a. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- b. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's educational performance;
- or
- c. otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.

Intimidation:

Intimidation means an act done to another with intent to cause fear of physical harm.

Findings and Recommendations

Effective, successful school bullying prevention efforts are ones that foster and uphold pro-social core values throughout the learning community. The school culture, climate and curriculum shall promote caring, inclusive, accepting school community and nurture peer norms against bullying and harassment. Awareness, skills, and behaviors are taught for prevention of bullying, harassment, as well as appropriate responses to bullying/harassment when it does occur, including reporting of bullying, harassment to adults at school and at home. When bullying and harassment are reported, educator and administrative responses should be effective, respectful and supportive for all involved. Restorative and reparative practices should be supported and practiced whenever possible as opposed to 'Zero Tolerance' or other authoritarian rules that can be counter-productive and deny educational opportunities and supports to children and youth.

The Task Force recommendations below are aligned with seven (core beliefs) findings supported by information before the committee.

A. Findings and Recommendations: The Supportive School

The Supportive School: Students, parents, and communities have a right to expect that children are safe in Minnesota schools. An essential foundation to student learning is the school environment which addresses the physical and mental health, social/emotional, and safety of all students. Bullying creates behavioral and emotional impediments to learning. School personnel must commit themselves to removing these barriers through both policies and practices. The adults (not just teachers) in each building must be responsible for creating a climate where education, intervention and follow up is standard practice.

Recommendations:

1. *Districts shall inform students, parents and guardians of its policies, procedures and activities related to bullying, harassment, hazing, and related topics that shall include, but not be limited to:*
 - a. *Availability of the policy and that the policy is explained to and discussed with its students;*
 - b. *How parents and guardians can reinforce the activities at home and support the school district or school policy;*
 - c. *A process for parents and guardians to report a bullying related situation to the school, which includes name(s) and contact information; and*
 - d. *Assure that all policies and procedures are distributed to students and their families AND made accessible in clear ways on the districts' websites.*
2. *Each school shall have a designated reporting officer to whom all school building incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyber-bullying is reported. The designated individual will be responsible for:*
 - a. *Recording and tracking reports of incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyber-bullying, and*
 - b. *Forwarding reports to a school district designated reporting officer.*
3. *Require each school and/or district to designate a trained "investigator" (trained personnel) who will effectively address all reports of harassment/bullying in compliance with the district's policy and Minnesota's bullying and harassment laws .*
4. *Each school/ district shall annually submit a report detailing the number of incidents by district and school building to the MDE and list the summary report on its website. This data should include but not be limited to number of incidents, attendance, and number of other discipline incidents and students level of comfort at school.*
5. *School districts shall bi-annually conduct a review of its policy and include it in its annual improvement plans making any necessary revisions and additions to improve school climate.*
6. *Require age-appropriate, curricula designed to educate students on the value of diversity in schools and society; methods of preventing and reducing bullying, cyber-bullying, intimidation, and harassment and designed to educate students on the following:*

- a. *Actively teaching knowledge and skills for respecting human differences, inclusiveness and empathy;*
 - b. *Problem solving and conflict management/resolution;*
 - c. *Multicultural/anti-bias education and civil discourse, etc.*
 - d. *How to recognize and respond to bullying/harassment- including procedures for reporting to adults*
7. *Encourage family/home engagement and provide home communication around prevention efforts. Include language that defines student protection against adults' bullying/harassment behaviors in schools and school-sanctioned activities. (school staff, teachers, contracted service providers, etc*
 8. *School districts should employ curricula designed to educate students on methods of preventing and reducing bullying, cyber-bullying, intimidation, and harassment and is designed to educate students on the value of diversity in schools and society.*

B. Findings and Recommendations: Prevention, Intervention and Consequences

Prevention, Intervention, and Consequences: The best way to stop bullying behaviors is through education strategies focused on prevention. Such educational strategies must include students and all school staff, inclusive of volunteers, who have direct contact with those students. Behaviors which are detrimental to the safe school environment have consequences for both students and adults. Those consequences, however, must be appropriate to the behavior and placed within a developmentally appropriate, or supervisory context whenever possible.

Recommendations:

1. *School districts shall have the same baseline/minimum policy dealing with bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyber-bullying. Programs, curricula, and practices should be developmentally age-appropriate and focus on prevention and education (e.g., restorative measures) before punitive disciplinary measures (e.g., suspension, expulsion). The policy shall include:*
 - a. *provisions for educators and school personnel to address - and report - a bullying situation that they witness.*
 - b. *provisions for educators and school personnel to address - and report - a bullying situation that they have not witnessed, but they have knowledge.*
 - c. *provisions to provide additional services for those students who have demonstrated on-going bullying behaviors.*
 - d. *provisions to provide additional services for those students who have been subjected to on-going bullying behaviors.*
2. *District developed consequences for those who bully or harass others, should be clear and scaled toward the severity of the individual's conduct. staff should be instructed as to the extent allowed under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act*

3. *Consistent follow up and remediation efforts shall be provided to the child who is the target and the child who initiates incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyberbullying. Such actions should include:*
 - a. *Support and follow up with the individual bullied/harassed including advising them of the consequences imposed.*
 - b. *a remediation plan for the child bullying and continued observation*
 - c. *Gradual and appropriate consequences for repeated bullying offenses. (Not zero tolerance)*
4. *School district programs must have components that address prevention and intervention on a school-wide, classroom, individual, community and parental level.*
5. *Prevention programs must include long term attention to positive school climate, curriculum, and supervision, with involvement from all staff, students, parents and community.*
6. *Intervention must include training for all staff on intervention techniques, supervision, conversations with the child who is the target, the child who is bullying and their parents.*
7. *Bystanders should be trained to intervene safely and report bullying behavior to adults.*

C. Findings and Recommendations: Community, Family Engagement & Collaboration

Community, Family Engagement, and Collaboration: School personnel cannot address bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, and harassment in the absence of parent, guardian, and community support to do the same. As such, parents and guardians are considered partners in addressing incidents indicative of such behaviors among their children. Strategies and techniques must be developed within school districts to encourage parents and guardians to assist school personnel in solving bullying behaviors, particularly among those students who are identified as responsible for creating such incidents. Likewise, collaboration, coordination of efforts, and services among schools, government units, and public and private community organizations can assist schools in addressing the problem.

Recommendations:

1. *Parents/Guardians of students who are identified as engaging in bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyberbullying behaviors will be required to meet with proper school or local officials to participate in a remediation plan.*
2. *Engage parents and community organizations as partners by actively enlisting community leaders, businesses, service providers, faith congregations, NGO/non-profit organizations, government, school, and others to build awareness, align messages, and work together toward solutions. Methods to engage parents and community organizations as partners can include:*
 - a. *Shared definitions of bullying/harassment;*
 - b. *Identifying its prevalence and its toll in our community;*

- c. *Rationale and strategies to end it, e.g. via public service announcements)*
 - d. *Developing community prevention and intervention actions.*
3. *Establish and maintain home and school partnerships and broader community engagement toward the prevention and reduction of bullying and harassment. Actively enlist community, business, service providers, faith congregations, NGO/non-profit organizations, government, school, and others to build awareness, align messages, and work together toward solutions. (Including, but not limited to, (shared) definitions of bullying/harassment, its prevalence and its toll in our community, plus rationale and strategies to end it, e.g. via public service announcements)*

D. Findings and Recommendations: Policy, Practice and Implementation

Policy, Practice, and Implementation: Effective prevention, intervention, and remediation of bullying behaviors will not be solved solely by written policies. Policies must be humane, practical, and enforceable. Additionally, students and parents should expect to find consistency in policy and practice within each school district throughout the state. In essence, no student should be less protected in one school district than another.

Recommendations:

1. *In order to ensure equity of protection for all students in all Minnesota schools, the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, and related relevant state agencies shall develop a baseline/minimum policy to respond to bullying, harassment, and cyberbullying. Included should be the following actions:*
 - a. *IEPs and Section 504 Plans for children who experience bullying should be written to address the skills and proficiencies that the student needs to avoid and respond to bullying and include accommodations, goals, objectives, and proactive measures to address the bullying issue.*
 - b. *For consistency and to clearly express its condemnation of such violations, “sexual orientation (including gender identity)” should be added to Minn. Stat. § 127A.42, subd.2(60).*
 - c. *The Commissioner of Education should begin, at the earliest opportunity, the process of amending Minn. R. 3535.2300 to include “sexual orientation (including gender identity).”*
 - d. *Definition of “discriminate” found in the Minnesota Human Rights Act should be expanded to read: “the term ‘discriminate’ includes to segregate or separate, to create or condone a hostile environment, and, for purposes of discrimination on the basis of sex, includes sexual harassment.”*
 - e. *The Commissioner of Education shall take effective steps to advise Minnesota school districts and administrators of their obligations under the Equal Access Act.*
2. *Establish a permanent Minnesota multi-agency council (Departments of Education Human Rights, Health, Human Services, Public Safety and Higher Education) to provide leadership and partnership for a comprehensive, coordinated, data-driven process to advance safe and healthy school communities, prevent and respond to bullying/harassment, provide appropriate staff*

training and awareness to improve school climate to ensure success for ALL students in Minnesota PreK-12 schools and higher education systems. The Council should be tasked with:

- a. *Establishing multi-system norms and standards for prevention, intervention and support;*
 - b. *Advancing evidence-based and promising policy and best practices options;*
 - c. *Coordinating inter-agency action, decision-making, planning, monitoring implementation, acquiring and leveraging resources, etc.*
 - d. *Develop and maintain a student and parent call-in Helpline or a Help Center with ready access to support such as mental health services, counseling support, etc.*
3. *Using the US Department of Education guide, "Anti-Bullying Policies: Examples of Provisions of State Laws," the Commissioner of Education and the Commissioner of Human Rights shall analyze existing statutes and policies and compare the components of policies and statutes that have been enacted in other states in developing or revising Minnesota's anti-bullying statutes and policies. (See <http://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/index.html>)*
 4. *Establish a School Climate Center at the Department of Education to ensure that all Minnesota's k-12 students are provided safe and supportive learning environments. The Center would operate within the All Hazards planning framework by focusing on prevention, intervention, response and recovery. The Center would be responsible for assisting the multi-agency council and work collaboratively with other state agencies, especially Health, Human Services and Public Safety/Homeland Security and with school and community organizations and public entities to best utilize available resources on behalf of Minnesota's k-12 students. (See Appendix E)*

E. Findings and Recommendations: Accountability and Monitoring

Accountability and Monitoring: Methods of monitoring progress in efforts to reduce bullying behaviors within school districts is essential. Data must be collected on an annual basis documenting the frequency of bullying incidents by specified standard categories as established by the Minnesota Department of Education and Minnesota Department of Human Rights. School districts must report annually to the Minnesota Department of Education their efforts to reduce bullying behaviors within their schools.

Recommendations:

1. *The Department of Education should develop a mechanism by which districts report aggregated data at the end of each school year regarding bullying/harassment reports, consequences and other outcomes, and proactive measures taken to address bullying/harassment.*
2. *The Minnesota Department of Education will record and annually report incidents of bullying by school district and school building. Each school district shall annually submit a report detailing the number of incidents by district and school building. The report shall provide a breakdown of incidents in which a protected class was involved, with delineation on each of the protected classes.*

3. *The Minnesota Department of Education shall add additional relevant questions to the Minnesota Student Survey specifically related to factors impacting school climate, e.g., bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyberbullying.*

F. Findings and Recommendations: Training for Adults and Student

Training for Adults and Students: Knowledgeable adult supervision of children is essential to effective school safety and improved school climate. All licensed school staff, supporting adults in K-12 schools—inclusive of paraprofessionals and volunteers in supervisory roles with children (e.g., playground monitors, bus drivers, lunchroom staff, and/or custodial staff)—need training on an annual basis in relevant and current strategies and techniques to address bullying. Teacher education programs have a similar responsibility to prepare future K-12 licensed professionals to address the issue. Students must also be given developmentally appropriate strategies and techniques to resolve conflicts among themselves in a civil and appropriate manner, as well as information on how to contact adults to assist them when they cannot resolve conflict on their own.

Recommendations:

1. *Require higher education institutions with teacher and administrator preparation programs to train all prospective teachers and administrators in the methods of identifying, correcting and preventing bullying and harassment behavior including compliance with Minnesota anti-bullying law, State Human Rights Act and reporting protocols.*
2. *Require the Board of Teaching (BOT) and the Board of School Administrators (BOSA) to incorporate in licensure and re-licensure requirements training for best practices in identifying and correcting bullying and harassment behaviors, developmentally appropriate best practices for prevention and effective, pro-social, respectful, protective responses when bullying or harassment occurs.*
3. *Establish and require staff development for school staff including administrators, teachers, coaches, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, custodians, cooks and playground supervisors, as well as service providers, contract employees (bus drivers, etc). Staff development should be developmentally and situationally appropriate and include:*
 - a. *Thoroughly explaining the district's bullying policy including the process of specific protocols/procedures/contact person(s) for reporting*
 - b. *How to recognize and respond to bullying/harassment;*
 - c. *Implementation strategies for its prevention;*
 - d. *Promoting pro-social behaviors and relationships, including the restorative and reparative practices*
 - e. *Compliance with Minnesota anti-bullying law, State Human Rights Act and districts' reporting protocols*
 - f. *Identifying and addressing staff-to-student bullying*

G. Findings and Recommendations: Funding

Funding: There are aspects of creating safe and bully-free school environments which cost nothing. Role modeling of civil behaviors among adults is one such example. Other components of addressing the issue have fiscal requirements. School districts need appropriate funding at the state level to assist them in addressing preventive curricular and staffing needs to maintain bully-free environments.

Recommendations:

- 1. Funding will be provided to all school districts to support prevention efforts and to respond to the social/emotional barriers to student learning, specifically incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and cyber-bullying by providing for adequate services from school-based student services personnel (licensed school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, school social workers, chemical dependency counselors)*
- 2. Require and fund trained licensed school-based student service personnel and licensed mental health professionals, to support students and school administrators', and skilled in assessing and supporting students with mental health needs.*

Conclusion

(To be written)

Appendix A: Executive Order

[View Executive Order 12-01 on Governor Mark Dayton's website.](#)

Appendix B: Task Force Membership

Co Chairs:

1. Julie Hertzog, Director PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center , Bloomington
2. Walter Roberts Jr., Professor of Counselor Education Minnesota State University, Mankato

Members:

3. Willie Bridges, Senior Planning Analyst Hennepin County Attorney, Minneapolis
4. Commissioner Brenda Cassellius Minnesota Department of Education
5. Vangie Castro, Youth Education Program Manager Diversity Council – Rochester
6. Senator Ted Daley , Burnsville, Mn
7. Representative Jim Davnie, Minneapolis, Mn
8. Senator Scott Dibble, Minneapolis, MN
9. Philip Duran, Legal Director Outfront Minnesota , Minneapolis, MN
10. Alana Friedman, Bullying Prevention Consultant and Trainer Safe Harbor, Duluth, MN
11. Representative Tim Kelly, Red Wing, MN
12. Commissioner Kevin Lindsey , St. Paul, MN
13. Lyn Mitchell, Education Director AMAZE, Minneapolis, MN
14. Jacob Reitan , Equality Ride Founder; Minneapolis, MN 55403
15. Thomas Scott, MD Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrician Minneapolis, MN

Ex Officio

School Board

1. Kirk Schneidawind Deputy Executive Director Minnesota School Boards Association

Superintendent

2. Kelly Smith Superintendent Belle Plaine Schools

Principals

3. Curt Carpenter Elementary School Principal Clear Springs Elementary Minnetonka, MN
4. Mary Mackbee Secondary Principal St. Paul Central High School St. Paul, MN

MDE Staff

Rose Hermodson , Assistant Commissioner
Daron Korte, Government Relations
Carol Thomas, Director, Safety, Health and Nutrition
Marikay Litzau, Due Process Specialist
Nancy Riestenberg, School Climate Specialist

Appendix C: Listening Sessions

Listening Session: Common Themes (as indicated by both Community Members and Students)

1. There is a lack of awareness that bullying occurs online, in schools, and in the community.

"Schools are saying there isn't an issue and [bullying] doesn't exist. It is time for school systems to admit there is an issue." - Rochester

"Bus drivers seem to be blind to [bullying]. There is a lack of supervision on buses and there is the impression that bus discipline is lax." - St. Cloud

"The worse [type of bullying] is on the internet and cyber-bullying. Parents and teachers need to be more aware." - Mankato

"Adults need to know when problems in the school are happening." - Mankato

"The adult community is accepting things that are not acceptable." - Mankato

2. Cyber-bullying has been a growing concern for both students and community members.

"Fights are happening online right during school." - Bemidji,

"Cyber-bullying is happening on Facebook, Twitter, and through pictures on cell phones." Mankato,

"Our parents experienced a lot of physical abuse but our generation is about verbal abuse, picking on someone lower on the totem pole...it's about competition. Facebook hacking." – Metro

3. All members of the community, including citizens, teachers, parents, and students need to be educated on what constitutes as bullying.

"Bullying is about powerful taking vulnerable. It happens at every age level. Educate on being helpful, respectful human beings" - Rochester

"Kids don't always recognize bullying." - Bemidji

4. There is a need for clear and concise action steps to both prevent and intervene bullying in schools and the community.

"There needs to be efforts to address different dynamics. I see disconnect between the bus system and school; we don't address what parents say to kids. The kids are getting mixed messages because we haven't figure this out." – Rochester

"Show that staff value the students wellbeing - victim and student who is bullying. Must have consistent enforcement of the rules." Metro

5. Prevention of bullying should occur first and foremost in the home and in the community.

"Parents are the teachers. The school is the tool to get the job done." - Bemidji,

"The school is not the place to lay all the blame. Schools are not teaching how to bully, the kids are bringing it to the school." Bemidji,

"Maintain high expectations for individual student's behavior and overall community. Humanized people involved and provide greater understanding of what caused the bullying to happen in the first place. Helps prevent future incidences and helps healing". Metro

6. There is a need for an active relationship to exist between parents and schools.

"Parents need the knowledge on how to address bullying and how to get help from the school." Bemidji

"Adults need to know that we're ashamed of being bullied. It's hard to admit that you let someone push you around." Metro

7. Lessons learned in schools need to be clearly conveyed and re-articulated within the community, and vice versa.

"We need to give the same messages within the family and the school." Bemidji

"Bullies bully for a reason so what adult should do is instead of taking the kid to the office... find out the reason that they're bullying" Metro

8. There is a need to empower youth to recognize bullying when it occurs and to take appropriate action against it (i.e. conflict resolution).

"I can't wait for my conflict resolution class on Fridays. If every kid knew conflict resolution, there would be less bullying in the schools." Bemidji

"Kids need a path to report." Bemidji

"Kids don't recognize what bullying is. They don't realize it could be perceived as bullying and it looks like. They need to be taught how to stand up for themselves and how to get other students to stand up for other students." Rochester

"Get the students involved. Students want to be involved, if they're educated and that they can do something, they'll feel good about that. Educate on the effects of bullying, that it's not just something everyone has to go through and that it can harm people more than they think." Metro

8. Promote both inclusiveness and tolerance of GLBT, special needs, and minority youth in the schools and community.

"We need to engage all parents to get schools to react better to gay issues in the media." - Bemidji

"There was a guy in one of my classes making fun of a girl with CP...making fun of her walk. It's dehumanizing. We need to learn about different kinds of people and how we can help kids who are being harassed." Metro

9. Students need to feel they have someone that is safe to go to.

"I think when teachers can simply recognize when it's happening and pull the kids aside and let them know that they are there for them." Metro

"Having a teacher that you can trust and you can rely on...they were there to help and speak up for me." Metro

"Adults should build a trust relationship with students. I had a teacher and she would check in with everyone, she knew everyone's names and would ask what was going on with them. She was everyone's favorite teacher. I feel like if I saw someone getting bullied or I was getting bullied I wouldn't tell a teacher who I didn't like or who didn't listen to me." Metro

10. Verbal forms of bullying need to strongly be recognized and addressed.

"Bullying is insidious and not always direct. It's the atmosphere as much as behaviors; hearing 'That's so gay.'" -Bemidji,

"Adults need to understand that bullying is not just physical." - St. Cloud

"Mostly verbal bullying, whether directly towards someone or rumors....that carries on to the internet and Facebook. A lot of verbal abuse comes before the physical confrontation." Metro

Other Unique Observations

1. There is a perceived correlation between violence in the home and bullying.

"There is a correlation between domestic violence in the home and bullying."

2. There is a need for a guideline for the intolerance of bullying to exist among schools in the same district.

"We need consistency from school to school. There is a lack of consistency even within a district."

3. There is too much focus placed on the Adequate Yearly Progress measurement as defined by the No C

"There is so much focus on AYP. What really matters is the well-being of kids. What good is AYP if kids are suffering?"

4. There is concern for how much jurisdiction schools have for bullying outside of an academic setting.

“How much jurisdiction do schools have when it comes to cyber-bullying?”

5. The solution to prevent bullying occurs in systematic changes.

“We need to know it’s not a silver bullet. Systematic change is needed for long lasting impact.”

6. Adults in the community and school need to be more approachable.

“Adults have an authoritative feel about them. Adults need to exhibit patience to encourage student trust.”

7. Bullying should be equally addressed and disciplined when involving males and females.

“There is a double standard of males versus female language. Some kids flaunt it. If a female is sexually active, she is referred to as a ‘slut,’ but if a male is sexually active, he is a ‘player’”

Appendix D: Glossary of Terms

Words: Words includes verbal acts, such as name-calling, demeaning jokes and teasing, and the transmission of sounds through electronic means, and nonverbal behavior, such as graffiti and written statements.

Images: Images include pictures, and other data shared in person or through electronic means.

Actions: Actions include gestures, physical acts, and/or conduct that is physical threatening, harmful or humiliating.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying and conduct that intimidates one or more students.

Bystander: one or more students who observe the bullying conduct.

Cyber-bullying: Cyber bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, or data, including a post on a social network internet web site, transmitted by the use of computers, cell phones, or other electronic devices. (mixture of Maine, California and Patchin).

Social exclusion: is repeated conduct by one or more students with the intent to ignore, isolate, exclude, or shun one or more students.

Off-campus conduct: Takes place elsewhere or through the use of technology, but only if the bullying also infringes on the rights of the student at school as defined in subdivision 1(a).

Reasonable person: Taking into consideration the student's age, developmental level, and disability status to determine if the conduct was intended to harm another person.

Intimidation: intimidation means an act done to another with intent to cause fear of physical harm.

Appendix E: Minnesota School Climate Center

The Minnesota Department of Education's School Climate Center would be established to ensure that all Minnesota's PreK-12 students are provided safe and supportive learning environments. The Center would exist within the All Hazards planning framework by focusing on prevention, intervention, response and recovery. The Center is to work collaboratively with other state agencies, especially Health, Human Services and Public Safety/Homeland Security and with other school and community organizations and public entities to best utilize available resources on behalf of Minnesota's k-12 students.

Key Services Provided by the Center:

- *Policy Development and dissemination*
 - *The Center shall review the recommendations of the 2007 Advisory Task Force on School and Staff Emergency/All Hazard Preparedness to identify policy initiatives*
 - *The Center shall be guided by the Governor's Anti-Bullying Task Force recommendations in the development of policy initiatives*
- *Single point of contact services for schools, parents, students seeking assistance and guidance*
 - *Services include information on laws and regulations, state and local resources, and best practices and research*
- *Qualitative and quantitative data gathering, interpretation and dissemination*
 - *Center shall support ongoing implementation and interpretation of the Disciplinary Incident Reporting System (DIRS)*
 - *Center shall ensure gathering and interpretation of data related to school engagement and school climate through methods such as the MN Student Survey*
 - *Center shall employ methods such as focus groups to guide planning and decision-making relating to emerging trends and issue*
- *Education and skill building, including workshops, conferences, training of trainers on topics spanning the All Hazards Framework*
 - *Biennial school climate statewide conference*
 - *Web-based trainings for staff development*
 - *Regional workshops*
- *Multi-sector planning and advisory processes incorporating best practices and research*