

## Best Practice Recommendations by Areas

### State Level (Governor/Legislature/Agencies)

1. Fully fund any mandated programs or curriculum requirements.
2. Include “electronic communications” in any definition of bullying. (with rationale based in its deleterious impact on academic opportunity, harm to learning environment.)
3. Establish an on-going Minnesota multi-agency\* forum/council/summit 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, and improve school climate to ensure success for ALL students in Minnesota PreK-12 (PreK-16???) schools.
  - a. Tasks might include: establishing multi-system norms and standards for prevention, intervention; advancing evidence-based and promising policy and best practices options; coordinating inter-agency action -decision-making, planning, monitoring implementation, acquiring and leveraging resources, etc.
  - b. \*Include State departments, divisions, councils with substantive work related to bullying, harassment, safe and healthy schools, violence prevention, human rights, etc.
4. Require higher education institutions with teacher and administrator licensure programs to train all prospective elementary, and middle, level teachers and administrators through colleges or departments of education and/or leadership training in the methods of identifying and correcting bullying and harassment behavior.
5. Require training for preservice teachers on bullying/harassment, including compliance with Minnesota anti-bullying law, State Human Rights Act and districts’ reporting protocols. Require training about best practices for effective, pro-social, respectful, protective responses when bullying harassment occur, as well as developmentally appropriate best practices for prevention.

### MDE

1. The Minnesota Department of Education shall provide information to schools on best practices and maintain a resource clearinghouse related to the prevention and reduction of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, and harassment.
2. The Minnesota Department of Education will develop a survey and periodically distribute the survey to all Minnesota public school districts to ascertain the scope/sequence and implementation of evidence-based (CASEL endorsed) Social Emotional Learning programming and anti-bullying curricula. The survey will also address implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and other pro-social programs for students and their families. Survey results will be analyzed in order to summarize existing supports for students and their families and to create a plan to ensure that all public school students in the State have access to social emotional and anti-bullying instruction.
3. The Minnesota Department of Education shall develop and implement a plan that incorporates social and emotional learning standards as part of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. (The states of Illinois and Anchorage School District (Alaska) have enacted standards, see Illinois’

at [http://www.isbe.net/ils/social\\_emotional/standards.htm](http://www.isbe.net/ils/social_emotional/standards.htm) and Anchorage's  
at [http://www.asdk12.org/depts/SEL/media/SEL\\_Standards.pdf](http://www.asdk12.org/depts/SEL/media/SEL_Standards.pdf) )

### **Community (Counties, Cities, Businesses, Other)**

1. Consider methods to engage relevant community organizations in the goal of eliminating bullying and harassment behavior.
2. Establish and maintain home-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)
3. Parents and community should be partners in any bullying prevention/intervention process.

### **School Districts**

Effective, successful school bullying prevention efforts are ones that foster and uphold prosocial 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 the reporting bullying, harassment to adults at school and at home. When bullying and harassment are reported, educator and administrative responses shall be effective, respectful, supportive for all involved. We endorse restorative and reparative practices whenever possible. (Maybe add: "as opposed to 'Zero Tolerance' or other authoritarian rules(?) that can be counter-productive and deny educational opportunities and supports to children and youth"???)

1. Schools should implement a comprehensive bullying prevention program for all forms of bullying, with both prevention and intervention components that involves all\* children and adults in the school. \*Children who are targets, those involved in bullying behavior and bystanders.
2. The adults (not just teachers) in each building must be responsible for creating a climate where education, intervention and follow up is standard practice.
3. Require districts to establish specific protocols/procedures/contact person(s) for reporting harassment, bullying, and require that they provide all stakeholders (students, staff, families, etc) specific training about their use, including contact person(s) for reporting harassment, bullying as well as what responses/outcomes to expect after a report is made (including explanations, timeline, follow-up procedures.) Schools should have a designated person in their schools that a student could report the bullying incident. The staff (Counselor, Social worker or designated staff) should contact the person who's doing the bullying that day if at possible or no later than the next day. The incident will be reported to the parent within two days of the incident.

4. Require (and fund) each school and/or district to designate a trained “investigator” who will effectively address all reports of harassment/bullying to support school administrators’ in fullest implementation and compliance with Minnesota’s bullying and harassment laws and the promotion of positive learning environments for all students.
5. Require (and fund) districts to provide trained mental health, social work, and/or school counselors to support students and school administrators’ in full implementation and compliance with Minnesota’s bullying and harassment law, including supporting training and other efforts to prevent bullying and harassment; assessing and supporting students with mental health needs; and promoting prosocial behaviors and relationships, including the restorative and reparative practices.
6. Districts shall bi-annually conduct a re-evaluation, reassessment, and review of its policy, making any necessary revisions and additions.
7. Districts should include in the policy a process for parents and guardians to report a bullying related situation to the school, which includes name(s) and contact information.
8. Districts shall include provisions for informing parents and guardians about the bullying prevention activities of the school district or school and shall include, but not be limited to: (i) availability of the policy (ii) how parents and guardians can reinforce the activities at home and support the school district or school policy; (ii) the process for contacting the school about a bullying related situation.
9. Districts shall ensure that the bullying prevention policy is explained to and discussed with its students.
10. Districts should put into place, at all grade levels, age-appropriate programs and practices that affirmatively engage students in the work of creating respectful, safe school environments throughout their years in the districts' schools.
11. Districts should assure that all policies and procedures that relate to bullying, harassment, hazing, and related topics are distributed to students and their families AND made accessible in clear ways on the districts' websites.
12. Recognize that school districts already have adopted policies and strategies with the goal of eliminating bullying and harassment behaviors. Requiring a “one-size fits all” approach may compromise existing and on-going practices where districts have made gains in either reducing such negative behaviors and/or increasing the frequency of more positive behaviors.
13. Recognize the value that school social workers provide in addition to guidance counselors and provide funding accordingly.

### **Curriculum**

1. School districts should employ curricula designed to educate students on methods of preventing and reducing bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, and harassment.

2. Schools should employ curricula designed to educate students on the value of diversity in schools and society as it relates to the prevention of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, and harassment.
3. Require age-appropriate, developmental, consistent, continuous PreK-12 classroom lessons/learning opportunities for students across the curriculum, throughout the school environment to prevent bullying/harassment, recognize and respond to bullying/harassment- including procedures for reporting to adults. Actively teach knowledge and skills for: respect for human differences, inclusiveness and empathy; problem solving and conflict management/resolution; multicultural/anti-bias education; civil discourse, etc. 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. (i.e. school staff, teachers, contracted service providers, etc).

### **Staff Development**

1. All staff shall be trained on the bullying policy regarding the process of reporting it.
2. Staff members in all Minnesota schools should be educated on best practice methods to prevent and reduce bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, and harassment.
3. Require regular, consistent, continual training for teachers, administrators, and staff about how to recognize and respond to bullying /harassment and implement strategies for its prevention.
4. Require training for all PreK-12 staff, service providers, contract employees (busdrivers, etc) , coaches, etc on bullying/harassment, including compliance with Minnesota anti-bullying law, State Human Rights Act and districts' reporting protocols.
5. Require training about best practices for effective, pro-social, respectful, protective responses when bullying harassment occur, as well as developmentally and situationally appropriate best practices for its prevention.