



Dear Parents / Caregivers:

We are committed to creating a school culture where everyone is treated with dignity. To make this possible, we recognize that one of our most important responsibilities is to create and sustain a safe environment so our students can enjoy learning and focus on their work. As in any school, we acknowledge that social conflicts and bullying can occur within our community.

We also know that some of these issues can be complicated to define, and people have different thresholds for what bothers them. Even if it's not bullying, our students can get into conflicts with each other that can make it more difficult to learn. So while we work with school staff to create a safe learning environment in the building, we also have the following programs and resources to support our students' social skills in their interactions with each other:

- **W.E.B.-Where Everyone Belongs**
- **Restorative Justice practices**
- **B.I.O.N.I.C.-Believe it or not I Care**
- **Facing History and Ourselves**
- **I.B. Learner Profile Traits**
- **Bully Prevention Assemblies** with Stu Cabe (The Ovations Company)
- **School Community Survey** (For students, staff, and parents)
- **Safe2Tell**

Our Dean of Students, Matt Hughes, is focused on building a community-wide approach to addressing bullying. If you have any questions about any of these programs, or would like more information about getting involved, please don't hesitate to contact Matt Hughes mhughes@psdschools.org.

How do we define *bullying*?

Bullying takes place when one person and/or a group repeatedly abuse or threaten to abuse their power over another person. This behavior has a profoundly negative impact both on an individual child's life and on the overall school culture. Bullying is a process of stripping someone of their dignity, of their inherent worth, by attacking and/or humiliating them because of a perceived inherent trait like their socioeconomic level, race, a disability, sexual orientation, or other traits.

Where does bullying occur?

Bullying often occurs outside of the physical school grounds, yet these actions impact the safety of our students as though they occur on school grounds.



How will the school respond to bullying?

Any bullying behavior demonstrated at school or outside of school that affects our school community will be addressed by the school. As a school, we will take any report of bullying seriously. Bullying will be responded to through a continuum of consequences and interventions up to and including out of school suspension depending on the frequency and severity of the behavior.

Some situations, including less severe first offenses, may be handled by the school through student conferences, mediation, or other interventions without a phone call to the student's parents or caregivers. Any student who is suspended will not be permitted to return to school without a re-entry meeting with an administrator. If any of these consequences becomes a likely outcome, we will notify you.

How can families respond to bullying and support the school?

If your child is the target of bullying inside or outside of school, please ask your child to describe the situation in writing. Please give us your contact information, including the best times to reach you. We will address any problems of this nature as quickly as possible, but please allow us 24 hours upon receipt of your written communication to respond. If you do not hear from us by that time, please call the front office. We also teach our students how to use the Safe2Tell application. Our school website also includes an email for reporting a bully.

Please understand that we want all our students to feel valued and respected in our school. These situations are hard for everyone - parents/caregivers, school administrators, teachers, and students alike - but it is in these moments when we truly show what we stand for as a community. Working together, we can do our best to ensure that our school is a safe community where every child can succeed.

Best Regards,

Penny Stires, Principal
Jake McCollum, Assistant Principal
Ryan Thomson, Assistant Principal
Matt Hughes, Dean of Students
(970) 488-5700