



Wyoming Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM NO. 2011-130

TO: School District Superintendents
School Principals

FROM: Cindy Hill
State Superintendent

DATE: October 10, 2011

SUBJECT: Your Suggestions and Input

RECOMMENDATIONS VIA SURVEY REQUESTED

There is an increasing sense of urgency present on both a state and national level that more action needs to be taken to ensure our schools are positive, civil, and welcoming places to learn and work. For many students, that type of school is not a reality.

Nearly all examined sources indicate that bullying is a significant problem, see the enclosed bullying data. Parents view bullying as the single largest school safety issue in the state. According to the 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey results, 54% of Wyoming middle school students are bullied on school property!

I think we can all agree that everyone needs to become more engaged in this serious issue. We need your recommendations regarding what courses of action should be pursued by the Department of Education. Please go to www.tiny.cc/BullyingAndActionSurvey between October 10 and October 17, 2011, and complete our five-question survey.

Please contact the department's School Safety Consultant, Bruce Hayes, at 307-777-6198 or bruce.hayes@wyo.gov, if you have any questions.

BH:rs

Enclosure

Bullying Data (How bad is it?)

- *About 56% of all students have witnessed a bullying crime take place at school.
(www.bullyingstatistics.org)
- *A reported 15% of all students who don't show up for school attribute it to fear of being bullied while at school. (ibid.)
- *Fully 71% of students report bullying as an ongoing problem. (ibid.)
- *About one out of ten students who drop out or change schools report the cause as bullying. (ibid.)
- *Peak years for bullying include 4th through 8th grade where 90% of students have reported some kind of bullying. (ibid.)
- *Homicide perpetrators were found to be twice as likely as homicide victims to have been bullied previously by their peers. (ibid.)
- *There are about 282,000 students that are reportedly attacked each month in high schools around the nation. (ibid.)
- *The majority of the cases where bullying is reported, the bullying stops. (Olweus.org)
- *Over half of adolescents and teens have been bullied online (25% repeatedly) – and about the same number have engaged in cyber bullying. (i-Safe)
- *More than 1 in 3 young people have experienced cyber threats. (ibid.)
- *Only one in ten teenagers tells a parent if they have been a cyber bullying victim.
(Hartford County Examiner)
- *Over 80% of teens use a cell phone regularly, making it the most commonly used vehicle for cyber bullying. (Cyber Bullying Research Center)
- *Cyber bullying affects all races. Its victims are more likely to have low self-esteem and to consider suicide. (ibid.)
- *A major cause of violence in schools is the media.
(Stop Teaching our Kids to Kill, Grossman, 1999)

*Causes of bullying include: high rates of domestic violence, low standards for how people treat each other, families that are not loving and where feelings cannot be shared, lack of social skills, jealousy, envy, poor home discipline, social rejection, and the very fact that having power sometimes means it is exercised in a negative, noticeable way.

(Uncovering the hidden causes of bullying and school violence, Weinhold, 2000)

*Effects of bullying can include violent retaliation, depression, suicide, lower grades, major loss of confidence, etc.

(www.bullyingstatistics.org)

*Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among young people resulting in about 4,400 deaths per year.

(CDC)

*Bullying victims are between 2 to 9 times more likely to consider suicide than non-victims.

(Yale University)

*There are 160,000 kids that stay home from school every day because of the fear of bullying.

(ABC News)

*Fully 10% of children in school are bullied regularly.

(www.bullyingstatistics.org)

*Teens that report being cyber bullied are more than twice as likely to use tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana.

(CASA Survey, Columbia University)

*Almost 75% of preteens attest that bullying is a regular occurrence at school.

(The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander, Coloroso, 2008)

*About 86% of children between the ages of 12 and 15 say they get teased or bullied at school.

(ibid.)

*A majority of Wyoming parents (52%) identify school bullying as the single largest school safety problem.

(WYSAC Technical Report NO. CJR-706)