

Students

Violent and Aggressive Behavior, Bullying

The Easton/Redding/Region 9 Boards of Education prohibit acts of harassment and bullying as well as other forms of violent and aggressive behavior. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and to achieve high academic standards. Harassment and bullying, like other aggressive or violent behaviors, disrupt both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate such behaviors are expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers. They must provide positive examples for student behavior.

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, teachers and other staff members address the issue of violent and aggressive behavior, including bullying, in other interactions with students. The school districts' approach for prevention and intervention strategies is multifaceted. In addition to programs described below, teachers and other professionals may find opportunities to educate students about such behavior and help to eliminate it through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially-appropriate behavior. Teachers and other employees intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of "bullying".

There are many formal programs in the ER9 School Districts that address both prevention of and intervention in violent and aggressive behavior, including harassment and bullying. These programs include, but are not limited to, the following:

Developmental Programs

- **Project Dream** is a partnership formed between John Read Middle School's Fine and Practical Arts Team and the teachers at Broadview Middle School in Danbury. The partnership believes that children in both Redding and Danbury will benefit academically and socially from collaborative activities and projects. These activities and projects culminate in a two-day experience that encourages respect for and tolerance of individual differences. (JRMS)
- **The Easton Operation Respect Program** is a community-wide initiative designed to foster mutual respect for and tolerance of individual differences among students through school-based, theme-related activities (Diversity Day, student skits on bus safety, Parent University). The activities are supplemented with related publications, such as a bus manual and an Internet safety manual. (SSES, HKMS)
- **Assets** is a team of students, teachers and administrators that actively promotes the importance of the 40 Developmental Assets (*Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors Survey*) as they relate to character and how one lives. The Assets Team visits tenth-grade health and wellness classrooms and each middle school to promote its cause. (JBHS)

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- **Habits of the Mind Program** was initiated to promote self-directed learning. The habits that most closely relate to bullying prevention include managing impulsivity and listening with empathy and understanding. Many classrooms introduce a Habit of the Mind per month and have students participate in different activities related to understanding and practicing Habits of the Mind. (RES)
- **Character Education Program** is a school-wide initiative designed to foster respect of self and others. This is achieved through class lessons led by pupil personnel specialists and/or classroom teachers. These lessons target the district-wide identified character attributes. In addition, the Redding Elementary School Character Council and an advisory program at John Read Middle School have been formed to help promote these attributes throughout the school. (RES, JRMS, HKMS, JBHS)
- **Wellness Curriculum (K-12)** includes the six dimensions of wellness (emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social, physical, and occupational). All dimensions promote positive and safe interactions that discourage bullying-type behaviors. (All schools)
- **Developmental Guidance** is a curriculum-based program that focuses on personal/social development, career exploration and academic responsibility. It is delivered to all students by school counselors through planned, sequential lessons and activities. (HKMS, JRMS, JBHS)
- **A Mentor/Advisory Program** for ninth-grade students facilitates the transition from middle school to high school. This program provides adults in the school community to help students navigate any issues that might arise, including interpersonal issues with peers and/or teachers, academic concerns, problem-solving skills, and other topics of student concern or interest. (JBHS)
- **Counseling Groups** of students are formed by pupil personnel specialists, including school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers to facilitate discussion among students about peer pressure, decision making, conflict resolution, effective communication, anger management, and other topics of student interest. (All schools)
- **“Names Can Really Hurt Us” Assembly Program** provides a forum for open and honest exploration of diversity, individual differences, and group dynamics by students and staff members. This exploration fosters a more tolerant, more accepting school environment. (JRMS, HKMS, JBHS)

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- **The Child Study Team and the Student Assistance Team** monitor the personal and academic progress of students who are at-risk in the school environment and/or in academic work. The teams are comprised of pupil personnel specialists and other school personnel as needed. (All schools)
- **The Crisis Team** meets to address significant incidents or behaviors that disrupt the school environment and any urgent issues or circumstances that affect students or staff members. (All schools)
- **Convocations** foster a sense of community and dialogue between staff and students. These forums allow for an open and free exchange of ideas that address a variety of topics including, but not limited to, school climate, homework, and X-Period. (JBHS)
- **The Family University Forum** provides information and opportunities for discussion on diverse topics pertaining to adolescent development and effective parenting. Topics include bullying, peer pressure, use of the Internet, and decision making. The forum is hosted by the Easton-Redding Community Coalition in collaboration with Parent Teacher Associations. (All schools)
- **Pre-Prom/Post-Prom Programs** are held for all students to provide education and to encourage discussion related to making safe and positive decisions during the prom season. The goal is to increase awareness of how poor choices can negatively impact a student's life as well as others. Following the prom, the PTSA sponsors a post-prom party, supplying students with a supervised environment to enjoy a safe celebration with peers. (JBHS)
- **Project Adventure** is an adventure-based program which includes new problem-solving challenges, warm ups, indoor/outdoor ropes courses, and rock climbing experiences. Through the use of debriefing, students gain a better understanding of themselves and their peers. (JRMS, JBHS)
- **Peer Mediation** is a school-wide program that focuses on the communication process in which individuals in conflict work together, assisted by a neutral third party. (HKMS)
- **Diversity Day** is an annual program that teaches students about tolerance, acceptance and civil interactions among classmates. Fourth graders are offered a variety of activities to generate acceptance and tolerance of each other's differences. (SSES)

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- **International Day for Tolerance** is a United Nations initiative that is celebrated annually. Students participate in a variety of classroom and school-wide activities that encourage students to recognize the value of diversity and celebrates the unique qualities that make each person special. Along with playing music that inspires love and peace, lessons include opportunities for students to examine their own varied character traits that make them strong, tolerant, and diverse. (SSES)
- **Saturday School** is an opportunity for students with disciplinary challenges to complete community service with certified staff at the high school. Working on various projects to improve the physical plant and grounds helps students to connect with staff and to develop more successful decision-making skills. (JBHS)
- **Transition 11** is a junior-year course that focuses on experiential learning and interpersonal competencies. Students are encouraged to practice constructive social interactions within their communities. (JBHS)
- **Transition 12** is a senior-year course that focuses on postsecondary life. Students form a network of support through units of instruction on careers, finance, and skills to promote independent living. (JBHS)
- **The School Climate Project** offers students an opportunity to complete a strictly confidential survey about how they feel in their school. The survey addresses concerns, such as bullying. The project is designed to identify students who are victims of bullying and help them deal with consequences. The project provides critical information in the form of succinct summary reports to the superintendent's office and to the school principal. The goal of the project is to improve the overall school climate, allowing students to concentrate on learning. (JRMS, HKMS, JBHS)

Summation

Some of the programs listed above involve prevention; others involve intervention. Every school takes whatever steps are necessary in individual circumstances to provide student support, via counseling, meetings, parent conferences, and other services for students on both sides of bullying and harassment situations as well as other situations involving violent and aggressive behavior.

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In addition to the above programs, there is training for staff, guidance for students, and programs for parents such as student orientation, new teacher orientation, and faculty meetings, all of which periodically address bullying and other violent and aggressive behavior.

For additional reference, there are other materials besides this document that discuss bullying. Student/Parent/Legal Guardian Handbooks are distributed at the beginning of the academic year and are available on each school's Web site. The Region 9 Web site provides information on specific curriculum strands in the Guidance and Wellness Curricula that relate to bullying.

Regulations approved:

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EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REDDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 9