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Walden University
2015

Abstract

Teacher Intent and Involvement in Incidents of Student Bullying:

A Multiple Case Study

by

James M. Petrakis

M.S., Duquesne University, 2006

B.M., University of Massachusetts, 1979

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

General Education

Walden University

July 2015

Abstract

Public awareness of the negative impact of bullying on adolescents has increased due to social networking and news media reports. Prior research on bullying has focused on the prevalence of bullying in public schools, yet few studies have explored teacher intent, constructive or punitive, and teacher involvement in incidents of bullying. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine teacher intent and teacher involvement in responding to student bullying. The conceptual framework was based on Bandura's social learning theory and Marshall et al.'s conceptual model of teacher intent and involvement. The central research question asked how teacher intent and involvement are impacted by state, district and school antibullying policies. This multiple case study included two middle schools, one in the Pacific region and one in the Midwest region of the United States. Participants in each case included 3 Grade 7 and 3 Grade 8 teachers. Data were collected from multiple sources, including teacher interviews, reflective journals, and state, district, and school documents. Single case analysis involved open and axial coding and category construction. Cross-case analysis involved the constant comparative method to determine emerging themes and discrepancies. Key findings indicated that state and district policies and procedures positively impact teacher intent and involvement. Teacher participants reported their intent to follow school procedures by responding to bullying incidents with constructive interventions to resolve conflicts. Teacher involvement was constructive and direct. This study contributes to positive social change by providing educators and policymakers with a deeper understanding of how to promote learning environments free from intimidation and violence.

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Dedication

My Papou or grandfather, Peter Demeris, came to America from Greece in the early 20th century. My grandfather came to America with no education and a dream to improve his life. He taught himself to read and write English, and he became a licensed barber in Haverhill, Massachusetts. For almost 50 years, my grandfather owned a small barber shop and lived in quiet dignity with a small family in a diverse Euro-ethnic community. My boyhood was filled with his presence and influence. He shared whatever he had, and whatever I wanted, he did his best to give to me. Papou had maps of the United States and the world on his kitchen walls and a short wave radio at the kitchen table. He was a farmer and a hunter, a winemaker, and a puppeteer. He was a barber until his last day when he picked the last fruit fallen from a pear tree and collapsed from heart failure near his home. Most of all, my Papou was an original lifelong learner. No one taught him that, it was inside him, and perhaps he was never aware of it. My Papou shared his life and his wisdom, and he gave me many things, but his greatest gift to me was his desire to learn. My grandfather would be very proud of his first and favorite grandson, because I am him today.

Acknowledgments

I wish to express my sincere gratitude for the dedicated support of my mentor and dissertation committee chairperson, Dr. Deanna Boddie, whose patience, sensitivity, and guidance has led me to the completion of this work. Thank you to Dr. Sharon Johnson and Dr. Linda Crawford, my dissertation committee members, whose input were so important to my completion of this study. Thank you to Dr. Asoka Jayasena for your exceptional guidance in development of this study. I also must give a special thanks to Dr. Paula Dawidowicz, who has been a highly supportive influence, especially in the middle years of my Walden experience. Dr. Dawidowicz taught me so much and helped me to see doctoral work in a special way that excited me and kindled my desire to become a qualitative researcher. I want to thank Dr. George Shutrump for his belief in my ability as a researcher and Dr. Bruce Glen, who encouraged me to pursue my vision in this doctoral journey. When I recall my residency experiences, I often think of the insights that Dr. Salter passed on to me in our personal conversations. I admired his leadership, sense of purpose and joy in research. I also want to thank the counselor of Snowfall Middle School whose text in 2010 set this study in motion and who supported this research at his school. In addition, I would like to thank Principal Marion Muller, and the principals of both case schools who believed in my vision to help students feel safe at school. I offer my gratitude to the time given to me by all participants who truly spoke from their hearts. I would like to give a special thank you to Jasrene Lambino Quinto for always being with me during my work. Finally, thank you to all the young people in school who came to me with their stories of bullying. I hope I served you well.

Prelude

"Anyway, I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around - nobody big, I mean - except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff - I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going, I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be."

— J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Global attention to adolescent bullying and its effects on students in public schools has highlighted the problem of how educators should implement appropriate interventions to prevent and reduce this phenomenon. This attention is partly due to an increasing number of teenage suicides attributed to the personal anguish, lasting depression, and suicidal ideation suffered by the victims of bullying at schools and of cyberbullying on social network sites (Espelage & Holt, 2013; Hepburn, Azrael, Molnar, & Miller, 2012; Klomek et al., 2013; Mayes et al., 2014; Rivers & Noret, 2013; Skapinakis et al., 2011). This global awareness of the negative consequences of bullying has placed direct attention on antibullying laws, policies, and procedures implemented by schools and school districts to reduce and prevent bullying.

In response to school violence in the 1990s, educators in many schools strengthened discipline codes by including zero tolerance policies with exclusionary consequences for students who engaged in harassment and violent behaviors, including school shootings. In 2001, the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Community Act was added to the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), which linked federal funding to laws that mandated school faculty members to implement safety plans with clear consequences for aggressive and violent student behavior. However, the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Community Act was limited in its scope because it did not include student bullying in the language of the mandate. During the years following the introduction of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Community Act, various states began to introduce antibullying laws and policies in addition to existing discipline codes and zero-tolerance policies. In

December of 2011, the U.S. Department of Education noted that 46 states had created

antibullying laws (Stuart-Cassell, Bell, & Springer, 2011). Of the 46 states, 45 states

advocated antibullying policies and models for local school boards to include in their

district policies (Cassell et al., 2011).

In a discussion about making school bullying laws matter, Edmonson and Zeman

(2011) noted that the new Safe Schools Improvement Act, introduced to Congress in

2011, proposed to "amend language specific to bullying and harassment" that required

states to collect and report incidences of bullying (p. 34). Edmonson and Zeman also

noted that the law required public school educators to add bullying reduction

implementation plans to student discipline codes that must be made available to all

shareholders in the school community. Edmonson and Zeman found that 37 states added

specific antibullying policies to public school safety laws. They found "most states relied

exclusively on coercive laws, such as those authorizing expulsion or criminal indictments

for bully conduct" (p. 37). Edmonson and Zeman concluded that retributive and coercive

laws of zero tolerance have led school district educators to implement punitive discipline

policies that include suspensions and expulsions, which have been proven to be

ineffective in the reduction, deterrence, and prevention of bullying.

The ineffectiveness of zero-tolerance and antibullying policies has led lawmakers

and school officials to reexamine their approach to deterring school violence and

reducing student bullying. As a result, in the first decade of the 21st century, an

increasing number of antibullying laws and policies required school boards and districts

to implement research-based antibullying programs that emphasized prosocial behaviors,

including conflict awareness and positive behavior programs (Ferguson, San Miguel, Kilburn, & Sanchez, 2007; Stuart-Cassel, Bell, & Springer, 2011; Ttofi & Farrington, 2009).

In a study about the effective elements of antibullying programs, Ttofi and Farrington (2009) noted that educators have implemented whole school antibullying programs to help students deal with the complex issues of direct and indirect bullying behaviors among peers. Ttofi and Farrington found that several elements of teacher interaction and response in the classroom are directly associated with the success of bullying reduction programs and are contingent on the interaction of teachers with students and staff in a schoolwide effort to create a safe learning environment. These elements include the following: (a) collaborative sessions between teachers and students to determine rules and attitudes against bullying, (b) classroom management that focuses on awareness techniques that support prompt detection and appropriate responses to bullying, (c) antibullying curricular materials that either stand alone or can be used with regular lesson plans, (d) collaborative support for teachers from counselors and psychologists, and (e) training for teachers in approaching bullying with appropriate disciplinary action, including "non-punitive methods or restorative justice approaches" (p. 18). Ttofi and Farrington also found a greater decrease in bullying behavior when teachers and students participated in the program with a shared depth of purpose over an extended period of time.

This study needed to be conducted because limited qualitative research has been conducted about how teachers perceive, react, and respond to bullying when it occurs in

their classrooms and on the school campus (Marshall, Varjas, Meyers, Graybill, & Skoczylas, 2009). Teachers are the frontline witnesses to bullying in the classroom and in the hallways of public schools, and they often find themselves as the first responders to peer-to-peer aggressive behaviors. Successful programs to reduce bullying often depend on the specific response skills of teachers and the support they receive from administrators and program directors in addressing these behaviors (Ttofi & Farrington, 2010). Although research-based antibullying programs build on the experiences and needs of students, limited qualitative research has been conducted regarding teacher intent and involvement in incidents of student bullying. This study sought to add to the research dialogue regarding teacher beliefs and responses to student bullying, particularly in relation to how their beliefs and responses are influenced by school district policies that attempt to reduce and prevent bullying.

The potential implications of this study for positive social change are twofold. This study provides a blueprint for educators about giving teachers a voice about how they perceive and respond to bullying issues during the school day. This study also brings a deeper awareness to educators and researchers about the needs of teachers in responding to student bullying. As a result, educators and researchers may be able to improve district and school programs, policies, and professional development aimed at reducing student bullying at the school level.

This chapter is an introduction to this study and includes background information, which is a brief summary of the research literature in relation the scope of this study and a description of the gaps in that research. This chapter also includes a statement of the

research problem, the purpose of this study, and the central and related research questions that guided this study. The conceptual framework for this study is described in relation to Bandura's (1973) social cognitive learning theory, which is associated with the social behavior of students. The conceptual framework of this study is also described in relation to a two-tiered model that Marshall et al. (2009) developed, which examines teacher intent and teacher involvement in relation to student bullying. In addition, this chapter includes a brief description of the methodology of this study and the related limitations and assumptions. The significance of this study is also discussed.

Background

In response to three adolescent suicides attributed to bullying, Norway became the first country to mandate systematic and formal research for the reduction and prevention of bullying in their schools. Well into the first decade of the 21st century, the Norwegian Ministry of Education called for renewed campaigns and projects in a sustained effort to identify, reduce, and prevent bullying in Norwegian public schools (Olweus, 2006; Olweus & Limber, 2010; Roland, 2011). No other nation had made such a concerted effort to respond to student bullying in their public schools. The Norwegian response to bullying has been influential in the development of antibullying efforts in Scandinavia, Ireland, and the United Kingdom, as well as the United States, Canada, Australia, and Japan (Olweus, 2006; Rigby, Smith, & Pepler, 2004).

The Norwegian antibullying campaign was successful in large part due to the research leadership of one individual, Olweus, a professor at the University of Bergen in Norway. Professor Olweus, who had researched student aggression in the 1970s, was

named as the director in the first national antibullying campaign in 1983 (Besag, 1989)

when efforts to respond to bullying were first initiated by the National Ministry of

Education. Olweus was involved in the following studies: (a) the Norwegian national

campaign against bullying (1983–1985), (b) parallel studies in Sweden, (c) the First

Bergen Project against bullying (1983–1985), (d) the New Bergen Project against

bullying (1997–2000), (e) the Oslo Project I and II against bullying (1999–2006), (f) the

new Norwegian national initiative against bullying (2001), and (g) the Norwegian

Manifesto I and II against bullying (2002–2009). Because of his early success in

reducing bullying in public schools in Norway, Olweus became a leader not only in

researching and defining the complex phenomenon of student bullying, but in developing

a bullying reduction program (Rigby, Smith, & Pepler, 2004).

The First Bergen Project enabled Olweus to implement the Olweus Bullying

Prevention Program in 42 primary and junior high schools in Bergen, Norway.

Participants included approximately 2500 students who reported their experiences with

bullying by completing the *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire*, which Olweus

administered before and after the implementation of this new program. Olweus (2006)

reported that in the first year of implementation in Bergen public schools, bullying was

reduced by 50%. Vandalism, fighting, and other antisocial behaviors decreased as well.

Olweus believed that if teachers administered these interventions with consistency and

fidelity, a safe school environment for students and staff would result. Olweus also noted

that "the attitudes, routines, and behaviors of the school personnel, particularly those of

the teachers, are decisive factors in preventing and controlling bullying activities, as well

as and redirecting such behaviors into more socially acceptable channels" (p. 46). Olweus pointed to the importance of teacher visibility and the need for teachers to respond appropriately to incidents of student bullying in their classrooms and in the common areas of school during passing time, recess, and lunch. Olweus believed that it is important for parents to understand that bullying may have a strong influence on the behaviors of their children. He also believed that peers who are not associated with a bullying incident can play a major role as bystanders who are willing to redirect bullying behavior.

Olweus (2006) understood the importance of defining bullying for researchers and educators alike. He proposed a definition that bullying occurred when an individual is "exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students" (p. 9). Olweus argued that negative actions can emerge in the form of words, physical contact, and gestures or mean-spirited looks. He also acknowledged a power differential as a defining factor in bullying issues by noting that two students of the same size and strength who are involved in a conflict would not be considered an example of bullying. Olweus described direct bullying as open conflict involving words, threats, or physical action and indirect bullying as a less visible form that socially isolates or excludes the victim from specific peer groups. Similar definitions of bullying have been added to the research, yet Olweus' definition remains as a foundational definition for other researchers and educators to consider in creating new and expanded definitions.

This study is needed because few qualitative studies exist that describe teacher intent and teacher involvement in relation to student bullying behavior in the classroom.

Instead, numerous quantitative studies, encouraged by the success of the Olweus' survey instrument and bullying prevention program, have measured the prevalence and forms of bullying that students experience in school through the use of surveys and questionnaires. Quantitative studies have also measured student and teacher perceptions of bullying and some have compared the two. This study will add to the knowledge of how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying may be impacted by state, district, and school antibullying programs and policies. The results of this study may provide teachers with a better understanding of how their responses can shape the lives of students who experience or subject others to bullying behaviors and how their actions contribute to the school learning climate. This study may also lead teachers to a deeper awareness of the skills that they need to help students reduce incidents of bullying in school and in the social media. In addition, this study may encourage school administrators to revise school district antibullying programs and policies in order to reduce bullying incidents and to support appropriate teacher responses to bullying. School officials may develop a deeper understanding of the necessity of appropriate professional development and training for all teachers and staff members regarding this phenomenon. Ultimately, this study may suggest new ideas, strategies, and further research that support the challenge of creating school learning environments that are free of student threats, aggression, and violence.

Problem Statement

Current research literature indicated that a pervasive socialization problem exists among students in public schools. That problem, specifically, is student-to-student

bullying that is manifested in rumors, threats, social exclusion, and physical violence that often causes emotional distress for the victim. Bullying is proactive aggression that is meant to humiliate vulnerable adolescent peers and create personal anguish for them (Roland, 2010). Bullying often causes anxiety, social coping problems, depression, suicidal ideation, and suicide for victims (Kärnä et al., 2011; Olweus, 1994, 2006; Roland, 2010). Victims and bullies often experience the negative effects of bullying in later life, which is exhibited by low-self-esteem, delinquency, and substance abuse issues (Kärnä et al., 2011).

School districts and local and state governance bodies have responded to this problem with a sense of urgency by legislating zero tolerance antibullying programs and policies that require schools to set high expectations for student behavior in school and to apply punitive consequences to offenders (Skiba et al., 2006; Stuart-Cassel, Bell, & Springer, 2011). In addition, school districts and schools have responded to this problem by implementing antibullying programs and policies designed to offer students and teachers strategies to confront and reduce bullying at school (Harel-Fisch et al., 2011; Kärnä et al., 2011; Limber, 2011; Rigby, 2010). Most antibullying programs are somewhat effective in reducing bullying, but the success of the program often depends on a dedicated whole school effort and teacher fidelity to the expectations of the program (Limber, 2011; Rigby, 2010; Roland, 2011; Ttofi & Farrington, 2009).

Despite these efforts to reduce pervasive bullying behaviors at school, the research literature suggests that the challenge of reducing and eliminating bullying behaviors continues to be a complex problem. Many factors contribute to the complexity

of this problem. Dixon (2011) argued that the factor of human interaction contributes to this complexity. Physical and relational bullying occurs at the individual and interpersonal levels where peer pressures or a need for personal power can fuel acts of aggression. Parental bullying and sibling rivalries at the family level may be factors that influence peer aggression and bullying at school. At the school level, discipline and antibullying policies, teacher–student relationships, the school climate, and the physical environment are factors that may contribute to aggressive behaviors among students. Dixon also argued that socioeconomic circumstances and a perception of tolerance toward violent behavior at the societal level, especially through the media, may be factors that contribute to the risk of bullying in schools.

In a related study about adolescent and teacher perspectives of bullying, James et al. (2006) suggested that "the absence of time, resources and teacher training" (p. 41) may be a factor in how teachers respond to bullying. In a study that examined peer-group contextual effects on aggression during early adolescence, Espelage and Swearer (2003) suggested that teachers may foster victimization by "failing to promote respectful interactions among students or speak out against teasing and other behaviors consistent with bullying" (p. 378), and therefore, more knowledge is needed in relation to teacher attitudes toward bullying. Because of this lack of knowledge about how teachers response to student bullying and the ineffectiveness of zero-tolerance policies in preventing study bullying, this study examined how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school programs and policies designed to reduce student bullying.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school programs and policies designed to reduce that behavior. In order to accomplish this purpose, I reviewed district and school documents related to antibullying programs and policies. I also described how middle school teachers define bullying behaviors and how they believe they respond to incidents of student bullying in their classrooms and on the school campus. In addition, I describe how teachers perceive their effectiveness in responding to and reducing bullying behavior in the classroom and on campus.

Research Questions

The central and related research questions for this study were based on the conceptual framework and the literature review for this study.

Central Research Question

How are teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying impacted by state, district, and school antibullying programs and policies?

Related Research Questions

1. How do middle school teachers define student bullying?
2. How do middle school teachers describe their responses to incidents of student bullying in their classrooms and on the school campus?
3. How do middle school teachers perceive their effectiveness in responding to and reducing incidents of student bullying?

4. What do state, district, and school documents and archival records reveal about policies and programs to reduce student bullying?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was based on a theory of social learning that Bandura (1973, 1977) developed and the research that Marshall et al. (2009) conducted regarding teacher intent and involvement in response to student bullying. A brief explanation of this research is presented, followed by a discussion of how this research is related to this study.

Social Learning

Bandura (1973, 1977) defined social learning as the acquisition of values and behavior through observation. Bandura believed human behavior could be described through the experience and cognition of extrinsic determinants observed and modeled within the individual's environment. Bandura stated:

Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action. (p. 22)

Bandura did not believe that individuals are innately aggressive; rather, observational learning and social modeling of aggressive and threatening behaviors can influence others to become aggressive and violent. According to Bandura, external behaviors are observed and internalized by the individual and contribute to personality and behavioral

tendencies. Social learning theory relates to the study of physical and social bullying in that young children and adolescents learn aggressive and threatening behaviors not only from adults but from their peers.

Bandura's (1973) notion of self-efficacy is a construct of social learning theory and a critical part of the conceptual framework for this study. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). Bandura (as cited in Gredler, 2009) also believed that self-efficacy could be further defined in relation to the following four sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Bandura (1977) summed up his theory of observational modeling by noting that "modeling serves as the principal mode of transmitting new forms of behavior" (p. 54).

Yet, Bandura knew that behavior will only be modeled and adopted in relation to several variables. Such factors as socioeconomic status, cultural persuasion, multimedia influences, peer pressure, and personal skill sets are all strong determinants in the adoption and retention of modeled behavior. The constructs of social learning theory, including self-efficacy, support this case study that sought to understand how teachers respond to incidents of bullying among young adolescents in the middle school setting. Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy supports insights into the perceptions that teachers have about their own effectiveness in responding to incidents of student bullying. Since Bandura's theory of self-efficacy directly relates to the behavioral choices and determinations of the individual, this construct was also the foundational

support to explain, understand, and perhaps define negative aggression among young

adolescents. Bandura believed that the notion of self-efficacy supports the core belief

that individuals can control their own behaviors and exert self-control upon the events

that impact their daily lives. Bandura explained the importance of self-efficacy in terms

of motivation and personal incentives. In order for individuals to sustain personal as well

as professional growth, they must believe in their own self-efficacy or ability to effect

change or to react positively to unforeseen circumstances and events.

Bandura's (1977) construct of self-efficacy is important to this study because

teacher awareness of observational and imitative learning may be a critical function in

developing a stronger awareness of the negative interactions that occur among students in

the classroom. Early and appropriate responses by teachers to bullying behavior, which

are signaled by overt social imitation, might help teachers discourage bullying behaviors

in the classroom. Bandura's notion of the diffusion of social behaviors through the media

is also exemplified in the newest form of bullying behavior, known as cyberbullying,

which is carried out through social networks and cell phone texting.

Conceptual Model of Teacher Responses to Student Bullying

The conceptual framework for this study was also based on a two-tiered

hierarchical model of teacher responses to student bullying developed by Marshall et al.

(2009). Marshall et al. separated teacher responses to bullying into the two tiers of

teacher intent and teacher involvement. Teacher intent describes the purpose of teacher

responses within the two subcategories of punitive or constructive interventions.

Marshall et al. described punitive responses as interventions that are meant to punish the

student or send the student to an administrator for disciplinary action. In contrast, teachers who use constructive responses shun punitive action by responding with educative and supportive interventions. They either mediate the problem with students who are involved in the bullying incident or refer them to a counselor for mediation. Teacher involvement includes the subcategories of direct responses and indirect responses to bullying. Marshall et al. described direct responses as those strategies that teachers use to personally respond to student bullying incidents. Indirect responses include such strategies as sending referrals to a counselor or administrator.

In their model, Marshall et al. presented the following four response modalities: (a) punitive-direct, (b) punitive-indirect, (c) constructive-direct and (d) constructive-indirect. These modalities enabled Marshall et al. to further clarify teacher perceptions of their roles and purposes in responding to bullying. In their study, Marshall et al. (2009) used a grounded theory design to determine the kinds of responses that teachers employ when addressing bullying behavior. Marshall et al. noted that while there is a wealth of quantitative data regarding student and teacher perceptions of bullying, few qualitative studies have been conducted that describe how teachers respond to student bullying. Marshall et al. focused on three concepts drawn from the literature as the rationale for their study. The focus of their study included how teachers define bullying, how students perceive bullying in comparison to how teachers perceive bullying, and how teachers impact bullying by their attitude and response behavior. They cited researchers who found that a lack of clarity in defining bullying has hindered teachers in recognizing and responding to bullying behaviors (Besag, 1989; Hughes, Middleton, & Marshall, 2009;

Olweus, 2006). Marshall et al. noted that social behaviors are often either inaccurately

determined or, in the case of relational aggression or indirect bullying, might not be

recognized at all.

In relation to student perceptions of teacher involvement, Marshall et al. found

many students are unsure that teacher actions effectively reduced bullying. In related

research, Hughes, Middleton, and Marshall (2009) also found that "children were not

particularly positive about the different strategies used to deter bullying" (p. 229). They

also found that students viewed "adults as not caring, not acting, and/or not being aware

of it happening to the extent that it was" (pp. 229–230). In addition, Hughes et al. found

that older students often refrain from reporting bullying to their parents and other adults,

because they do not believe that anything positive will result. Students who were bullied

often revealed their desire for teachers to respond to bullying more often, to offer better

supervision, to teach all students about getting along, and to implement consistent rules

against bullying.

Marshall et al. (2009) concluded that the literature regarding teacher responses

has been "almost exclusively quantitative, self-report Likert-style surveys," which they

believed allowed for "potential strategies to be ignored, unidentified, or even over-

identified" (p. 139). They noted that the existing research rarely encourages teachers to

express their own definitions of bullying. Marshall et al. argued that their study offered

descriptive findings that have not been available from the largely predominantly

quantitative literature base regarding teacher responses to bullying. They described their

two-dimensional model as a "distinct framework to conceptualize and analyze teachers' responses to bullying" (p. 152).

Marshall et al. (2009) believed that more research is still needed to validate their two-dimensional model on teacher intent and teacher involvement. Marshall et al. noted that categorizing patterns and themes into the model enabled them to effectively arrange the responses into appropriate interventions. They believed that their model might help teachers recognize patterns in their responses and discern appropriate interventions for multiple behavioral situations. Marshall et al. also argued that this model is an effective tool for administrator and teacher teams to use in evaluating the effectiveness of their responses. They also noted that the model offers easily discernible styles of teacher attitudes and behaviors in certain response categories. Teacher attitudes, behaviors, and responses were noted as critical factors in their conceptual model.

Nature of the Study

This study used a qualitative research paradigm. The rationale for the choice of a qualitative, rather than a quantitative paradigm, was based on the characteristics of qualitative research. These characteristics, according to Merriam (2009), include the following: (a) a focus on meaning and understanding, (b) the researcher as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, (c) the use of an inductive process to build concepts and theories rather than deductively testing hypotheses, and (d) the use of rich, thick description. For this study, an inductive approach was used to understand how teachers in middle schools perceive, relate, and respond to the phenomenon of bullying. As the sole researcher for this study, I conducted all interviews and collected school and

district documents about programs and policies that pertain to bullying. The result was an exploration of each school's approach to bullying, which was supported by rich, thick descriptions of the setting, participant perceptions about their intent and involvement in incidents of student bullying, and school and district documents related to programs and policies intended to reduce student bullying.

The research design for this study was a multiple case study design. The single unit of analysis, or the case, was teacher intent and teacher involvement in relation to the antibullying programs and policies at a middle school in the United States. Two cases were presented. The research sites included two middle schools in the United States, each with students in Grades 6–8. One middle school is located in the in the Midwest region of the United States, and one middle school is located in the Pacific region of the United States. These two research sites were selected because faculty at both sites have developed antibullying procedures and policies aimed at significantly reducing bullying behaviors at school. Participants for this study included three teachers from Grade 7 and three teachers from Grade 8 from each middle school for a total of 12 teacher participants. Teachers taught a variety of subjects.

Concerning the methodology, data were collected from multiple sources of evidence, including initial and follow-up interviews, reflective online journals maintained by the same participants, and documents related to district and school antibullying programs and policies. All data were collected from May 2013 to October 2013. Data analysis for this case study was conducted at two levels. At the first level, which was the single case analysis, interview and journal data were coded and categorized for each case.

A content analysis described the purpose, content, and use of the documents. At the second level, which was the cross case analysis, coded and categorized data were examined across all sources and cases, using the constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009), for emerging themes and discrepant data to determine the key findings. Strategies for ensuring the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of this qualitative research are also presented. The major themes that emerged from this cross-case analysis are presented as key findings in relation to the central and related research questions. In addition, these findings were interpreted in relation to the literature review and the two-tiered conceptual model that Marshall et al. (2009) developed.

Definition of Terms

Aggressive behavior: Overt physical and verbal aggression meant to disturb, distress, or cause harm to the victim (Olweus, 2006).

Antibullying program: Programs created at the school level to reduce bullying in one of two approaches: (a) whole school, in which students are presented, usually in curricular design, with prosocial values intended to help students develop relationship skills to address bullying behavior among peers, and (b) case focused, in which special attention is made to address bullying with those involved such as victims, bullies, and bystanders (Rigby, 2010).

Assault: Intentionally, knowingly, recklessly, or negligently causing serious bodily injury or bodily injury to another person with or without a dangerous instrument (Hawaii Administrative Rules, 2011).

Bullying: Olweus (2006) defined bullying as exposing a student repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students (p. 9). Besag (1989) added to Olweus's definition of bullying behaviors by describing them as repeated attacks that are psychological, social, and verbal and are meant to distress the victim for the aggressor's personal gain or advantage.

For this study, in the Snowfall School District, bullying was defined as a deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm and results in a significant negative effect on the victim of bullying. Bullying may be repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to age, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, and social, economic or family status. Bullying behavior can be (a) physical (e.g., assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior), (b) verbal (e.g., threatening or intimidating language, name-calling, racist remarks), (c) indirect (e.g., spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the Internet, which is also known as cyberbullying).

For this study, in the Sunshine State Department of Education, bullying was defined as any written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibit toward other particular student(s) and the behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other student(s); and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it

creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

Bullying behaviors: Intentionally negative actions that are meant to inflict physical injury by hitting or striking or emotional duress such as teasing, taunting, threatening, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and social exclusion (Olweus, 2006).

Cyberbullying: Electronically transmitted acts that a student has exhibited toward another student or employee that causes mental or physical harm to the other student(s) or school personnel and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment (Sunshine State Department of Education, 2010).

Direct bullying: Overt, repeated physical and verbal aggression on individuals who are perceived by the perpetrator as physically weak (Olweus, 2006).

Indirect bullying: The spread of rumors and social exclusion of the victim or victims; referred to as relational bullying that causes emotional duress and negatively impacts an individual's social status or reputation within the peer group (Leff, Waasdorp, & Crick, 2010).

Self-efficacy: "Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3).

Self-esteem: "The value an individual places upon her or his own perceived attributes and status" (Rivers, Duncan, & Besag, 2007, p. 206).

Social learning behavior: Behavior learned and modified by modeling and imitating the observed actions of others (Bandura, 1973).

Social networks: Web-based services that allow individuals to do the following: (a) construct a public or semipublic profile within a bounded system, (b) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (c) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Violence: "Any form of behavior that deliberately causes distress to another human being" (Rivers, Duncan, & Besag, 2007, p. 144). For this study, violence includes direct and indirect bullying, as well as hitting, punching, and fighting in mutual disorderly conflicts of a physical nature.

Zero-tolerance policy: "A philosophy or policy that mandates the application of predetermined consequences, most often severe and punitive in nature, that are intended to be applied regardless of the seriousness of behavior, mitigating circumstances, or situational context. Zero tolerance policies assume that removing students who engage in disruptive behavior will deter others from disruption, and create an improved climate for those students who remain" (Skiba et al., 2006, p.3).

Assumptions

The assumptions of this study were related to conventional wisdom regarding the negative issues of bullying behaviors on a public school campus, especially in terms of how teachers perceive and respond to incidents of student bullying. First, it was assumed that parents and communities demand a safe and secure school environment for their children. This assumption was important because the results of this study may stimulate a new understanding of how teachers can respond to bullying in ways that support and promote a safe and positive school climate for students, parents, and the school

community. Second, it was assumed that direct and relational bullying behaviors among

students occur frequently in public schools and that school personnel acknowledge the

need to find ways to control or stop bullying. This assumption was important because the

results of this study may enable educators to design more effective professional

development that creates an awareness of the complexities of direct and relational

bullying and teacher effectiveness in appropriate responses. Third, it was assumed that

all teacher participants believe that pervasive bullying behaviors exert a negative impact

on students' lives. It was also assumed that teachers understand that bullying can happen

in their classrooms and on the school campus and that they are required to respond in

ways to control and reduce these behaviors. These assumptions were important because

the results of this study are dependent on the agreement of participants that bullying does

exist among adolescents and that adults can respond in ways to effectively reduce or

eliminate it from the classroom and school. Finally, it was assumed that all teacher

participants would respond to the interview questions with honesty and integrity. This

assumption was important because the perceptions of participants are valid and

contribute to the credibility of this research. The researcher must be able to trust in the

personal integrity of the participants that their answers reflect their commitment to the

integrity of the study as well.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this case study included teacher intent and teacher involvement in

relation to antibullying programs and policies that have been developed at each of two

public middle schools in the United States. The scope of this research study was also

limited to a schoolwide approach to reducing antibullying behaviors, rather than to an individual student approach. One middle school was located in a small community in the Pacific region of the United States , and the other middle school was located in a small community in the Midwest region of the United States. Each school serves students in Grades 6, 7, and 8. Both school communities are similar in population with approximately 12,000 residents. Each school has a student population of between 600 and 700 students with faculties that ranged in size from 50 to 60 certified teachers.

The delimitations of this study further narrowed the scope of this study in relation to participants, time, and resources. In relation to the participants, a total of 12 middle school teachers, six from each school, were selected to participate in this study. Data were collected only during the months between May 2013 and October 2013. As the sole person responsible for all data collection and analysis, I also had limited time and limited financial resources to conduct this study.

Limitations

The limitations of a study are often related to the research design. One of the potential limitations of this study in relation to this case study design included the possibility of researcher bias because I was the only person responsible for all data collection and data analysis for this study. Merriam (2009) cautioned that researcher bias may occur when data appear to be contradictory to the researcher's preconceived theories that can result in a determination to exclude the data. Merriam added that a single researcher may not realize that personal bias may cloud the data collection and analysis process. I addressed this issue of potential researcher bias by describing specific

strategies that I used to improve the credibility, the transferability, the dependability, and the confirmability of this study. These strategies are described in Chapter 3. Other limitations are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Significance

The significance of this study is described in relation to future research on the topic, to practice in the field, to the development of educational policies, and to positive social change. In relation to future research, this study is significant because it added to the larger body of qualitative research that Marshall et al. (2009) conducted about teacher responses to student bullying. Marshall et al. noted that few qualitative studies have been conducted that are committed to understanding how antibullying programs and policies have impacted teacher perceptions about and responses to student bullying. Therefore, this study may also inspire researchers to conduct additional studies about the impact of antibullying programs and policies on noninstructional staff members, parents, students, and other stakeholders in the school. In addition, this study may motivate researchers to replicate this study at the elementary school or high school level to determine if similar findings emerge.

In relation to practice in the field, this study is significant because a better understanding of how antibullying policies and procedures impact teacher responses to bullying may contribute to a safer school climate for learning. Administrators and counselors may gain a better understanding of how teachers respond to bullying incidents and of the professional development and in-service training and support that teachers need to effectively address these bullying behaviors. Students may feel more

comfortable in relating bullying incidents to teachers when they perceive that teachers understand and will respond immediately and effectively to their requests for help. Principals and faculty may develop more effective whole school antibullying programs, policies, and procedures that provide specific strategies for teachers, students, and parents to confront, reduce, and prevent bullying behaviors.

In relation to educational policies, this study is significant because it may provide legislatures, local school boards, and superintendents with a deeper understanding of the problem of student bullying from the perspective of classroom teachers. Results garnered from this study may encourage local legislators and school district administrators to revise or adapt existing school discipline and antibullying policies in order to clarify appropriate teacher action in bullying cases. Outcomes might include legislative and policy mandates for research-based bullying reduction programs that improve awareness and response strategies for teachers and students.

Finally, in relation to creating positive social change, this study is significant because teachers have a significant impact on victims and offenders when responding to incidents of bullying. Teachers are responsible for maintaining a safe and positive school climate for learning. In this study, several teachers referred to being on the front line in responding to student behavior, and all teachers believed that they react immediately to stop incidents of bullying. Yet teachers believed that their responsiveness is often dependent on their awareness about the different types of bullying and their own self-efficacy or confidence in responding appropriately and effectively to these incidents. Teachers also believed their intervention skills and efficacy in making initial responses to

bullying could be strengthened. Therefore, this study may contribute to positive social change by determining how district and school administrators can support teachers through professional development activities that offer appropriate intervention skills and strategies to reduce bullying behaviors. The development of an ethically caring climate will contribute to the middle school philosophy of serving the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of these students. A schoolwide awareness of effective responses to bullying may result in an emphasis on whole-school programs designed to help all members practice the ethics of caring and the value of positive teacher–student interpersonal relationships in a school setting. Students will experience a sense of safety and well-being associated with a school culture that is defined by an ethically caring school climate.

The findings of this study may also motivate educational policymakers to examine how teacher beliefs and responses to bullying impact the number of bullying incidents, and as a result, they may develop progressive and constructive antibullying policies and procedures that support whole-school bullying reduction programs in all schools. In addition, policymakers may provide for alternative discipline and restorative justice programs for students involved in bullying conflicts. In a larger sense, when progressive antibullying laws and programs are created to promote the reduction of bullying in schools, society as a whole benefits because fewer young adolescents will experience bullying, lessening the long-term effects of trauma and depression associated with these incidents.

Summary

This chapter included an introduction and background to the study followed by the problem statement, the purpose of the study, and the central and related research question. The central research question for this study asked how teacher intent and involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school antibullying programs and policies. This chapter also included a description of the conceptual framework based on the social learning theory of Bandura (1973, 1977) and on the conceptual model of Marshall et al. (2009) for determining teacher intent and involvement in relation to student bullying. In addition, this chapter included a description of the assumptions, the scope, delimitations, limitations, and significance of this study.

Chapter 2 includes a review of the research literature, beginning with a description of the search strategies that were used and a more detailed explanation of the conceptual framework for this study. The review of the literature is organized according to the following topics: (a) definitions of bullying, (b) antibullying laws and policies (c) bullying reduction and prevention programs, (d) student and teacher perceptions of bullying, and (e) teacher responses to bullying. The concluding section includes a discussion of the major themes and research gaps that emerged during this review.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The phenomenon of bullying has been the subject of systematic research for only the last 25 years. Much of the existing research from the early 1980s to the present has focused on quantitative approaches to determine the prevalence of bullying in elementary and secondary schools. Quantitative researchers often employ surveys and questionnaires directed at students and teachers in order to determine the prevalence of bullying in schools. The development and implementation of antibullying laws, policies, and programs often depends on statistical data presented in quantitative research. Yet little qualitative research exists regarding teachers' beliefs and perceptions as well as their reactions and responses when faced with bullying in their classrooms and in the general school setting (Marshall et al., 2009). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how teacher responses, as defined by their intent and involvement, to incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school programs and policies designed to reduce bullying behavior.

A brief summary of the research literature establishes the relevancy of this qualitative research gap. Prior studies have been conducted about student perceptions of teacher responses to bullying using a quantitative approach (Frisén, Holmqvist, & Oscarsson, 2008; Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010; Troop-Gordon & Quenette, 2010). Several researchers approached bullying from teachers' perspectives. Maunder and Tattersall (2010) chose a phenomenological approach to interview secondary classroom teachers in order to describe their experiences in managing bullying issues, particularly in relation to facilitating interventions. Maunder and Tattersall noted that

"teachers and other school staff have a significant role to play in bullying intervention; however, little research has explored how they experience this role and the factors that may impact on their practice" (p. 116). In a study about teacher's understanding of bullying, Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, and Wiener (2005) noted that "research is lacking on teacher's understanding of bullying and on factors that influence their views and interventions" (p. 719). They used semistructured interviews to determine how teachers define, understand, and respond to bullying in their classrooms.

Marshall et al. (2009) conducted a grounded theory approach to gain a better understanding of how teachers respond to bullying. Marshall et al. noted that few qualitative researchers have sought the perspective of teachers who experience bullying behaviors in the classroom. Their study, which categorized data from semistructured interviews with 30 teachers in Grades 4–8, resulted in a conceptual model about the intent and involvement of teachers when responding to bullying. Their call for more research to validate their model was the impetus for this multiple case study that addressed the qualitative research gap about teacher intent and involvement in response to student bullying.

Chapter 2 includes a review of research studies related to the following topics: (a) definitions of bullying, (b) federal and state zero-tolerance and antibullying legislation, (c) bullying reduction and prevention programs, (d) student and teacher perceptions of bullying, and (e) teachers' responses to bullying. The concluding section includes a discussion of the major themes and research gaps found in this literature review.

Literature Search Strategy

Several search strategies were used for this literature review. Databases from

accessed through the Walden University library included Academic Search Complete,

ERIC, Education Research Complete, ProQuest Central, Education: A Sage Full-Text

Database, PsycINFO, SocINDEX, and PsycArticles. In addition to these databases,

search engines from the Internet such as Google, Google Scholar, and Google Books

were used. The following key words and phrases were also used in database searches for

peer-reviewed articles: *adolescent aggression, alternatives to suspension, antibullying*

policies, anti-bullying programs, bullying, bullying definitions, bullying effect, bullying in

schools, bullying interventions, bullying programs, bullying reduction, classroom

management and bullying, cyber-bullying, direct bullying, indirect bullying, peer

aggression, peer victimization, restorative justice/practice, retributive justice, student

perceptions of bullying, teachers and bullying, teachers and bullying, teachers'

perceptions of bullying, teachers' responses to bullying, violence in schools, and *zero*

tolerance policy.

I chose to enlarge the scope of the literature review search to global and all-

inclusive responses to bullying over the past 30 years of bullying research since few

research studies have focused exclusively on teachers' responses to bullying. This global

response-theme search strategy led to the development of a thematic historical literature

review over the 30 years of formal bullying research beginning with bullying research of

Olweus (2006) in Norway in 1983. Two queries drove this thematic search strategy. The

first asked what the research revealed about the ways researchers, legislators, educators,

and community members have responded to bullying in the past 30 years of formal research. The second query focused on the progression of global responses to bullying finally leading to teachers' responses to bullying on the front line in the classroom. The search revealed researched responses to bullying in over 30 years including (a) the development and use of student questionnaires seeking the prevalence and impact of bullying in schools, (b) the development of antibullying reduction and prevention programs, (c) the creation of zero-tolerance and antibullying laws and policies, (d) the practice of restorative justice and alternative disciplinary responses, and (e) the response to bullying by teachers and educators in public schools. By conducting a comprehensive review of research about teacher responses to bullying in the classroom, I was able to achieve saturation.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on Bandura's (1973, 1977) social learning theory and on a conceptual model of teacher intent and involvement in relation to student bullying that Marshall et al. (2009) developed. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to describe Bandura's social learning theory and Marshall et al.'s conceptual model in relation to current research about student bullying. In addition, a discussion of how this study benefits from this conceptual framework is included.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning refers to the acquisition of values and behavioral styles through observation. Bandura (1977) believed that human behavior could be described through the experience and cognition of extrinsic determinants observed and modeled within the

individual's environment. Bandura did not believe that individuals are innately

aggressive, but he believed that observational learning and social modeling of bullying

behaviors can influence others to practice aggressive and violent behaviors. According to

Bandura, external behaviors are observed and internalized by the individual and

contribute to personality and behavioral tendencies. Social learning theory relates to the

study of physical and social bullying with the notion that young children and adolescents

may learn and model aggressive and threatening behaviors from adults as well as from

their peers.

Bandura (1977) believed that individuals learn new behaviors through observation

and modeling others. Bandura based his social learning theory on the early work of

Millar and Dollard (1941) who presented imitation as a function of social learning.

Bandura added to the theory of social learning by conducting his own experiments

concerning the imitative behavior of young children. Bandura knew that learning would

become a difficult task if individuals chose to rely on their own trial-and-error

experiences rather than on the observation of others.

In relation to social learning theory, Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1961) first studied

the imitative learning of young children and theorized that children may be influenced by

visually witnessing adult behavior. Bandura et al. conducted an experiment in behavior

modeling with young children by using a 5-foot inflated Bobo doll, a toy designed to

return to its upright position when pushed or knocked over. In a controlled classroom

environment, Bandura et al. noted that the experimenter modeled aggressive and

nonaggressive behaviors toward the Bobo doll. These episodes of aggressive or

nonaggressive actions upon the doll were observed by two specific groups of preschoolers. Bandura et al. found that preschoolers who observed the aggressive behaviors closely or identically imitated the behaviors of the experimenter. They also found that students who observed the nonaggressive behavior were not as aggressive as those who observed aggressive actions toward the doll. Bandura et al. concluded that the "model–subject relationship, is a sufficient condition for producing imitative aggression in children" (p. 582). They recommended that more research is needed to observe children who model aggressive behavior of peers who may be either feared or socially accepted.

In addition to the construct of modeling, Bandura (1977) also contended that self-efficacy is an important construct in social learning. Bandura defined self-efficacy as the belief that individuals can control their own behaviors and exert control upon the events that surround and impact their daily lives. Bandura explained the importance of self-efficacy in terms of motivation and personal incentive. He argued that an individual's ability to achieve personal and professional growth is dependent on a sense of self-efficacy to effect change and react positively to unforeseen circumstances and events. Bandura also defined the types of influence that contribute to individuals' beliefs about their personal efficacy, which include mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states.

In addition to the constructs of imitation and self-efficacy, Bandura (1977) contended that the construct of differential reinforcement is important to consider in relation to social learning. Bandura noted that individuals respond to a wide variety of

events and situations in daily life. Bandura believed that successful learning is more than

associating success or failure with a single positive or negative experience. A wide range

of responses to observations may result in success, minimal impact, or punitive

consequences. Bandura referred to this experiential decision making as "differential

reinforcement" where "successful forms of behavior are eventually selected and

ineffectual ones discarded" (p. 17). Bandura noted that learning through differentiated

reinforcement is not an automatic mechanism. For Bandura, learning through

reinforcement is a process of human awareness and cognitive thought that involves the

assessment of the results or consequences of the response.

As part of his social learning theory, Bandura (1977) argued that learning is

shaped by three functions derived from the response consequences of a chosen behavior,

including acquisition of behavioral information, motivation for incentives, and

recognition of reinforcement outcomes. Bandura believed that when individuals acquire

behavioral information through observation, they formulate concepts of the

appropriateness of the behavior determined by the outcome of their behavior in a

particular social setting. Bandura noted that this acquired information is remembered and

"serves as a guide for further action" (p. 17). According to Bandura, the remembrance of

effective behavioral outcomes serve as motivation for incentives related to the

effectiveness of the learned behavior. Bandura noted that the cognitive "capacity to bring

remote consequences to bear on current behavior by anticipatory thought encourages

foresightful behavior" (p. 18). He also noted that anticipating incentives reinforces and

sustains behavior that brings rewards to the individual. Bandura stated that

"reinforcement serves principally as an informative and motivational operation rather than mechanical responses" (p. 20). He pointed out the notion of behavioral regulation rather than the "reinforcement in terms of automaticity and response strengthening" (p. 20). Bandura also noted that the recognition of reinforcement outcomes might not necessarily assist the individual in manifesting new behaviors, but rather with regulating behaviors already learned.

In addition to these learning functions, Bandura (1977) explained that, through experience, individuals discern the differences in behaviors that result in either beneficial or negative consequences. The manifestation of this experiential discernment results in the capacity for anticipation and motivation to repeat the beneficial response. Bandura noted that the ability to anticipate consequences motivates the individual to repeat behaviors that serve the needs of the individual. This incentive to prepare for future events, Bandura argued, is the result of a cognitive understanding of the stimulus response to outcomes experienced as a "type of incentive function of great utility" (p. 18) so that the individual anticipates and prepares for future events with appropriate responses.

In relation to current research, elements of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory may be evidenced in studies that describe the variety of roles that students may assume when they engage in bullying behaviors in school. In *Rethinking School Bullying: An Integrated Model*, Dixon (2010) noted that students who engage in bullying may be modeling the behaviors of older siblings or parents in the home. In a study about a national trial of an antibullying program for students in Grade 1–9, Kärnä et al., (2011)

found that peers who witness the power gained by a bully may engage in the same

behaviors to either gain power over other less powerful victims or to gain approval status

from the bully. Kärnä et al. also noted that "bullying is a group phenomenon in which

bystanders can have an effect on the maintenance of bullying and on the adjustment of

the victims" (p. 313). Kärnä et al. maintained that bystanders can induce positive change

in student attitudes and behaviors toward bullying at school. Kärnä et al. concluded that

those students who understand their own responses to bullying can have a positive and

significant impact on the rest of the students in the school. Kärnä et al. also concluded

that when students model behaviors that support the victim and discourage bullying,

social learning occurs, resulting in a safer climate for learning.

Conceptual Model of Teacher Responses to Student Bullying

The conceptual framework for this study is also based on the two-tiered

hierarchical model of teachers' responses that Marshall et al. (2009) developed. This

model separates teacher responses to bullying into two categories of intent and

involvement, with subcategories that include direct and indirect responses and

constructive and punitive responses. Marshall et al. used a grounded theory design to

describe the kinds of responses that teachers employ when addressing bullying behavior.

In their research, Marshall et al. focused on three concepts drawn from the literature as a

basis for their study. These concepts include how teachers define bullying, how students

perceive bullying, and how teachers impact bullying by their attitudes and responses.

They noted that prior research studies demonstrate a lack of clarity in defining bullying

(Besag, 1989; Dixon, 2010; Lee, 2006; Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010; Naylor,

Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencourt, & Lee, 2006; Olweus, 2006; Rigby, 2010) and that this

lack of clarity has led to an inability of teachers to recognize and respond to bullying

behaviors. They also cited studies where social behaviors were either inaccurately

determined or were not recognized at all.

The conceptual model that Marshall et al. (2009) developed places teachers'

reported responses to bullying into two categories: punitive or constructive. Responses

are further categorized as either direct or indirect. Marshall et al. developed this model

by coding and categorizing teachers' responses to open-ended interview questions.

Figure 1 presents this hierarchy of teacher responses to student bullying.
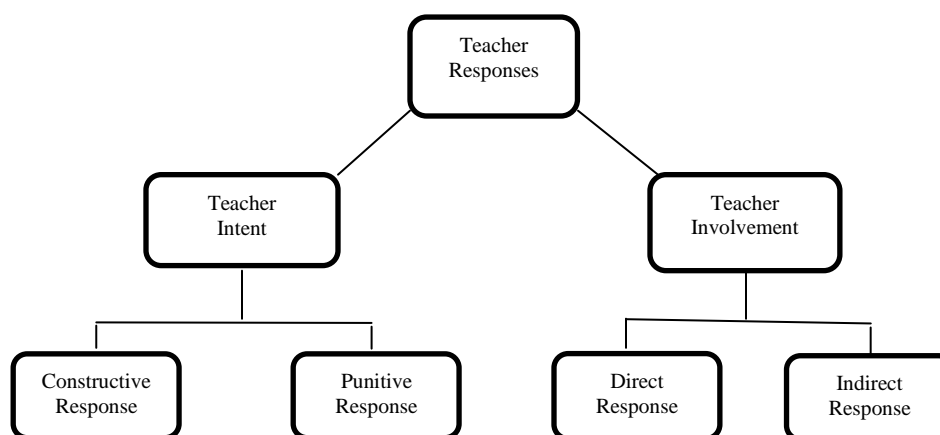
Figure 1. Multitiered hierarchy of teachers' responses to bullying. From"Teacher

Responses To Bullying: Self-Reports From The Front Line," by M. L. Marshall, K.

Varjas, J. Meyers, E.C. Graybill, & R. B. Skoczylas, 2009, *Journal of School Violence,*

8(2), 143. Used with author's permission, noted in Appendix F.

Figure 1 indicates the multitiered coding hierarchy of teachers' responses to bullying that Marshall et al. (2009) developed. Marshall et al. separated teachers' responses into two categories of intent and involvement. Their second tier described involvement as direct or indirect and intent as punitive or constructive. The criteria of teacher intent as punitive or constructive led to the development of this two-by-two model, which emphasized four types of responses: constructive direct, constructive indirect, punitive direct, and punitive indirect. Marshall et al. believed that this categorization of responses would help teachers understand the types of choices that they make when determining their responses to bullying situations that often occur without warning in a classroom or common area. Marshall et al. contended that this categorization of teacher responses might also help administrators and school officials understand the need for appropriate intervention programs and policies for teachers and other staff.

Table 1 illustrates the Marshall et al. (2009) model of teacher intent and involvement, which is characterized in relation to the following four constructive-direct interventions: (a) confer with the offender(s) quietly and to the side, away from others, (b) acknowledge that the behavior unacceptable, (c) mediate an apology, or (d) relate to students in an empathic way with personal experiences with bullying. Marshall et al. described constructive-indirect interventions as the following: (a) referring students for counseling with support staff, (b) conferring with other teachers to discuss the incident and appropriate follow-up interventions, and (c) informing the victim's parents of the

episode. Marshall et al. also portrayed punitive-direct responses of teacher intent and involvement in relation to the following four interventions: (a) physical removal of the offending student or students, (b) determination of punitive consequences, (c) physical restraint of the participants, and (d) ending the conflict. They also characterized responses punitive-indirect when teachers (a) called or informed the offender's parents or (b) referred or sent the offender to an administrator for disciplinary action.

Table 1

Two-By-Two Model of Teachers' Responses To Bullying with Intent and Involvement

Teacher Responses	Teacher Involvement as a Direct Response	Teacher Involvement as an Indirect Response
Teacher Intent as Constructive Response	Constructive–Direct Responses • Pull aside and talk to student(s) • Call out inappropriate behavior • Protect the victim • Make bully apologize • Teacher relates to a personal experience	Constructive–Indirect Responses • Send, inform or refer student(s) to counselor • Consult other educators • Call victim's parents
Teacher Intent as Punitive Response	Punitive–Direct Responses • Remove or move bully in the classroom • Punishment • Physically get in the middle of students • Yell	Punitive–Indirect Responses • Call bully's parents • Send, inform, or refer bully to administrator

Note. Adapted from "Teacher Responses To Bullying: Self-Reports From The Front Line", by M. L. Marshall, K. Varjas, J. Meyers, E.C. Graybill, & R. B. Skoczylas, 2009, *Journal of School Violence*, 8(2), 144. Used with author's permission, noted in Appendix F.

Marshall et al. (2009) noted that their conceptual model does not distinguish between the kinds of bullying, but allows "for concurrent examination of both teacher intent (the rationale of the response) and teacher involvement (the role in implementing the strategy), without solely focusing on the type of bullying or involved student(s)" (p. 153). Marshall et al. believed that the clarity of the model might help teachers differentiate appropriate responses to bullying by reducing the "complexity and confusion for teachers" when faced with "multiple types of bullying and/or participating students" (p. 153). Marshall et al. also believed that this two-tiered model might assist researchers, school authorities, and teachers in evaluating the effectiveness of the interventions employed to respond to bullying in the classroom. In addition, they believed that this model might provide educators with a framework for professional development for teachers about the choices they could make when responding to bullying. Marshal et al. argued that their two-dimensional model was unique because it provided teachers with specific characterizations of their intent and involvement when responding to bullying.

In summary, this study benefited from this conceptual framework in several ways. In relation to Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, this study may shed light on teacher self-efficacy when teachers are faced with incidents of student bullying, particularly in relation to how an individual's perception of his or her effectiveness can impact determinations of intent and involvement. This study of teacher responses to student bullying also depended upon social learning theory in order to describe how peer pressure and social conditioning can affect school culture and climate. Bandura's social learning theory may also explain how modeled behavior might contribute to a safe or

unsafe school climate. This study also benefited from the Marshall et al. conceptual

model of teacher intent and involvement in relation to student bullying because of the

ease with which teacher responses reported in this study can be categorized in relation to

this model. These categorizations will help determine how teacher intent and

involvement are impacted by state and district policies and procedures.

In the following literature review, I will analyze research related to early and

current definitions of bullying and antibullying legislation, including zero-tolerance

policies, alternative options, and state and district laws and policies. In addition, I will

analyze current research related to bullying prevention and reduction programs, student

and teacher perceptions of bullying, and teacher responses to bullying.

Definitions of Bullying

Researchers have sought to find a comprehensive definition that distinguishes the

forms and complexities of bullying, one that can find acceptance within the scientific

research community and the field of law as well as from policymakers, schools officials,

and educators. Dixon (2010) suggested that defining bullying is complicated because of

the mix of personal theories from many people who have experienced bullying. Dixon

noted "personal theories (of bullying) are often a mixture of conscious, preconscious,

and unconscious mental representations, they are likely to be resistant to change, difficult

to communicate, and difficult to test in an academic forum" (p. 13). Therefore, this

section will include a review of research efforts over the last three decades to define the

phenomenon of bullying.

Early Definitions

During the 1980s, Olweus (2006) presented one of the earliest definitions of

bullying when he first described bullying as a recurring state where "a student is being

bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly over time, to negative actions

on the part of one or more students" (p. 9). Olweus characterized negative actions as not

only physical contact such as hitting or kicking, but also verbal actions such as taunting,

teasing, threatening, and name calling. Olweus (1993) added that "there should also be

an imbalance in strength" or "an asymmetric power relationship" (p. 1173) in which the

victim is weaker than the offender or unable to act in defense of the victimization.

Olweus extended this definition into two domains: direct bullying/victimization and

indirect bullying/victimization. He described direct bullying/victimization as overt

physical aggression or "open attacks" (p. 1173) on individuals, distinguishing it from the

less recognizable indirect bullying as victimizations intended to exclude or isolate the

victim from a group.

Several other researchers have attempted to define bullying since Olweus offered

his three-pronged definition of bullying. In another early definition, Besag (1989)

defined bullying as "verbal, physical or psychological" that has the intention of making

victims sense distress and inferiority (p. 4). Besag also noted that bullying behavior is

characterized by repetitive aggression toward a victim. Besag supported Olweus' notion

of dominant aggression with a differential of power between the aggressor and the victim.

Besag defined bullying as:

behavior which can be defined as the repeated attack–physical, psychological,

social of verbal–by those in a position of power, which is formally or situationally

defined, on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing

distress for their own gain or gratification. (p. 4)

Besag cautioned that overarching definitions of the complexities of bullying can cause

difficulties in distinguishing bullying behavior, especially with indirect bullying that may

be manifested as what appears to be harmless gestures aimed at unsuspecting adults.

Besag contended that facial gestures such as a wink or glaring look might be interpreted

by the victim as threatening bullying behavior. Besag believed that "it is in this

interpretation of the behaviour by the victim and bully that the power lies" (p.4). Besag

concluded that bullying is a dysfunctional behavioral process that is deeply embedded

within normal student interactions and is often accepted by the social culture.

Current Definitions

In more current studies, researchers have attempted to link student and teacher

perceptions of bullying to forms of verbal, physical or socio-relational bullying. Marshall

et al. (2009) noted that educators have dissimilar understandings of the various kinds of

bullying behaviors, often confusing playful teasing with pervasive bullying and violent

behaviors while disregarding issues of relational aggression. In a discussion of current

findings about bullying and future directions for research, Griffin and Gross (2004) noted

that references to bullying in the national media differ from definitions applied by

researchers. They suggested that the confusion in defining bullying has caused

incongruence between the research definitions of bullying and the notions of the

American public about bullying. Griffin and Gross pointed out that the "definition of bullying is typically focused on the actual behavior or probable intention driving the behavior of the bully rather than on the perception or experiences of the victim" (p. 383). Thus, this lack of clarity in the definition of bullying among educators is a critical factor in causing differences in perceptions about and responses to bullying.

In a significant study about teacher perceptions of student bullying, Lee (2006) interviewed 14 teachers in a primary school in England. Lee focused on how teachers perceive, understand, and define bullying. Lee believed that clarifying the definitions of bullying and aggressive behaviors leads to a better understanding of the bullying phenomenon and to productive results in terms of school safety. Lee used the following six concepts as a framework for defining bullying: intent, hurt, repetition, duration, power, and imbalance. Lee interviewed each teacher twice and found that teachers had varying views of the six concepts, yet could not come to a consensus about a definition of bullying. Lee argued that the inability of teachers to reach shared viewpoints regarding how to define bullying might not be as important as the reflective process that each teacher experienced. Lee noted that perhaps the definitions of bullying would "change with time purpose, and culture; therefore, they need revisiting and perhaps revision" (p. 74). Lee used these six concepts as a framework to define bullying during the interview process. For Lee, intent is a deliberate action to cause duress upon the victim. Hurt refers to physical or psychological pain including social exclusion. Repetition refers to the act of bullying on the same individual. Duration indicates bullying behaviors that take place over a period of time. Power refers to the imbalance of power between the

offender and the victim, either physically or socially. The act of provocation refers to the response of the victim that may cause or provoke action by the offender.

Lee (2006) hypothesized that a shared consensus among the 14 teachers about a bullying definition would be a key factor in driving school bullying policies, programs, and practices. However, Lee found that only one participant spoke to the notion of shared understanding about bullying. Instead, Lee found that three definitions of bullying emerged from the teacher interviews. The first definition was related to intent and repetition. The second definition was described in relation to episodes of bullying that teachers actually witnessed. The third definition included a broad spectrum of bullying behaviors that resembled a sequence of events from teasing and indirect bullying to direct physical abusive behavior (p. 69). Lee found that no teacher was able to "compose a succinct set of words immediately… offering fairly broad models" (p.69). Lee also reported that teachers believe bullying exists in different forms. One teacher stated, "You've got to grade it" (p.270) in an attempt to describe violent physical behavior. Another teacher found it difficult to accept name calling as a bullying behavior and believed bullying described all levels of negative interaction between two students.

In a summary of key findings and recommendations, Lee (2006) found that most teachers ascribed to a continuum of negative behaviors, but they could not reach a group definition upon which all could agree. Teachers referred to the six concepts of bullying, but "none emerged as predominant and there was no evidence of a sharing of views" (p. 73). Lee that defining bullying on a continuum "at which a 'bullying action' exists at one end and a 'bullying relationship' at the other" (p. 73) might have merit. In this

scenario, the bullying action drives the concepts of duration and repetition along the continuum until an imbalance of power in a bullying relationship results at the end of the continuum. Lee concluded that final recognition of any bullying definition would require revision and reconsideration, which is dependent on the "behaviors, experiences, and relationships that did not correspond with the agreed version" (p. 74). He added that revising the definitions of bullying would be a continuing process, dependent upon social trends, cultural growth, and school and community needs. Lee's belief about the evolving definition of bullying lends credence to the purpose of this study, which is designed to explore how teacher intent and involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school anti-bullying policies, which include definitions of bullying behavior.

In a related study comparing behavioral definitions of bullying in secondary schools, Maunder, Harrop, and Tattersall (2010) used identical questionnaires to survey 1302 students, teachers and support staff in four secondary schools in northwest England. Questionnaires included bullying scenarios with sets of questions for the respondent to answer. Maunder et al. found that fewer respondents could define indirect or relational bullying than direct or physical bullying. They noted that the notion of aggression as a lesser form of bullying was consistent for every demographic group. Maunder et al. also found differences in the perceptions of bullying behaviors between adults and students, and they pointed out that teachers and support staff had a response rate of less than 40% to bullying incidents. Maunder et al. called for all stakeholders to reach consensus about a definition of bullying behavior.

In another study, Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencourt, and Lemme (2006)
compared teacher perceptions of bullying with the perceptions of secondary students in
the United Kingdom. Naylor et al. administered a written questionnaire to 225 teachers
and 1820 students in 51 secondary schools throughout the United Kingdom. They noted
that few studies had been conducted that compare student and teacher definitions of
bullying, and they also noted that little research exists regarding how teachers define
bullying. They believed that comparing teacher and student perceptions of bullying
definitions will assist educators in understanding response and referral rates and aid in
improving interventions that decrease the incidences of bullying. Their specific purpose
was to understand age and gender issues, teacher and pupil status, and offender and
victim issues regarding teacher and student definitions of bullying. Naylor et al. coded
and categorized the responses to the questionnaire. Categories included gender and
status in relation to a number of variables, including power imbalance, intent to harm,
social exclusion, and verbal and physical abuse. Six types of bullying behaviors were
also categorized: physical abuse, verbal abuse, social exclusion, power imbalance,
pervasive bullying behavior, and harmful/hurtful intent. The questionnaire also focused
on the victim or target of the bullying behavior in categories that involved feeling hurt
and feeling threatened. From the findings of the study, Naylor et al. concluded that
teachers help students who are targeted as victims of direct and indirect bullying.

In a comparison of multiple perspectives about school bullying in Taiwan,
Cheng, Chen, Ho, and Cheng (2011) surveyed 1558 participants in 77 secondary schools
located in13 counties in Taiwan. Participants included principals, directors, sections

chiefs, and students identified as bullies, victims, and bystanders. Participants were asked to answer the following question: "What is bullying in your opinion?" (p. 230). Cheng et al. found that educators defined bullying in terms of intent and repetition. They found that students identified as bullies defined bullying as control manifested in two actions: (a) by attacking the emotions of the victim through teasing and mocking behaviors or (b) by physically abusing the victim or destroying the victim's property. Cheng et al. also found that most participants believed that bullying occurred when there is an imbalance of power in which the aggressor "driven by emotional or material needs, abused the victims physically or verbally, damaged the victim's property, or exposed the victims to relational bullying, behavioral bullying, or coercive behavior" (p. 234). They also discovered that bullying behaviors often continue even when the victim demands that the behavior stop. Cheng at al. found that students viewed bullying at three levels: (a) playful teasing, (b) direct and relational bullying, and (c) severe bullying that is meant to cause physical and emotional harm (p. 235-236). Students identified as bystanders agreed with victims by describing teasing as harmful bullying characterized as behavior most likely to be endured without response. In addition, Cheng et al. found that bullying is often "characterized by power imbalance, intention, assaults, and negative results" (p. 237). Cheng et al. found that the repetition or pervasiveness of bullying, a criterion of bullying in the Olweus definition (2006), did not fall within the student conception of bullying. They noted that adult participants described repetition as a criterion for bullying. Cheng et al. also noted that their findings agree with the findings of Naylor et al. (2006) regarding the post-bullying effects of feeling harmed or threatened, but they

added the destruction of property as a factor in the definitions offered by the Taiwanese participants. Cheng et al. (2011) also discovered varying degrees of intentionality among participants, from those identified as bullies who viewed their behavior as unintended to those of victims, bystanders, and educators who viewed bullying as negative actions intended to abuse victims emotionally, destroy possessions, and cause physical harm. They also found that the inability to stop bullying behavior was a notion expressed by educators and victims, but not reported by bystanders and bullies.

In their conclusion and recommendations, Cheng et al. (2011) contended that bullying behavior falls into six categories: (a) physical, (b) verbal, (c) relational, (d) property, (e) coercive, and (f) behavioral. Cheng et al. concluded that these six categories indicate "bullying means demanding rights through violence" (p. 238) and that bullies use power to cause mental and physical harm while abusing personal rights. Cheng et al. also suggested that teachers need to be able to identify incidents of bullying when they occur because their ability to react appropriately is dependent on teacher recognition of the various levels of bullying severity. They recommended that "educators should develop strong supportive relationships with students, and be constantly alert to signs of abusive behavior, and take action to prevent and intervene in all types of bullying" (p. 239). Because they noted a disparity in the severity of bullying as characterized by the definitions given by students, teachers, and school officials, Cheng et al. recommended that a general definition that brings agreement to the severity levels of bullying will help teachers in responding to bullying.

In an exploration of bullying definitions by researchers and students, Vaillancourt et al. (2008) hypothesized that children would define bullying from a negative perspective rather than from the three themes of repetition, intent to harm, and power imbalance suggested by Olweus (2006). Vaillancourt et al. focused on aspects of "aggression, peer victimization, and the development of social cognition" so that they might examine themes that "emerged in children's spontaneous definitions of bullying" (p. 487). In this study, Vaillancourt et al. randomly assigned 1767 students in Grades 3 to 8 to two groups: Group 1 in which students were given a standardized definition of bullying and Group 2 in which students were asked to provide their own definition of bullying. Vaillancourt et al. provided students in Group 1 with the following bullying definition from Whitney and Smith (1993):

> A student is being bullied, or picked on, when another student, or group of students, say nasty or unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a student is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes, when people talk to them, and things like that. These things may happen a lot and it is difficult for the student to defend himself or herself. It is also bullying when a student is teased a lot in the nasty way. It is not bullying went to students about the same strength have the odd (rare) argument or fight. (p. 488).

Once students in Group 1 read this standardized definition, they were expected to answer a series of questions on a survey that used a 5-point scale indicating frequency of agreement such as *none, once, twice, three or four times*, and *five times or more*. Student

participants in Group 2 were asked to finish the following phrase, "A bully is…" and then answer the same questionnaire as those students in Group 1.

In relation to data collection, Vaillancourt et al. (2008) coded the participants' definitions of bullying using Olweus' criteria for bullying, which included power imbalance, intention, and pervasiveness, as well as verbal, physical, and relational aggression. Vaillancourt et al. also coded the data according to the following four factors used in defining bullying: (a) power imbalance, (b) repetition, (c) intention, and (d) negative behavior. A second codification process determined student inclusion of harassment, including verbal, physical, and relational aggression, as well as personality and physical characteristics of bullies and victims.

Several key findings emerged from this study. Vallaincourt et al. found that the primary concepts in defining bullying, which are power balance, intentionality, and repetition, were scarcely evident in the definitions provided by Group 2. For this group, intentionality was evidenced in only 1.7% of the written definitions while only 6% of the students referred to repetition in their definitions. More Group 2 students were able to characterize an imbalance of power as a factor defining bullying, although this factor appeared in only 26% of the student definitions. Vallaincourt et al. also found that most of the students who included power imbalance in their definitions were from the upper grade levels. Vallaincourt et al. also discovered that students were unable to discriminate between harassment and aggression and bullying, which was defined according to intention, repetition, and power differential. They found that 92% of all students in both groups included a reference to negative action or behavior in their definitions. Student

participants in the upper level grades included personality characteristics in their

definitions of bullying, but fewer lower grade level students included those

characteristics. Vallaincourt et al. also found that students reported fewer incidents of

victimization when given the definition before responding to the questionnaire than those

students who provided their own definitions. Conversely, higher reports of victimization

were collected from students who were allowed to provide their own definition of

bullying. Students also reported more incidents of bullying when given a definition prior

to completion of the questionnaire than those students who provided their own definition.

Vallaincourt et al. also reported that students named behaviors when asked to give a

description of a bully, and they noted that their request for the definition focused on

defining the bully and not the action of bullying. Harassment was included in nearly half

of the participant definitions. Physical aggression appeared in one of four definitions and

was more often used by students at the primary level and less often by older students.

Between 13% and 16% of the students referred to verbal and relational bullying in their

definitions of a bully. Middle school students focused on relational bullying behaviors

that included social exclusion and the spreading of false and negative rumors.

Vallaincourt et al. also found that younger students could easily express physical

aggression, but older students were better able to differentiate between the various types

of aggression, including relational, social, verbal, and physical. They found that more

females than males provided definitions for relational bullying and aspects of social

bullying.

In their discussion of these findings, Vallaincourt et al. (2008) concluded that students should be provided with a definition of bullying before they are asked to complete a survey that requires them to express their personal history with bullying. They noted that "students who were given a definition reported being victimized less than students not provided with a definition" (p. 493). Vaillancourt et al. believed that this result may cause researchers to question the notion of providing a definition of bullying when attempting to seek reliable responses regarding the prevalence of bullying.

In a related study, Kert, Codding, Tryon, and Shiyko (2010) investigated the impact of the word "bully" on the reported rate of bullying behavior. Kert et al. surveyed 114 Grade 5 students (n= 60) and Grade 8 students (n= 54) to determine whether or not the use of the word "bully" in definitions might influence student responses "and thus "compromise the validity of questionnaire results" (p. 194). Kert et al. hypothesized that when students are given a definition of bullying or see the word "bully" in questionnaires, they might change their answers because they are uncomfortable with describing negative behaviors of other students. Kert et al. noted that the purpose of their study was to determine whether or not the use of a bullying definition or the word "bully" would have an effect on "self-reported rates of bullying behavior" (p. 195). For this study, Kert et al. employed the following adaptation of the Olweus (1993, 2006) definition for bullying, which posited that bullying is a negative behavior associated with a differential of power:

Bullying is when someone hits, kicks, grabs, or shoves someone else on purpose. It is also bullying when someone threatens or teases someone else in a hurtful

way. It is also bullying when someone tries to keep others from being their friend

or from letting them join in what they are doing. The person being bullied has

difficulty defending himself in the situation. (p. 198)

Kert et al. used three adaptations of the *Reynolds Bully-Victimization Scale* for two

experimental groups and one control group. Adaptations included the use or non-use of

the word "bully" with or without a definition of bullying. Kert et al. hypothesized that

the control group, which was asked to complete questionnaires without definitions or

references to the word "bully", would respond with higher rates of self-reported bullying

activity than participants in the experimental groups. Kert et al. also hypothesized that

response validity might be associated with a difference in grade levels and that students

in the lower grades would be more likely to answer without reservation. Kert et al. found

"self-reporting of bullying behavior was significantly lower" (p. 201) among students in

the experimental group who were given the definition of bullying along with "explicit use

of the word bully in each item" (p. 201) than those students in the control group. Kert et

al. reported that their findings corroborated other research findings about inaccurate

responses by students in their self-reported personal histories of bullying, particularly

when respondents are presented with a definition of bullying, including the word "bully"

written into each item of the survey. Kert et al. concluded that researchers who design

questionnaires should reduce or exclude definitions of bullying and the use of the word

"bully" in an effort to attain a more reliable representation of the bullying climate.

In a study about the identification of teasing among students as a step toward

reducing verbal aggression in schools, Pšunder (2010) explored levels of teasing among

238 students in Grade 6 and Grade 8 from six public schools in Slovenia. The

questionnaire asked students to recall how often they had been teased and to describe the

kinds of teasing that they had observed at school. Participants were also asked to

describe how they felt when they were teased and to write down an example of a personal

experience with teasing. Pšunder found that over 90% of all students, with no exceptions

for grade level or gender, had been teased in the last school year. In an effort to

determine the prevalence of teasing in one week, Pšunder found over half of all student

respondents had experienced teasing in the previous week. Within that group, 5% of the

participants stated that they had been teased more than three times, and nearly 3%

admitted that they had been teased more than five times in the previous week. When

asked for reasons why they were teased, students responded that they were teased about

their physical appearance, intelligence, sexual orientation, or romantic issues. Teasing

issues related to physical appearance included being overweight, facial features, and

clothing. Students who appeared more intelligent than others were also teased more

often. Pšunder found few instances of teasing in relation to someone's family, social

status, or nationality.

In this study, Pšunder (2010) found that emotions felt by students who were

teased fell into three categories: (a) positive emotions, characterized by fun, (b) neutral

emotions, characterized by non-caring, and (c) negative emotions, characterized by hurt

feelings, shame or embarrassment (p. 222). Pšunder found that students at all age levels

experienced one of these three categories with little differences in the responses between

older and younger students. According to Pšunder, 27% of Grade 6 students reported that

they were able to ignore teasing while over 50% responded verbally, and 10% admitting

to responding with physical violence. Only 6.3 % of the students reported their behavior

to an adult. At Grade 8, 31% of students reported being able to ignore teasing, 50%

responded verbally, and 3.8 % responded with physical violence. Less than 1% of Grade

8 students reported their behavior to an adult.

Pšunder (2010) concluded that a majority of the students had experienced teasing

weekly and over 10% of the Grade 6 students had responded physically to teasing.

Pšunder suggested that one way to alleviate this teasing would be to develop character

education programs that would help students learn social skills. Pšunder also suggested

that peer mediation strategies would help students learn solve teasing problems through

"non-violent communication, but also other important social values such as mutual

respect, tolerance, solidarity, justice and cohabitation" (p. 225). Pšunder also contended

that since the level of reporting to adults was low, teachers may not have an

understanding of the depth of teasing taking place among students. Pšunder suggested

that:

> [Teachers] should pay more attention to the relationships between students.
> Teachers have an important role in forming and encouraging classroom
> atmosphere and giving students a sense of security when one is accepted without
> fear of humiliation or denigration. (p. 225)

Pšunder concluded by noting that these studies about teasing enable researchers to gain

deeper insights into the phenomenon of verbal aggression that often leads to pervasive

and harmful bullying. Pšunder suggested that educators develop interventions that include the participation of teachers, students, and parents to reduce verbal aggression.

In summary, research indicated that defining bullying is a critical factor in determining how to reduce bullying behavior. The research also indicated that because a standard definition is difficult for researchers to agree on, multiple definitions of bullying have emerged. Although schools, communities, and countries have been cognizant of bullying and bullying behaviors, it was not until 1983 that Olweus (2006) defined bullying as part of a systematic and formal research effort in Norway. The Olweus definition of bullying was based on intent to harm, repetition, and a power differential. While agreement has been found among researchers regarding the criteria in Olweus' definition, many have sought to expand the definition, based on the perceptions of students, teachers, and parents, which are often expressed through personal experiences and emotional memories of direct and indirect bullying. Research has indicated that students and teachers express differences about the factors that constitute bullying and whether or not teasing can be defined as bullying, yet all three criteria of the Olweus definition of bullying are seldom included in their definitions. Lee (2006) reported that definitions of bullying may also be subject to adjustment because of socio-cultural trends requiring schools and communities to reflect on how bullying is defined in their school environment. Cheng, Chen, Ho, and Chen (2011) recommended that teachers need to be able to identify the range of bullying behaviors in order to respond quickly and effectively to these behaviors.

Antibullying Legislation

Beginning in the 1990s, federal, state, and local governing bodies passed laws and policies in response to drug and alcohol use in schools and to incidents of school violence, particularly school shootings. Therefore, this section of the review includes an analysis of research that examines the impact of zero tolerance and exclusion legislation and policies for offenses of bullying, peer aggression, and violence in public schools. This section also includes an analysis of research about alternative options to zero tolerance laws, such as long-term suspensions or removal from school in order to deter future violence. In addition, this section includes an examination of the research literature in relation to how states and local school districts have responded to bullying by legislating antibullying policies, school discipline codes, and zero-tolerance policies.

Zero Tolerance Policies

Zero tolerance policies first gained recognition and implementation with the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, which mandated that states impose a zero-tolerance policy for all schools against student possession of guns and firearms on campus. At that time, Daniel and Bondy (2008) noted, school and community leaders believed that the concept of zero tolerance toward school violence sent a strong message to all students, and they appealed to the public that this law was a "seemingly clear and no-nonsense approach to dealing with the problem of violence in our schools" (p. 2). However, Daniel and Bondy noted a problem with assumptions about zero tolerance policies because they operate from a "rational manner", which "is based upon the premise that if the possibility that they will get away with the transgression is zero, they

will not do it" (p. 4). Daniel and Bondy pointed out that not all individuals operate from this rational state, but rather from a state of "contradictory choices" (p. 4) that calls for case-by-case interpretation and that points to "the futility of standardized solutions" (p. 4).

In their study about antibullying school policies and programs, Daniel and Bondy (2008) conducted an examination of program, policy, and practice in Ontario schools in relation to zero tolerance. They conducted semi-structured interviews with 16 educators, including school administrators, counselors, social workers, and teachers who had at least 10 years of experience. They noted that the purpose of zero-tolerance legislation is twofold: (a) zero tolerance for the behavior, and (b) zero tolerance for the offending individual.

Concerning the purpose of their study, Daniel and Bondy (2008) sought to discover how educators interpreted the Canadian Safe Schools Act of 2001 within the context of zero tolerance. They explained that zero tolerance as a concept is not presented in this legislation, but rather was implied in earlier memos from the Canadian government. Daniel and Bondy could only "point to the processes and outcomes of the [Canadian Safe Schools Act] as perceived by professionals involved in its implementation", and they believed that it is not "feasible to draw conclusions for all schools from the emerging themes" (p. 8). They categorized their findings into four themes. The first theme concerns the "perceived positive impact" (p.8) that the Safe Schools Act (2001) achieves for a safe school culture. Participants favored this legislation because it provides clear and consistent guidelines that clarify consequences

for inappropriate and unacceptable student behaviors (p. 8). In relation to the second

theme of deterrence, Daniel and Bondy found that this legislation does not deter special

needs students or those students who are "dealing with a lot of issues" (p. 9) from

partaking in peer aggression or acts of violence. Respondents believed that many

students impacted by suspensions and expulsions related to the Safe Schools Act are not

capable of understanding the consequences of their behaviors. The third theme concerns

a lack of resources, and Daniel and Bondy found that all respondents believed that more

resources are needed to provide support services for at-risk students. Instead of

suspending or expelling students, some of the participants believed that alternative

classrooms and counseling support from behavioral health specialists should be provided.

The fourth theme related to issues of fairness and equity, and none of the participants

believed that ethnic and racial minority groups are unfairly treated. When Daniel and

Bondy pointed out that prior research indicated discrimination against racial and ethnic

minorities in Canadian schools, they noted that "our participants declared that it did not

happen at their school" (p. 13). Daniel and Bondy concluded that while all the

participants agreed that suspensions and expulsions are not a deterrent to behavior, they

still retained the notion that exclusionary consequences often act as a deterrent in

preventing similar behaviors by other students. Daniel and Bondy suggested that

restorative justice could be used to help the offender make amends to the victim in

contrast to the zero tolerance policies of suspension and exclusion from school that often

includes criminal referrals to juvenile court. Daniel and Bondy urged the Ontario schools

to consider the progressive and forgiving aspects of restorative justice for inclusion in their discipline code.

In a report to the American Psychological Association, Skiba et al. (2006) discussed the effectiveness of zero tolerance policies in schools. In this report, Skiba et al. explained that zero tolerance policies mandate the application of predetermined consequences, most often severe and punitive in nature, that are intended to be applied regardless of the seriousness of the behavior, negating circumstances, or situational context. They noted that the zero tolerance philosophy focuses on creating safe school climates, free of violence, with consequences meant to deter others from violent behaviors through the removal and exclusion of students found engaged in violent or hurtful actions to others. For this report, Skiba et al. were commissioned by the American Psychological Association to "examine the evidence concerning the effects of zero tolerance policies" and "the assumptions that underlie zero tolerance policies and all data relevant to testing those assumptions in practice" (p. 4). Skiba et al. noted that their task force examined the "effects of zero tolerance policies of exclusion upon students of color and those with disabilities" in an effort to understand equity when determining consequences mandated by zero tolerance policy.

Skiba et al. (2006) reported their findings in six areas: (a) safety and discipline, (b) impact on ethnic and racial groups and students with disabilities, (c) psychological effect upon adolescents, (d) juvenile justice, (e) negative and positive effect on students and families, and (f) alternatives to zero tolerance. In the first area of improving safety and discipline through zero tolerance policies, Skiba et al. sought to determine the

relevance of five suppositions used to support zero tolerance policies, and they found that their data revealed contradictory results for each of the five suppositions. First, Skiba et al. found that "serious and deadly violence" is a small fraction of reported school violence. They noted that school violence has decreased since the 1980s. Second, Skiba et al. found that zero tolerance policies do not support school discipline and are often applied inconsistently in schools. Third, they found that "the removal of disruptive students will result in a safer climate for others" (p. 5) is untrue. Skiba et al. found that educators who depend on exclusionary consequences such as suspensions and expulsions appear to have less positive school climates with indicators of negative student achievement. Fourth, Skiba et al. found that zero tolerance policies do not appear to deter negative student behaviors. They noted that consequences of exclusion such as suspension "appears to predict higher future rates of misbehavior" (p. 6) and are often associated with increasing drop-out rates and further absenteeism. Fifth, according to Skiba et al., the notion that parents and communities support zero tolerance is not conclusive, especially when there is a general perception that zero tolerance policies of exclusion put students' academic freedom at risk.

In the second area of zero tolerance consequences in relation to their impact on students with learning disabilities or students from ethnic and racial minorities, Skiba et al. (2006) found that policies of exclusion in schools have been employed in disproportionate amounts with African American, Latino American, and learning disabled students. They found no evidence that students from ethnic and racial minorities exhibited higher rates of violence than other students, and they suggested that such

disciplinary consequences are often subjective and "due to a lack of teacher preparation in classroom management or cultural competence" (p. 7).

In the third area of psychological impact, Skiba et al. (2006) found that the implementation of zero tolerance policies has little impact on the developmental and psychosocial maturity of adolescents. They noted that recent brain research has shown that the adolescent brain is still in a developmental state, which may lead adolescents to take higher risks with little care for the results of their behavioral choices. Skiba et al. argued that those educators who implement zero tolerance consequences often do not consider the developmental immaturity displayed by the judgment of the offending adolescent. Skiba et al. noted that before initiating exclusionary consequences, educators should consider whether the offense poses a "threat to safety" and consider the "long-term negative consequences of zero tolerance policies, especially when such lapses in judgment appear to developmentally normative" (p. 9). They noted that the zero tolerance philosophy is not tolerant toward the developmental immaturity of adolescents.

In relation to their key findings, Skiba et al. (2006) noted that an increase in the use of zero tolerance policies often creates a closer relationship between schools and the justice system. Zero tolerance has compelled educators in schools to use security technology, such as cameras and metal detectors, security guards and school resource officers, and student profiling or identification of at-risk or problem students by comparing actions to previous offenders. However, Skiba et al. noted that research does not support these methods as effective deterrents to school violence or that they contribute to a safe school environment. Skiba et al. also reported that little empirical

research has been conducted about the effects, negative or positive, of zero tolerance

policies on families and communities. They noted that while it may be assumed that the

consequences of zero tolerance policies may contribute to "student shame, alienation,

rejection" (p. 11) and may negatively impact the self-esteem and mental health of the

adolescent, little research has proven this assumption. They also noted that few

researchers have investigated the impact of zero tolerance policies on families and

communities, and they called for more research in this area.

In their final recommendations, Skiba et al. (2006) presented alternative responses

to zero tolerance policies that include "primary prevention strategies for all students,

secondary prevention strategies for those who may be at risk for violence and disruption,

and tertiary strategies that target those students who have already engaged in disruptive

or violent behavior" (p. 12). Skiba et al. suggested that educators consider employing

these three levels of responses while retaining zero tolerance policies for violent incidents

that threaten the safety of the school. The primary level of prevention response should

be manifested in a whole school anti-bullying program. The secondary level of response

should be manifested in threat assessments conducted by counseling and behavioral

health personnel. The tertiary response should be manifested in restorative justice that

brings the offender and victim together for mediation and reconciliation without fear of

retaliation or exclusion from school. Skiba et al. concluded that the value of a school

plan for disciplinary action might enable students to achieve academic excellence in a

safe school environment. They contended that zero tolerance policies of exclusion, in

some cases subjectively determined, act as a threat to safeguarding the academic freedom

for all students. Skiba et al. recommended that zero tolerance policies should be reformed and that alternative programs be added to the discipline policies and practices of schools and school districts. They also recommended that zero tolerance policies be revised, offering determinations with more flexibility and that teachers and staff be trained as the "first line of communication with students and parents", particularly in cases of disruptive and aggressive incidents toward peers (p.13). In addition, they recommended that responses by teachers and administrators take into account adolescent developmental behaviors when meting out consequences that are fair, consistent, and suitable to the seriousness of the offense. Recommendations also included training for teachers in classroom management that is both culturally and ethnically sensitive as well as informative to the wide range of bullying behaviors and levels of harassment that students may experience in the classroom and common areas of the school. Skiba et al. concluded that zero tolerance policies have failed to help educators lessen violent student behavior. Thus, their study indicated the need for a revision of zero tolerance policies to include other methods of disciplinary practices that are conducive to building a positive school climate for learning.

In a study about reforming the discipline management process in schools, Kajs (2006) argued that school districts with zero tolerance policies tend to "exclude pertinent explanations and common sense solutions to address student infractions" (p. 25). Kajs also contended that consequences such as suspensions and expulsions can cause severe harm to young student offenders. In order to support this argument against zero tolerance, Kajs (2006) examined three case studies that demonstrated the application of

consequences determined by the school's zero tolerance policy. Kajs believed that these case studies provided evidence of zero tolerance consequences that were unreasonable and excessive. Researchers who conducted the first case study described a 16 year old student who was expelled for having a butter knife in his truck bed. The butter knife belonged to his grandmother and had accidentally fallen into the back of the truck. Kajs described the second case study of a zero tolerance policy in which a student purchased a knife from a male teacher with his mother's permission. The student was expelled, even though the male teacher resigned because of his misconduct. In the third case study, a student, age 13, was expelled because he brought a South Korean pencil sharpener to school. The blade of the instrument was two inches long and was deemed to be a dangerous instrument. Kajs argued that the lack of common sense displayed in these three cases demanded flexibility from administrators in terms of their discretion, fairness, and consistency when applying consequences. In the conclusion, Kajs recommended that administrators consider several factors when determining consequences for serious offenses, including the student's age, special learning needs, prior history, circumstances of his or her participation, and impact of the offense upon self and others. Kajs noted that these factors could serve as guidelines for the application of alternative disciplinary interventions. Kajs concluded that, in order to avoid determinations based solely on zero tolerance policy, school administrators should be firm and fair, yet consistent, in their applications of disciplinary consequences.

Alternative Options

Several other options to zero tolerance policies emerged in the research literature. McCluskey et al. (2008) sought to determine how the restorative practice approach might foster a safe and positive whole school environment that promotes positive relationships and academic success while decreasing disciplinary practices of punishment and exclusion. McCluskey et al. researched the outcomes of a restorative practice pilot project in three school districts in Scotland. The expectations of the program focused on the development of character traits such as responsibility, respect, and empathy. The program also focused on the reduction of bullying and peer victimization through informal and formal restorative conferences. McCluskey et al. conducted their study in 18 schools. The research team employed group and individual interviews with students and staff, observations of school activities, and analysis of school documentation. They also conducted focus group sessions with the local authorities and with students and staff at each school that they were responsible for overseeing. McCluskey et al. coded all interview responses and categorized emerging themes in relation to individual and group experiences, interpersonal relationships, student needs, and cultural demographics.

McCluskey et al. (2008) found that the concept of restorative practice could be described as on "a continuum ranging from whole school to highly individualized approaches" (p. 409). School staff were allowed to develop their own restorative practice strategies according to their individual needs. McCluskey et al. also noted that restorative practice was a different concept than restorative justice. They defined restorative practice as an approach to dealing with criminal behaviors such as harmful

bullying and harassment by enabling the offender to make amends to the victim who takes an active part in the restorative conference. McCluskey et al. described restorative justice as "professionals working with young people who offend" (p. 407), a process that is not oriented to the whole school community. They found that schools "became identifiably calmer and pupils generally more positive about their whole school experience" when restorative practices were used. They also reported that the staff was comfortable with the procedures of restorative practice. McCloskey et al. also found that conflict resolution skills for students had improved because educators reported a decrease in suspensions and disciplinary referrals. McCloskey et al. noted that educators who were ready to adapt to change found the highest success rates in developing strong relationships among all members of the school culture. They also found that staff members had some difficulty adapting their discipline policy to the restorative practice model. While teachers believed that restorative practice might help in daily minor classroom situations, they reported mixed opinions about its effectiveness in serious incidents of peer aggression. In fact, most educators still held on to exclusion for specific kinds of student behavior, and the question remains as to whether or not the maintenance of punitive behavior management could give way to the process and procedures of restorative practice. McCluskey et al. also found "a clear positive impact on relationships, seen in the views and actions of staff and pupils and in a reduction of playground incidents, discipline referrals, exclusion and need for external support" (p. 415). They concluded that the restorative practice model enables a school organization to develop a safe and secure environment and offers the opportunity for educators to depart

from punitive and exclusionary discipline determinations to a more restorative

disciplinary outcome for both victim and offender.

In another study of alternative options to zero tolerance policies in schools, Teske

(2011) presented a case study of a multi-integrated systems approach to improving

outcomes for adolescents. The setting for this case study was a juvenile court in Clayton

County, Georgia that instituted this systems approach as a response to the negative effects

of zero tolerance policies. The court noted that once police officers were assigned to

middle schools and high schools, the number of court referrals for misdemeanors such as

fighting, disorderly conduct, and disruptive behavior had risen sharply. Teske noted that,

by 2004, the number of court referrals had increased to 1248% since the mid-1990s.

Teske noted that these referrals were handled by school officials prior to the placement of

police officers on every campus.

Teske (2011) described the court's response plan, known as the school reduction

referral protocol, in relation to three response levels. The first response is the school's

response to a first time offender, which is a warning to the parents. A second offense

places a student in a conflict resolution programs. The third offense refers the student to

juvenile court. Teske noted that once this protocol was implemented, court referrals

decreased by 67%. Since police officers did not have to spend time addressing

misdemeanor offenses, they could focus on deterring felonious activities, which dropped

by over 30%. Teske noted the reduction of referrals for students from ethnic and racial

minority groups diminished by 43%. After the school reduction referral protocol had

been established, there were fewer incidents of weapons on campus as indicated by a

73% reduction in student possession of weapons on campus. The move from a zero

tolerance policy to the school referral reduction protocol also had an impact on

graduation rates, which increased by 20%. The court system reported that "the juvenile

felony rate in Clayton County reached an all-time high, but declined 51% after creating

the integrated systems" (p. 93). Teske concluded that a multi-integrated systems

approach supported by clear objectives enables educators to employ appropriate

interventions in relation to the seriousness of the offense. Teske argued that the multi-

integrated systems approach has a direct impact on the effectiveness of those responding

to the needs of the individual offender while lessening the negative impact on his or her

learning.

In a related discussion about school bullying and restorative justice, Morrison

(2006) argued that four experiential levels of bullying exist: the bully, the victim, the

non-bully/victim, and the bully/victim. Morrison noted that "restorative justice

interventions work from an emotional base and build a positive affect" (p. 389) and can

be used to address the issues of shame, pride, and respect within the four experiential

levels of bullying in school. Morrison used three response theories, including

unacknowledged shame, re-integrative shaming theory, and procedural justice theory, to

examine the notion of restorative justice as a positive factor in bullying interventions.

In relation to data collection, Morrison (2006) administered a questionnaire to 581

families from 32 schools, public and private, in Australia. Parents and students were

given individual questionnaires. Students returned 365 questionnaires, and after the

elimination of incomplete or invalid responses, Morrison used 307 questionnaires to

create four groups of students. The four groups included non-bully/non victim, victim, bully, and both bully/victim. Sections in all questionnaires that referred to bullying were prefaced by a definition for bullying. The *Peer Relations Questionnaire* focused on three areas of peer aggression for respondents to consider, which included (a) participation in bullying, (b) victimization experiences, and (c) experiences that may have caused shame or embarrassment. Students also responded to issues of individual respect, peer-group values, and school pride.

Concerning key findings, Morrison (2006) discovered that students who regarded themselves as victims scored highest in the shame displacement category regarding shame management. In contrast, those students in the bully group were less involved with personal shame issues. In relation to respect, students scored highest in the bully and non-participant groups and lowest in the victim and bully/victim group. The highest level of pride occurred in the non-participant group with the bully/victim group reporting the lowest feeling of pride. A large separation was found between the high scores of emotional value in the bully and nonbully group in comparison to the low sense of value among the members of the victim and bully victim group. Morrison also noted a pattern of consistency across the four groups and concluded that issues of shame were strongly characterized in each of the four groups. Morrison also found restorative justice conferences and discussion circles as effective interventions to incidents of school bullying. Morrison recommended that interventions through social and emotional shame management skills training along with restorative justice support interventions might help counter the negative effects of bullying. Morrison concluded that an antibullying policy

that implements the strategies of restorative justice, such as community circles and positive bully/victim conferencing, may provide more support for students who are impacted by bullying and who may be struggling with shame, a loss of self-respect, and low self-esteem.

State and District Laws and Policies

In a study about making school bully laws matter, Edmondson and Zeman (2011) examined whether or not state anti-bullying legislation corresponds with the *Circle of Courage* bullying prevention model designed to create a supportive school climate with positive expectations and interventions that reduce bullying behaviors. The themes of the *Circle of Courage* are similar to the themes Daniel and Bondy (2008) presented that are designed to foster equity and fairness in order to promote a positive impact on behavior. In their study, Edmonson and Zeman noted that the NCLB Act of 2001 included the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Community Act, which connected school funding to states enacting school safety legislation. At that time, Edmonson and Zeman noted that federal legislation was pending that would amend the Safe and Drug Free Schools Act to require states to legislate laws that address and report bullying. Pending legislation would also require the inclusion of polices about bullying in student codes of conduct. States would be required to clarify complaint procedures specific to bullying incidents in schools.

In relation to the methodology of their study, Edmondson and Zeman (2011) collected "public school laws from online legislative depositories of archived state statutes" (p. 35). They chose laws that used language that referred to bullying and peer victimization. Their research question stated: "Among states that legally mandate public

schools to address bullying, how extensively have they incorporated language

representing the themes of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity?" (p. 35).

Once the state legislation was chosen, Edmonson and Zeman coded the data in relation to

these four themes, which are identified as the constructs of the *Circle of Courage* model.

If at least one of four themes were present in the state law, Edmonson and Zeman

recorded a Yes. If a state law had none of the four themes, the researchers recorded a No.

Edmonson and Zeman indicated that a Yes was categorized as a 1 and a No was recorded

as a 0 for statistical data analysis.

Concerning the results of this meta-analysis, Edmondson and Zeman (2011)

found "thirty-seven states (74%) wrote specific bully-related policies into their public

school laws" (p. 36). They also found that 81% of all states included behavioral

expectations and consequences. They noted that the independence theme was most

evident and appeared in the laws of 19 states (51%). The independence theme focused on

helping students make the right choices. Mastery appeared as the second most prevalent

theme in 15 of 38 states (41%). The theme of mastery indicated the existence of

programs designed to help students make better choices through such programs as

character education and conflict resolution. Edmondson and Zeman found that

generosity or the building of a caring culture was evident in 13 states, while belonging,

characterized by citizenship and programs of inclusion, was evident in 6 states (16%).

Edmondson and Zeman noted that "most states relied exclusively on coercive laws such

as those authorizing expulsion or criminal indictments for bully conduct" (p. 37). They

believed that educators may have sensed legislative pressure to satisfy the law by

initiating extreme consequences of a zero tolerance policy. They recommended that

educators seeking to improve or adapt the school's bullying and discipline policy might

compare its policy language to the four themes of the *Circle of Courage* model.

Edmondson and Zeman concluded that educators might find added success in building a

positive school culture and climate by reflecting on their existing policies and introducing

independence, mastery, generosity, and belonging to their vision and mission for a safe

school.

In another study about state laws and policies that address bullying in schools,

Limber and Small (2003) conducted a review of 15 states in 2003 that legislated anti-

bullying policies. Limber and Small found a wide range of definitions for bullying in the

statutes. They described some laws as calling for school antibullying policy development

with specific punitive consequences for perpetrators and support for those victimized.

They found other laws mandating school boards to add antibullying programs to their

local anti-bullying policies. Limber and Small suggested that educators at the state level

utilize definitions of bullying that are closely aligned with the research model for

defining bullying as described by Olweus (1993). They argued that state legislators

should endorse bullying prevention programs supported by research and avoid using

inflexible policies of exclusion for offenders.

In a related study about antibullying legislation from a public health perspective,

Srabstein, Berkman, and Pyntikova (2008) examined all state laws that addressed

bullying from 1994. In relation to the findings of their study, Srabstein et al. (2008)

discovered that 35 states had legislated antibullying laws by June of 2007, an addition of

20 states to the15 states with antibullying laws previously reviewed by Limber and Small (2003). Srabstein et al. found that educators in 21 states had acknowledged that bullying negatively impacts the health of the victim. Srabstein et al. also pointed to the severity of bullying on the physical and mental health of students, causing them to stay home from school due to fears of being bullied, as well as from "physical sickness, mental and emotional anguish, and long-term mental and social consequences" (p. 13). They found that educators at the state level were inconsistent in their definitions of bullying with some educators noting the physical aspects of bullying and with others noting both physical and relational bullying. Twenty three state legislatures were found to mandate that schools apply policies that included disciplinary consequences targeting bullying behaviors and often combining acts of intimidation and harassment. Srabstein et al. also found that 23 state legislatures had either suggested or mandated that school boards institute anti-bullying programs, including character education and conflict awareness and resolution training. Srabstein et al. concluded their review with recommendations that states mandate anti-bullying laws that reflect an understanding of public health issues, provide clear definitions of bullying behavior, and include an appropriate range of penalties, such as school suspensions, criminal sanctions, and/or the ability to request a protective order. They cautioned that penalties should be positively presented as efforts to ensure a safe environment rather than as forms of exclusionary punishment. Srabstein et al. concluded that zero tolerance policies can only be effective when school climates improve due to the implementation of positive disciplinary procedures designed to deter bullying behavior and support those who have been victimized.

In a related study, Stuart-Cassel, Bell, and Springer (2011) presented an analysis of bullying legislation in all 50 states. In their analysis, commissioned by the U. S. Department of Education, Stuart-Cassel et al. reviewed state legislation within a framework of 11 legislative and policy components and six district policy subcomponents. The legislative and district policy components included: (a) prohibition and purpose, (b) scope, (c) prohibited behavior, (d) enumerated groups, (e) district policy, (f) district policy review, (g) definitions, (h) reporting, (i) investigations, (j) written records, (k) sanctions, (l) mental health referrals, (m) communications, (n) training/prevention, (o) transparency/monitoring, and (p) legal remedies. Stuart-Cassel et al. found 46 states with laws that prohibited bullying in schools and that 45 of the 46 state laws contained directives for school districts to institute local antibullying policies. Only 3 of the 46 states with bullying laws had provided a definition for the prohibited behavior. Stuart-Cassel et al. also found that 41 states had proposed model bullying policies. As of April, 2011, Hawaii, Montana, and Michigan did not have state anti-bullying legislation, yet these states had offered model policies for their school boards and local school districts. Hawaiian legislators had passed anti-bullying legislation in July, 2011, which stated that "the purpose of this Act is to require the department of education to maintain, monitor, and enforce anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies and procedures to protect students" (p. 1). The Hawaiian state legislation, known as the Safe Schools Act, defined bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment, and it directed the Hawaii Board of Education to monitor the Hawaii Department of Education for compliance. This law will not take effect until July 1, 2030.

In a study about antibullying practices in American schools from the perspectives of school psychologists, Sherer and Nickerson (2010) noted that fewer than 20% of schools in the United States have anti-bullying program awareness sessions for students or provide school-wide survey assessments to determine the depth of bullying at the school. In this study, Sherer and Nickerson surveyed 213 randomly sampled school psychologists from a large urban area in the northeastern region of the United States about their perceptions of effective and ineffective antibullying interventions in their schools. Psychologists were also asked about their perceptions of the need for improvement as well as barriers to successfully implementing bullying reduction strategies. Nearly two-thirds or 64.5% of the school psychologists represented the elementary school level, 22.5% were from the middle school level, and 13% were from the high school level.

Concerning key findings, Sherer and Nickerson (2010) reported that psychologists noted the most frequently implemented interventions were those in which adults talked with students identified as bullying others or with victims after an incident. Psychologists also noted significant disciplinary consequences such as suspension and increased levels of supervision in common areas where students gather at recess and lunch. Psychologists believed that the least frequently employed strategies included anti-bullying awareness sessions, training sessions for adults, and surveys to determine the extent of bullying in the school. In addition, psychologists reported that the most effective interventions included the implementation of whole school positive behavior support plans, which they described as "modifying space and schedule for less structured

activities and immediate responses to bullying incidents" (p. 223). The three least

effective strategies reported by school psychologists involved procedures that separated

bullies and victims when settling a conflict, determinations based upon zero tolerance

policies, and "written anti-bullying policies" (p. 273). More than half (62%) of the

psychologists believed that professional staff development was most in need of

improvement followed by improvement in procedures for effective bullying reporting.

The respondents also indicated the need for improving school positive behavior support

plans. Only 14 psychologists believed that zero tolerance policies were in need of

improvement. Three barriers to the improvement of bullying reduction strategies

included curricular and other school priorities, a lack of time, and insufficient training for

adults. Sherer and Nickerson found that many of the responses by psychologists matched

the findings in recent studies in relation to the perceived effectiveness of positive

behavior supports and timely response to bullying incidents. However, Sherer and

Nickerson also found that bullying reduction interventions that have been investigated in

the research literature as successful, such as bullying awareness curricula, student

surveys, and referral procedures, were employed with little frequency in the schools

represented by the respondents. The psychologists reported using few strategies that

included student involvement and positive participation in preventing bullying. Sherer

and Nickerson concluded that staff training and bullying prevention may not be a priority

in schools. They suggested that school psychologists could bring greater awareness to

schools through bullying reduction training and empathic response interventions, as well

as by administering school-wide bullying surveys and questionnaires.

In summary, studies indicated that during the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century, the notion of zero tolerance for school violence moved legislators and school policymakers to respond with policies of exclusion for student offenders. However, much of this research indicated that policies of zero tolerance that require exclusion from schools and criminal referrals to juvenile courts were ineffective. Research also indicated that school violence was not reduced through zero tolerance practices of exclusion nor did zero tolerance deter other students from participating in school violence. Research also revealed that zero tolerance policies of exclusion have a negative impact on the social maturity of adolescents and have been associated with the rise in school dropout rates. While many educators have not removed zero tolerance policies from their school disciplinary policies, other educators have chosen to resolve issues through restorative justice practices and anti-bullying policies that provide fair and consistent interventions to bullying behavior. In relation to teachers' responses to bullying, research studies indicated that teachers who build strong relationships with students are often able to employ constructive and restorative intervention practices. These constructive, rather than punitive responses, have resulted in fewer discipline referrals because of a reduction of incidents of bullying in the classroom and common areas.

Bullying Prevention and Reduction Programs

Bullying in schools is a problem that school administrators and teachers have sought to resolve by developing and implementing school programs that focus specifically on bullying awareness, reduction, and prevention. This section of the review

will include an examination of studies related to more recent bullying prevention and

reduction programs, particularly in relation to their effectiveness.

Antibullying Intervention Designs

Rigby (2010) described specific intervention designs found to be successful in

bullying prevention and reduction programs in *Bullying Interventions in Schools: Six*

Basic Approaches. Rigby presented six antibullying program response interventions.

They include (a) traditional disciplinary, (b) strengthening the victim, (c) mediation, (d)

restorative justice, (e) support group method (no blame approach), and (f) method of

shared concern. Rigby noted that the traditional disciplinary approach uses punitive

measures to discourage bullying behaviors and is dependent on strict rules and

procedures for determining the appropriate punitive response that will sufficiently reduce

the behavior. The second intervention, strengthening the victim, is dependent on helping

individuals acquire more confidence and a social means to resist bullying behaviors

directed at them. Rigby noted that teaching verbal skills to students in order to confront

the aggressor may or may not be effective, especially if the aggressor has stronger verbal

skills. Mediation, the third intervention, is a method of compromise through an impartial

mediator who negotiates a settlement acceptable to both the victim and the aggressor.

Rigby noted that the success of mediation is dependent on the levels of listening skills

and the emotional intelligence of the students involved. Rigby cautioned that outcomes

for this intervention rely on the promise of future resolution and may be beyond the

control of the mediator. Rigby believed that the fourth intervention, restorative justice or

restorative practice, may be in direct reaction to the retribution aspect of the traditional

disciplinary approach. Programs using restorative justice focus on the desire to bring

about a change in the behaviors of the aggressor by seeking to "bring about good or

tolerable relationships when things have gone wrong" (p.68). Rigby called the restorative

practice approach "future oriented" (p. 68) and noted that it differed from mediation

because other members in the social and family community may be involved in the

process. Rigby noted that restorative practice focuses on bad behavior and not bad

children and added that the notion of shame is an integral part of the restorative practice

process. He cautioned that the use of "undesirable shame" (p. 72), rather than shame that

is re-integrative, might impede the process and sabotage the intervention. Rigby

described re-integrative shaming "as a disapproval that is respectful of the person is

terminated by forgiveness and does not label the person as evil" (p. 72). The fifth

intervention, according to Rigby, is the support group method, which like restorative

justice, provides solutions to the bullying problem rather than the retributive punishment

of the traditional disciplinary approach. The support group method differs from

restorative justice because it is comprised of individuals directly involved with the

incident with only one adult as facilitator. There is an understanding that no punishment

will be determined and that all will agree to share in the "responsibility to improve the

situation" (p. 80). The sixth intervention is called the method of shared concern and is

similar to mediation and support group interventions. The method of shared concern

does not cast blame upon any person. Those students identified as aggressors or bullies

are individually counseled and brought together as a group in an effort to improve

attitudes and build empathy toward victims.

Whole School or Case-by-Case Approach

In addition to these six types of interventions, Rigby (2010) noted that antibullying programs may employ either a universal or case-by-case approach to reduce bullying, and some programs may use both types of approaches. The universal approach includes all students and aims to create a whole school awareness of the impact and consequences of bullying. The universal approach may also promote social behaviors meant to enable students to develop conflict awareness and improve interpersonal relationships. The case-by-case approach is designed to concentrate attention on specific bullying episodes in which implicated students are identified as either victims or aggressors. Specific interventions for each episode assist individuals with strategies to deal with issues directly impacted by the episode. Rigby noted that both approaches complement each other, and the use of one approach to the exclusion of the other does not achieve optimal results in reducing bullying.

Research conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of antibullying programs often refers to the value of the whole school approach as a criterion for successful reduction and prevention of bullying in schools (Olweus, 2006). In their synthesis of evaluation research about the effectiveness of whole school antibullying programs, Smith, Schneider, Smith, and Ananiadou (2004) noted the value of the whole school approach:

> The whole school approach is predicated on the assumption that bullying is a
> systemic problem, and, by implication, an intervention must be directed at the
> entire school context rather than just at individual bullies and victims. One
> advantage of the whole school approach is that it avoids the potentially

problematic stigmatization of either bullies or victims. It also circumvents the

potential for cross-fertilization of beliefs that aggression is legitimate among

aggressive children brought together for intervention in some forms of group

counseling and social skills training. (p. 548)

In their review of 14 studies about antibullying programs, Smith et al. noted that "the

whole school approach is predicated on the assumption that bullying is a systemic

problem (p. 538)." Smith et al. also noted that a systemic focus on the context of the

whole school "avoids the potentially problematic stigmatization of either bullies or

victims" (p. 548). Smith et al. compared studies of programs that employed a systematic

whole school antibullying intervention and/or systematic case-by-case anti-bullying

interventions. Smith et al. tailored their review to studies that offered quantitative data on

bullying experiences determined from the participation of a majority of the school

population. They found that most of the 14 studies shared some features of the Olweus

whole school approach, yet they also found that inconsistencies among the various

programs hindered their ability to compare results for a reliable synthesis of similar

values. In addition, Smith et al. found that many of the studies lacked control groups,

noting that "only some of the studies incorporated systematic procedures to ensure that

the planned interventions were implemented with integrity, and in several cases

implementation of some of the program components was optional for the schools

involved" (p. 554). In addition, Smith et al. found student self-reports of their

experiences with bullying in most to of the studies, but noted that the time element in

which the experiences were reported was generally inconsistent and did not support

accurate comparisons. Smith et al. suggested that the purpose of antibullying programs should be to increase awareness of bullying issues, which may, in turn, result in an increase of student reporting about bullying. They also suggested that an increase in student reporting might point to a rise in bullying incidents and "essentially mask a positive effect of the whole school program" (p. 557). Smith et al. cautioned that inconsistent results of studies employing a whole school program should discourage schools from using it as the only approach to reducing bullying. They reminded readers that "the Olweus program in Norway had not been replicated elsewhere" (p. 557), noting that studies using the Olweus model resulted in less than significant findings. Smith et al. observed that the high rate of success of the Olweus program might be attributed to the intervention of the national government and to highly qualified teachers and excellent school systems in Norway. Smith et al. also suggested that the success of the Olweus program might have been attributed to the "seriousness and urgency with which school officials and students invested themselves in the initiative" (p. 557) due to the adolescent suicides in Norway that were attributed to bullying. Smith et al. found that the programs they reviewed often adapted interventions from the Olweus program to the specific needs of their school. They cautioned that dilution of the Olweus interventions might have a deleterious effect on the success of the program, although they concurred that it was hard to discern any negative effects from their review of the results. Smith et al concluded that the whole school approach might be effective in reducing bullying, even though inconsistent and inconclusive data from their review did not support this conclusion. They concluded that no other approach to bullying stood out as more productive than the

whole school approach, and they called for more research based evaluations of this approach.

Antibullying Program Effectiveness

In a meta-analysis of 31 antibullying prevention and reduction programs, Ryan and Smith (2009) sought to discover whether consistent "standards of effectiveness, efficacy, and dissemination" had been applied with rigor in the evaluations of these programs. They hypothesized that a study of the evaluations of 31 programs would indicate a lack of rigor in the evaluation of antibullying programs results in an inability to "make conclusive statements about the effectiveness of bullying prevention programs" (p. 249). If a program provided bullying interventions for at least three groups, including peers, students, parents, individuals, and community, Ryan and Smith characterized the program as a whole school program. They noted that 61% of the schools in this meta-analysis were classified as having whole school programs. They defined assurance of program integrity through manuals, training, and supervision.

In their comparative review of antibullying program evaluations, Ryan and Smith (2009) gathered 550 antibullying reports in a search strategy within the following databases: Medline, PsychInfo, and ERIC. Ryan and Smith and used three initial criteria for acceptance if the report: "(a) evaluated an intervention intended to prevent bullying in schools, (b) reported data on student outcomes directly related to bullying and/or victimization, and (c) were published in English" (p. 249). The list of articles was also reduced to peer reviewed papers published no earlier than 1997 and published no later than 2007. Ryan and Smith reduced the articles from 550 to 31 studies that met all

criteria for acceptance. Sample sizes of the 31 studies averaged between 200 and 499

participants and included two studies with less than 50 participants and nine studies

having more than 1000 participants.

Ryan and Smith (2009) found that 77.4% of the 31 studies had lessons for

delivery in the classroom and over half of the 31 programs (61.3%) were whole school

designs. While 64.5% of the studies mentioned a program manual, only 16.1% involved

all three elements to ensure program integrity, including a manual, teacher training, and

supervision (p. 250). They noted that "38.7% of the studies did not report any form of

integrity verification" (p. 250). Most of the studies were quantitative in design with less

than 20% using qualitative methods such as open-ended interviews, observations, and

journals. All 31 studies used surveys to gather self-reports from students with 35.5% of

the programs using the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire or an adaptation of the

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. With regard to the participants or "informants" (p.

253) in the studies characterized as self, peers, teacher, and parent, Ryan and Smith noted

that 54.8% used only one informant, 38.7% used two informants, and one study used all

four informants. Ryan and Smith found that 45.2% of the 31 studies employed one

measure of reliability and just over half (54.8%) used one measure of validity.

In relation to data analysis, Ryan and Smith (2009) coded their data based on

three criteria set forth by the Standards Committee of the Society for Prevention Research

(Flay, 2005) concerning program efficacy in real world conditions, effectiveness for

measuring with appropriate procedures, and dissemination of a complete program that

includes training, manuals, and follow-up support. Ryan and Smith discovered that no

studies were able to meet the committee's criteria of program efficacy, effectiveness, and

dissemination. They revised the criteria by "excluding criteria that might only be met

after the data had been collected" (p. 253). Efficacy as the first criterion included the

ability for replication, use of control groups, and the ability for "long-term follow up on

outcomes" (p. 253). Effectiveness, the second criterion, set expectations for

implementation with fidelity and integrity applied by school staff in the school

environment. The third criterion, dissemination, required efficacy through the

dissemination of appropriate manuals, guidebooks, and curricular materials, as well as

explicit procedures for ensuring reliability including monitoring and evaluation of the

program's delivery.

Concerning key findings, Ryan and Smith (2009) found that only 16.1% of the

evaluation studies noted that all three resources were employed. Ryan and Smith also

found supervision or oversight of program implementation in only 22.6% of the studies.

Nearly two-thirds of the programs (64.5%) made note of a program manual. Data

indicated that the highest rate of program integrity occurred in training where 80.1% of

the program studies included training sessions for school facilitators or administrators of

the program. In addition, Ryan and Smith found that 38.7 % of the schools provided no

evidence of program integrity verification. Program studies often employed interviews,

questionnaires, journals, and observations of teachers, students, and program facilitators,

yet only 19.3% of the studies reported differences in the levels of participation and the

responsiveness of the participants. Ryan and Smith found that less than one fifth of the

studies employed a qualitative approach.

In their discussion about the effectiveness of whole school anti-bullying programs, Ryan and Smith (2009) noted "despite the positive results shown by Olweus (2006) and the widespread use of such programs, recent research questions their effectiveness" (p. 249). Ryan and Smith noted that evaluative reviews of anti-bullying programs revealed a wide disparity of results in the reduction and prevention of bullying. They believed that this disparity of results was due in part to inconsistent criteria used to measure the effectiveness of the programs. As a result, educators, who are often bound by government budgetary mandates to implement data-based programs, find it difficult to choose the right program for the needs of the school. Ryan and Smith believed that inconsistent methods of evaluating antibullying programs has a direct impact on determining program effectiveness.

Ryan and Smith found only one study that was able to meet the efficacy criterion and two studies that were able to meet the effectiveness criterion. The remaining 28 studies were characterized as pilot studies because of their failure to meet any of the three criteria. Ryan and Smith expressed a concern that more than one-third of the studies indicated no procedures for monitoring and determining the integrity of the program implementation. Ryan and Smith found "less than 10% of the sample qualified as meeting the revised criteria of efficacy or effectiveness" (p. 254). They also found that reviews of antibullying programs do not follow a consistent and rigorous design for appropriate evaluation because programs may not be rigorous in their implementation. In order for rigorous evaluations of anti-bullying studies to occur, Ryan and Smith presented the following recommendations for anti-bullying programs: (a) rigorous control or quasi-

experimental design, (b) data collection before implementation, directly after, and up to

one or two years later for effective follow-up, (c) use of multi-method designs with more

than one informant, (d) effective measures of validity and reliability. Ryan and Smith

concluded that a key element to success of a program would be in maintaining

collaborative and supportive long term communication with school staff by the research

team.

In a meta-analysis of anti-bullying programs from 1983 to 2008, Ttofi and

Farrington (2009) sought to reveal the elements of an ideal program that can reduce

bullying. Ttofi and Farrington chose 59 of 600 reports evaluating antibullying programs

and noted that these 59 reports were "high quality evaluations" that enabled them to

present a systematic review of what works in preventing bullying. The criteria for

choosing the reports for analysis included (a) a clear purpose to reduce or prevent

bullying, (b) clear definitions of bullying, (c) the completion of questionnaires on

bullying by all participants, (d) the inclusion of both experimental and control groups, (e)

evidence of previous research that supported the program, (f) measurement of effect size,

and (g) a sample size no less than 200 participants.

In relation to key findings, Ttofi and Farrington (2009) discovered from their

analysis of 59 school programs that "school-based antibullying programs are often

effective" (p. 23). They found programs that followed the tenets of the Olweus Bullying

Prevention Program to be the most effective. Ttofi and Farrington reported that the "most

important elements that were associated with a decrease in victimization were videos,

disciplinary methods; work with peers, parent training, and cooperative group work" (p.

22). They also reported that effective programs included more time for implementation and were more intensive for both teachers and students. They found that antibullying programs were more effective in Norway and Europe and less effective in the United States. Ttofi and Farrington concluded that effective antibullying programs work best when they are based on data driven research, and therefore, they recommended that schools conduct research specific to the bullying incidence rates before initiating a prevention and reduction program.

In another study about the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs, Midthassel and Ertesvåg (2008) examined the process of implementing an antibullying program known as the Zero Anti-Bullying Programme in six Norwegian compulsory schools. They hypothesized that a willingness to eliminate bullying from the school culture is an important factor in the process of implementing an anti-bullying program. Their research sought to discover if teachers who are better prepared and ready for change during the implementation process of an antibullying program achieve greater success than teachers with lesser preparation.

Concerning the methodology of their study, Midthassel and Ertesvåg (2008) interviewed groups of teachers from six Norwegian schools who had agreed to participate in the Zero Anti-Bullying Programme in 2003-2004. The research team sought to find out how ready teachers at each school were for the changes that might need to take place during the implementation of the year-long program. They conducted semi-structured, open-ended group interviews with teachers in two separate sessions. The first interview took place in the fall during the initial implementation, and the second interview took

place in the spring as the program was about to end. Questions focused on project group roles in the implementation and facilitation of the antibullying program, specific activities related to the program, and the challenges that accompanied the process. Lead teachers were interviewed by telephone because they were not present during the focus group sessions. The telephone interviews focused on facilitation and leadership challenges that were expected during the implementation process. The research team considered each school as a case, and they coded the data from each case for patterns and themes. A cross-case analysis led to an examination of all the data for themes and patterns that might have carried over from one school to another.

Concerning key findings, Midthassel and Ertesvåg (2008) found that teachers at the six schools had different reasons for participating in the study, and they demonstrated varying degrees of willingness to carry out the implementation process of the Zero program. Four themes became emerged from the coding process. These themes included leadership, priority, involvement, and actions. All lead teachers were members of the school's project group, but some teachers carried more leadership responsibilities in some schools. Some schools met their leadership goals while other schools did not meet their intended leadership goals. Midthassel and Ertesvåg determined that a disparity between the commitment levels of teachers to follow program expectations led to inconsistent implementation of the program among the six schools. Midthassel and Ertesvåg found that the time teachers were able to give to the program was a major factor in making the program work. Involvement was a key component of the Zero Programme, which as a whole school approach, brought all stakeholders together to reduce bullying and to create

a safe school climate.   Midthassel and Ertesvåg also found varying degrees of teacher

involvement in the implementation process, with lack of time as a major deterrent.   They

noted that "although these activities involved all pupils and staff, the anti-bullying work

did not seem benefit from them in the long run. On the contrary, it seemed as if they

drained energy from the staff" (p. 168). They also found several issues that hindered

implementation, including a lack of commitment by the staff, a lack of leadership by the

lead teacher, a false sense of control and mastery in conducting an antibullying program,

and a lack of follow-up activities and procedures to strengthen the program. Midthassel

and Ertesvåg concluded that in order "to create a successful process to institutionalize the

change" (p.171), the process of transformational leadership is a critical aspect that

educators must consider in motivating teachers to accept and implement a program with

consistency and fidelity. Midthassel and Ertesvåg recommended that educators who are

planning to implement an antibullying program should prepare for the change process

prior to the initiation of a program that demands whole school commitment.

In a study about the conditions for the implementation of anti-bullying programs

in Norway and Ireland, Midthassel, Minton, and Bourdeadhuij (2009) considered how

antibullying programs are influenced by internal and external factors, including program

quality, program dissemination and classroom instruction, and the environmental and

cultural setting. They framed their study in relation to three aspects of antibullying

implementation, which included the national context, program delivery, and school level

strategies. They compared the Norwegian approach to program delivery within the

national context to the anti-bullying approach in Ireland, which chose to implement the

Norwegian Zero Program in all of their schools. Midthassel et al. found that the

Norwegian Manifesto brought all schools together in a pledge to support a nationwide

program to prevent bullying with a "zero acceptance" approach, hence the program name

Zero. Midthassel et al. also found that zero-acceptance was based on an understanding

that positive and caring communities, with determined adults, could prevent, identify and

stop bullying. In 1993, Irish schools received directives from the Department of

Education and Science to develop antibullying programs. Midthassel et al. found

differences in training methods related to network leadership and curriculum delivery

between the two countries and that programs delivered in Ireland were not as efficacious

in reducing bullying as programs in Norway. Midthassel et al. concluded that the school

context and curricular delivery and support, as well as a whole school commitment to

preventing bullying, are key factors in the success of an anti-bullying program.

In another study about the effectiveness of a national intervention program

designed to prevent school bullying in Ireland, Minton and O'Moore (2008) compared

implementation of The Donegal Primary Schools Anti-bullying Programme with

implementation of the ABC Anti-Bullying Program in terms of contributions to the

development of bullying intervention programs that serve the needs of the schools in

Ireland. The first program, known as the Donegal Primary Schools Anti-Bullying

Program, was implemented in Donegal County primary schools from 1998-2000. This

program was an outcome of a nationwide survey in Ireland in which 20,422 students

completed a modified *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire* (1993). The questionnaire was

administered in order to discover student attitudes toward and involvement in bullying.

The survey implementation was prefaced by an explanation of bullying defined by Olweus (1993). The second program was the ABC Anti-Bullying Program that was implemented in primary and secondary schools throughout Ireland from 2004-2006. This program also employed the *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire* as pre and posttest assessments. Both programs adapted a Norwegian anti-bullying program by creating levels of support and implementation. These components included a network of trained consultants, teachers trained for classroom implementation, a component to foster parent support, and a follow-up plan implemented by the network consultants.

In relation to key findings, Minton and Moore (2008) found statistically significant reductions in five of six of the bullying categories for the Donegal Primary Schools Anti-bullying Program. For the ABC Anti-bullying Program, they noted reductions in four of the six categories at both the primary and post-primary levels, but only in two instances did these reductions reach statistical significance. These findings indicated that the Donegal Primary Schools Anti-bullying Program may have significantly helped to reduce short and long term bullying. Minton and Moore suggested that the Donegal program was more successful than the ABC Anti-Bullying Program because a difference in the training of the network consultants may have impacted commitment in the ABC cohort. Minton and Moore also suggested that there may have been a lack of commitment to implement the ABC Anti-bullying Program with fidelity because few existing structures within the participating schools supported implementation of the program. Minton and O'Moore recommended "evidence-based

program content and well thought-out implementation procedures" (p.10) as critical

components to ensure the success of an anti-bullying program.

In a another study about program effectiveness, Roland, Bru, Midthassel, and

Vaaland (2009) sought to discover the effectiveness of the Zero Anti-bullying Program in

primary schools in respect to the contextual expectations in the Norwegian Manifesto I

that was issued in September, 2002. Roland et al. collected baseline data prior to

implementation of the Zero Anti-bullying Program in 2003.The sample included 20,446

students between the ages of 7 and 12. Roland et al. conducted an identical assessment

after 9 months with the sample totaling 20,430 students. Control group data was derived

from the *School Environment Survey* (SES) administered nationally by the Center for

Behavioral Research at the University of Stavanger in Norway. Both questionnaires

guaranteed anonymity and were procedurally similar. Teachers administered the survey

according to a time protocol to ensure that all participants were instructed to read all

questions at the same time. The surveys focused on two characterizations of bullying.

Student participants responded with personal assessments of peer victimization toward

themselves or others with temporal indicators such as *never, now, then*, and *weekly* (p.

47). Each survey opened with a definition of bullying that included degrees and types of

bullying.

In their findings, Roland et al. (2009) noted "a downward trend for mean scores

for the scales on bullying" and "the reduction in bullying was slightly, but statistically

significantly greater" among students in Grades 5-7 than among students in Grades 2-4

(p. 48). In a comparison of the mean scores from the program survey and the *School*

Environment Survey, Roland et al. found little statistical significance in the "bully others" category (p.48). They also found the "prevalence of bullies was significantly higher in the SES samples than in the Zero samples", and they described a "moderate reduction in the percentages of bullies from pre-test (2003) to post-test (2004) in the Zero sample" (p. 48). Final analysis of the data indicated a tendency toward a reduction in victimization in the program sample, but they found "overall prevalence in reported victimization was not significantly different between Zero and SES samples (p=0.67)" (p. 49). Roland et al. found a 25% reduction in students bullied weekly after 12 months of program implementation. Although they believed that a 25% reduction was substantial, this percentage did not indicate that the Zero Anti-bullying Program had a strong impact the overall reduction of bullying. Roland et al. concluded that cultural and structural variables at the school level may greatly impact the success of an anti-bullying program. They suggested that students be trained for specific roles in helping to create individual awareness for the prevention of bullying.

In a study about the effectiveness of antibullying interventions, Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, and Voeten (2005) sought to determine the effectiveness of an antibullying program focused on helping students use self-efficacy when confronting bullying behaviors. They conducted this study in the 12 months following implementation of an anti-bullying program in eight schools in Helsinki, Finland and eight schools in Turku, Finland. Forty-eight teachers took part in four training sessions over a period of a year to learn antibullying program interventions for the classroom. Students in Grades 4-6 in 48 classes completed questionnaires at three points of time during the 12 month study.

The questionnaire focused on outcomes such as the rate of peer victimization in class, student attitudes towards bullying, degree of personal self-efficacy in confronting a bullying situation, and participant role behaviors.

In relation to their findings, Salmivalli et al. (2005) noted positive and significant outcomes for participants in Grade 4. The outcomes for participants in Grade 5, however, did not reach expected levels of significance. Salmivalli et al. found that the data from self and peer-reported victimization indicated "no statistical significant effects" (p. 479) from program interventions. Salmivalli et al. found that while classes participated at a high level of performance implementation, outcomes indicated a small degree of statistical evidence for positive behavioral improvement. Salmivalli et al. found that the degree of implementation was less than expected, which may have had an impact leading on the results. Five of the 16 schools indicated high implementation, and most schools scored low in terms of implementation integrity. Salmivalli et al. questioned the motivation of the teachers, which they believe may have contributed to the less than significant outcomes. They suggested that if the whole school had been involved in the program, higher levels of significance might have been attained. Salmivalli et al. concluded that educators who wish to implement a bully prevention program might take heed of the level of teacher motivation as an important criterion for success in reducing bullying.

In a related study about the interplay between personal and social factors in standing up for bullying victims, Pöyhönen, Juvonen, and Salmivalli (2010) examined student perceptions of self-efficacy, ability to affect empathy, and rank of social status as

factors that can impact the ability of students to defend peers who are victimized by the

bullying behaviors of others. Pöyhönen et al. examined "the role of cognitive, emotional,

and interpersonal factors in defending behavior", arguing that self-efficacy and affective

empathy are related to defending behavior (p.146). They also hypothesized that the

positive social status of an individual may be a significant factor in defending behavior.

Pöyhönen et al. conducted this study in a small town in southwestern Finland. Their

sample consisted of 489 students in Grade 4 and Grade 8 (257 females and 232 males).

All but 49 parents of the original sample agreed to allow their children to participate in

the study. Students were asked to respond to questionnaires while attending school in

February of 2006. The 15 item *Participant Role Questionnaire* contained items that asked

students to either describe themselves or to nominate classmates from a list included with

the questionnaire. There were four sections within the questionnaire for determining

defending behavior and social perspectives. The first section included three items

regarding defending victimized peers. The second section focused on social status and

included sub-sections that asked for peers they liked the most and perceived to be most

popular. The third section referred to "self-efficacy beliefs for defending behavior" and

"how easy or difficult it might be" to speak or stand up for one who is victimized (p.

149). The last section asked students to describe their cognitive and affective empathy

and how they might recognize and understand the feelings of their friends and peers.

Concerning their findings, Pöyhönen et al. (2010) defended their hypothesis "that

defending behavior was positively associated with self-efficacy for defending, affective

(but not cognitive) empathy, as well as high social status among peers" (p. 154). They

found that a student's social status had a moderating effect upon self-efficacy and affective empathy in his or her ability to defend a victim. Pöyhönen et al. also found that an individual's perception of popularity had an impact on the decision to defend others and that the greater the perception of popularity, the higher the degree of defending behavior. The more frequently an individual chose to defend another, that individual's self-efficacy increased. In addition, Grade 8 students were less likely to defend victims than younger students. Poyhonen et al. added that "adolescents' social and cognitive skills are more developed than those of their younger counterparts" (p. 158), and they suggested that a perception of real or imagined social norms for their age level might impact their decision to defend a student who was bullied. However, Pöyhönen et al. also argued that bullying can be reduced when students feel empowered to defend others who are victimized and when all students are taught effective strategies to diffuse peer aggression and defend those who are victimized. Pöyhönen et al. suggested that role playing might help adolescents to improve their self-efficacy in applying effective strategies in defense of those experiencing victimization. They also suggested that "vicarious experience can be a source of self-efficacy and thus witnessing others successfully defend victims may also contribute to enhancing self-efficacy for defending" (p. 159). Pöyhönen et al. concluded that programs should focus on "high-status students to support children" (p. 159) so that the engagement of popular students as defenders of victims would encourage other students to model their behavior.

In a related study, Kärnä et al. (2011) examined a nationwide trial of the KiVa anti-bullying program for students in Grades 1-9 in Finland. This program is another

Finnish bullying reduction program that operates on the premise of the bystander as a key

player in defending the victim and reducing bullying behaviors. Kärnä et al. conducted

this study to determine the effectiveness of the KiVa program in the first year of

implementation. Participants included 150,000 students in Grades 1-9 in 888 Finnish

schools. The KiVa program focuses on accentuating bystander response as a key strategy

to confronting and reducing bullying episodes. Lessons are designed to help students

develop self-efficacy in their attitudes toward anti-bullying prevention and to become

more empathetic as bystanders to a bullying victimization.

Concerning the methodology for this study, Kärnä et al. (2011) used a quasi-

experimental, cohort, longitudinal design. Of the 3218 Finnish schools invited to

participate in the study, only 1872 schools committed to participate. The first year of the

program included the training of teachers and staff for program implementation. Budget

constraints postponed a second request for additional school participation until 2010.

The first round of 1850 schools responded to the questionnaire in May, 2009 with the

final adjustment to a cohort of 888 participant schools by May, 2010. Some school

participation attrition took place due to a lack of resources for teacher training and/or

because of an inability to procure pre-test or post-test measurements. A total of 141,099

students were assigned to the control group, and a total of 156,629 students were assigned

to the KiVa group. Pre-test and post-test assessments were based on the *Revised Olweus

Bullying/Victim Questionnaire,* which all participants accessed through the Internet. All

students were provided with the definition of bullying as determined by Olweus (1993)

prior to answering the questionnaire. Likert-type questions included responses that

indicated degrees of agreement. Peer reporting was also calculated by similarities across the grade levels and separated into forms of bullying and victimization.

Initial results of the Kärnä et al. (2011) study indicated that the prevalence bullying rate was 16% while the perceived prevalence rate was 11.1%. Overall reported prevalence decreased largely for students in Grades 1-6 with reduction levels from 13.6% for students in Grade 1 to 8.3% for students in Grade 5. An increase in bullying was found for students in Grades 6-8 but a decrease was found for students in Grade 9. The highest prevalence of bullying behavior was for students in Grade 7. Kärnä et al. found the greatest effectiveness of the KiVa program occurred at the elementary level with "the smallest (and mostly statistically non-significant) effects in the lower secondary grade levels" (p. 797). They suggested that the results of these interventions were impacted by the tendency for victims and bullies to leave the program. They conceded that there may be some bias within the results because of these dropouts, but they argued that their conclusions "tolerate quite a strong selective attrition" because the research team had "assumed a selection bias that was much larger than the actual observed difference between the study sample and the dropout schools" (p. 804). Because the KiVa program was in the early stages of development, Kärnä et al. suggested that a follow-up study three years later might give an indication of the true effectiveness of the program. They suggested that teachers may need time to develop a better understanding of the implementation and motivational needs of their students in order to implement the program with integrity and fidelity. Kärnä et al. concluded that a program that focuses on

the bystander perspective as an intervention contributes to a culture of accountability for all students in creating a school climate safe from bullying.

In an additional study, Kärnä et al. (2011) examined the effectiveness of the KiVa antibullying program in relation to the reduction of school bullying, peer aggression, and victimization. During the 2007-2008 school year, 78 volunteer schools in Finland involving students in Grades 4-6 were randomly assigned to participate in the KiVa program funded by the Finnish Ministry of Education. The 78 schools were evenly split, with 39 schools and 4,207 students assigned to the experimental group, and 39 schools and 4030 students assigned to the control group. Student participants in each group completed an online questionnaire prior to receiving 20 hours of computer program lessons given by trained teachers. The questionnaire focused on bullying and victimization issues derived from the *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire*. All student participants were provided with the Olweus definition of bullying. This definition was displayed on every computer screen while students completed each software program lesson. The KiVa program questionnaire was adapted from other questionnaires and included student perceptions of student social roles, individual empathy, anti-bullying attitudes, and school climate.

In relation to the findings of this study, Kärnä et al. (2011) found that "after 9 months of implementation, the intervention had consistent beneficial effects on 7 of the 11 dependent variables, including self- and peer-reported victimization and self-reported bullying" (p. 311). Kärnä et al. gathered results of the KiVa program intervention in two time points labeled as Wave 2 and Wave 3. In relation to the reduction of victimization

and bullying during Wave 2, every KiVa school demonstrated reduced levels of peer-reported victimization. Data analysis of Wave 3 indicated further reduction in peer-reported victimization and reductions in self-reported bullying and self-reported victimizations. This finding led Kärnä et al. to conclude that the experimental schools experienced successful implementations of the KiVa program in comparison to the control schools who did not experience the KiVa program implementation. Self-reports of bullying and victimization were lower in both categories in the experimental schools than in the control schools. Kärnä et al. also found no significant reduction in peer reported bullying in the experimental school data. In addition, Kärnä et al. found that "KiVa school students assisted and reinforced the bully less than the control school students" (p. 321). Kärnä et al. also discovered that male students reported higher incidents of involvement as bullies or victims than female students and assisted and encouraged bullies rather than defending victims. Kärnä et al. also reported that students in the experimental group exemplified more positive attitudes about anti-bullying, demonstrated increased empathy for victims of bullying, and demonstrated greater self-efficacy than the control group students.

In a discussion of conclusions and recommendations, Kärnä et al. (2011) concluded that the KiVa program focused on promoting anti-bullying attitudes in students who find themselves as bystanders and witnesses to a bullying episode. The KiVa program also focused on developing social skills such as empathy and self-efficacy for any individual student who witnesses a bullying incident, but is not a bully or a victim. Kärnä et al. suggested that social skills training that focuses on empathy, victim

support, and antibullying attitudes might help onlookers choose to deter the episode

rather than encourage the aggressor. They also suggested that computer designed lessons

should be provided to help students learn more about bullying and how they can deter

bullying incidents. Kärnä et al. concluded that the KiVa anti-bullying program can

effectively reduce bullying in a whole school environment and that KiVa interventions

might be applied with success to middle school students because findings suggest that

peer aggression and victimization is a major problem at that level.

In summary, the research literature indicated that the Olweus Bully Prevention

Program has had an enduring impact on many research-based antibullying programs that

followed. The whole school systemic approach, linked with the Olweus Bullying

Prevention Program, is designed to reach all students and members of the school. While

researchers agreed that responding to bullying on a case-by case basis can help individual

offenders, they also believed that a whole school approach offers the greatest opportunity

for all teachers and students to collaborate in meeting program expectations, ultimately

leading to a safe environment for everyone. In relation to teacher responses to bullying,

research indicated that teacher motivation for implementing bullying reduction programs

with fidelity in relation to consistent interventions results in the greatest success in

reducing bullying.

Teacher and Student Perceptions of Bullying

Researchers have also sought to determine how teachers perceive, define, and

respond to the complexities of bullying. Many researchers believe that the insights

gained from the self-reported perceptions of students may help teachers, school officials,

and parents understand how school definitions, policies, procedures, programs, and responses to bullying issues impact the behaviors of students who experience bullying (Akiba, Shimizu, &Zhuang, 2010; Mishna, Pepler, & Wiener, 2006; Aceves, Hinshaw, Mendoza-Denton, & Page-Gould, 2010.; Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003). Therefore, this section of the literature review includes an analysis of research that examines teacher perceptions regarding their experiences with bullying in school as well as student perceptions regarding their personal experiences with bullying, including their perceptions of teacher responses to bullying.

Teacher Perceptions

In a study that compared middle school teacher and student perceptions about bullying and anti-bullying interventions, Crothers and Kolbert (2004) noted that teachers "should take into account students' perceptions of the likelihood of success in bullying interventions" (p.29). Crothers and Kolbert used a mixed methods design to collect data from 285 Grade 6-8 students and 37 teacher participants in a middle school in southwest Pennsylvania. In the quantitative portion of the study, teachers and student participated in the *Bullying Intervention Survey* designed to determine the effectiveness of intervention strategies to reduce bullying. Intervention strategies were used by students, teachers, and non-teachers. The qualitative portion was composed of interview questions that sought to determine how teachers respond and justify their responses to bullying. Crothers and Kolbert used a stratified random sampling procedure for choosing seven teachers for the interviews, including two sixth grade teachers, one seventh grade teacher, one eighth grade teacher, a special education teacher, and two art teachers.

In relation to the findings, Crothers and Kolbert (2004) found that students were less likely to report their observations of bullying than teachers. While teachers indicated the importance of strategies that encourage students to talk about bullying, students indicated that a helpful intervention would be to create a classroom environment where bullying would not occur because of increased teacher awareness. Students also indicated that they wanted teachers to teach them how to stop others from bullying them. The least favored strategy among students was to "make school rules that say no to bullying" (p. 25). Teachers indicated that their least favored strategy was enabling students to determine consequences for bullying behavior. The strategy of pairing bullies with their victims in friendship or buddy roles was the least favored one by both teachers and students. Crothers and Kolbert also found that while teachers perceived that interventions such as role playing and curricular activities were viable strategies to prevent bullying, students reported differently. Crothers and Kolbert were perplexed by this disagreement because of the relative success of role playing in antibullying programs. They thought that the phrase "books and role playing" made it "difficult to determine if the respondents disfavored role-playing or education through literature" (p. 28). They noted that teachers also did not favor role-playing, noting it as a counseling strategy to help students move from concrete operational thinking to subjective reasoning. Crothers and Kolbert suggested training teachers in a subjective approach to finding solutions to bullying for which role playing is designed. They also found that teacher ambivalence to the complaints of victims gave students a feeling that teachers were not aware of or did not care about bullying. Crothers and Kolbert suggested that

teachers lead discussions with students not only to understand their perceptions, but to focus on learning how to identify and define bullying, including the use of assertive strategies to address bullying behaviors by their peers.

In a related study about teacher perceptions of teasing in schools, Smith et al. (2010) examined how teachers differentiate between teasing and bullying. Their qualitative study involved semistructured interviews with 28 teachers in Grades 4 to 8 who were chosen through convenience and snowball sampling methods. Their study was an extension of a larger study on teachers' responses to bullying (Marshall et al., 2009). Smith et al. designed three research questions that sought to determine teachers' perceptions about the differences between teasing and bullying, how they determine the behavior, and interventions used for each.

Concerning key findings, Smith et al. (2010) found that some teachers conceptualized teasing as a negative interaction intended to harm the targeted person. Smith at al. added that teasing is often viewed as antisocial behavior. A second conceptualization indicated that some teachers viewed teasing "as a playful, reciprocal, and non-harmful act shared between students who have an equal relationship", which Smith et al. noted fit the prosocial definition of teasing. They found that the second conceptualization neglected to include a sense of insult that seems to underlie teasing in general. Smith at al. noted that teasing is often viewed by researchers and educators as a prevalent and often harmless behavior among children in schools and at home. They concluded that teachers' responses to teasing were often a function of whether or not

teachers could identify the difference between a negative and positive interaction among students.

In a study of bullying from multiple perspectives, Mishna (2004) noted that the complexity of bullying behaviors is often confusing to teachers, parents, and children. Mishna administered the *My Life in School Checklist*, a survey to 61 Grade 4 and 5 students in a large urban school in Canada and conducted semistructured interviews with "selected children, a parent of each child, the child's teacher, vice principal, and principal" (p. 236). Purposive sampling was used to select students for the interview process. Five of the 59 students who had reported being victimized by bullying were chosen to take part in the interview process. Students who were selected as participants had the highest or lowest scores among the 59 survey scores and were chosen for the range of their experiences. Mishna found that most participants had difficulty defining bullying. Students and teachers agreed that an imbalance of power combined with the intention to threaten or hurt would be considered as bullying. Some participants defined indirect bullying as spreading rumors and social exclusion, but most participants believed that physical bullying was more serious than name calling or ignoring another person. Teacher participants also expressed confusion about the victim's potential responsibility in a bullying incident. Some teachers believed that it is hard to know whether or not the victim has provoked the incident. Teachers also acknowledged the complexity of determining repetition or pervasiveness of bullying behaviors among students. They also noted the difficulty of discerning whether or not an imbalance of power exists between two students, especially when students appear to be friends. Mishna found that defining

bullying did not necessarily lead to appropriate decision making as to whether or not an incident was considered bullying. Mishna suggested that several pre-determined notions may affect the determination of whether or not an incident is bullying, including the prior knowledge of the child, the perception of a power imbalance, the measure of the seriousness of the episode, or evidence of injury or harm. Mishna called for more research in understanding how teacher attitudes and beliefs can impact decision making in bullying incidents. Mishna concluded that future studies may seek to help teachers increase their awareness of their perceptions of bullying, which might result in more effective interventions.

In a study that examined factors associated with perceptions and responses to bullying situations by parents, teachers, and principals, Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, and Wiener (2006) conducted a study of Grade 4 and Grade 5 students in four schools in Canada, by using the *Safe School Questionnaire,* which was adapted from the *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire* (1993, 2006). In addition to this questionnaire, nine males and nine females who identified themselves as having been frequently bullied were interviewed regarding their definitions and perceptions of bullying. Twenty parents and 19 teachers and staff members also took part in the interview process. Mishna et al. found that all three groups had different perceptions and definitions of bullying. Most participants understood the power differential that occurs between the bully and the victim. Yet Mishna et al. found that some participants had not considered indirect bullying, and most participants did not include the pervasive or repetitive aspect of Olweus' (1993) bullying definition that was used in the study. Some students reported

that they would not tell a teacher about their victimization until they believed the teacher

considered the bullying to be serious. Students also revealed their fear of retaliation if

they were to tell teachers of their victimization. Mishna et al. suggested several reasons

why students chose not to report their victimization: (a) the perception that bullying is a

secret activity, (b) the victim has a sense of little or no power, (c) the victim assumes

personal blame for the abuse, (d) a fear of the loss of friends or social exclusion, and (e)

the assumption that teacher interventions will not help or will make the situation worse

(p. 262). Mishna et al. found that even though students perceive an action as a bullying

behavior, teachers and parents might view such behavior as normal. They also found that

one teacher had not considered the emotional impact of bullying on students and referred

to the bullying of girls as "boys say things to get her attention and show off, like a

courting thing," noting that "the teacher did not intervene" (p. 265-266). Mishna et al.

found that most teachers had difficulty in discerning whether or not bullying was taking

place, and many teachers reported that they were unsure of how to respond. Some

teachers reported having difficulty feeling empathy toward the victim because of the

perception that the victim might be acting in an annoying manner, which had provoked

the bullying behavior. The general belief among teachers was that they had little time to

respond to bullying incidents, and they had not received training in intervention

strategies. However, Mishna et al. also found that participants were able to shift their

thinking when confronted with new information about bullying. Mishna et al. suggested

that all demographic groups in the school need to be educated about bullying behavior,

and educators need to support the development of positive relationships between adults

and the students who must deal with the complexities of bullying within the socio-environmental school environment. Mishna et al. called for a specific focus on training for teachers, school administrators, students, and parents:

> Such education must provide validation about how confusing and difficult it can be for children and adults alike to deal with bullying behavior, increase knowledge and understanding of the various and subtle forms of bullying, and clarify and correct assumptions and misperceptions. (p. 275)

Mishna et al. concluded that the ability of teachers and school administrators to understand the effects of victimization and how to respond appropriately is an important step in building a relationship of trust with students that will help all parties to reduce incidents of bullying in school.

In a study about staff experiences in managing bullying in secondary schools, Maunder, Harrop, and Tattersall (2010) explored student and teacher perceptions in Year 8 (12-13 years of age) and Year 11 (15-16 year of age) in secondary schools in northwest England. The participant sample included 685 Year 8 students, 415 Year 11 students, and 144 teachers. All participants completed questionnaires about their perceptions of direct and indirect bullying scenarios. Maunder et al. found that most students were able to recognize and define both direct and indirect bullying episodes, although smaller numbers of students were able to define indirect bullying behaviors. All participants classified direct or physical bullying as more serious than indirect or ambiguous forms of bullying, with threats as the most serious behavior among all participants except male teachers. Maunder et al. were concerned with the discrepancy between teacher

perceptions and student perceptions and noted that the "influence of gender has different effects with pupils and staff" (p. 278). They found that female students identified bullying behaviors more effectively than male students and gave more serious thought to both indirect and direct bullying than male students. The study also revealed that male students attributed direct bullying as less serious than female students, while male teachers appropriated higher levels of seriousness than female teachers to bullying. Maunder et al. concluded that, given the discrepancy in perceptions of bullying found across age and gender groups, school personnel should endeavor to define bullying. They believed that this effort would ensure a clear and consistent understanding of the complexities of bullying prior to the implementation response strategies. Maunder et al. cautioned that educators might have to suspend school bullying intervention procedures temporarily until all members of the school community are united in a consistent approach to perceiving, defining, and deterring bullying.

Student Perceptions

In a study about the prospects of adolescent students collaborating with teachers in addressing issues of bullying and conflict in schools, Rigby and Bagshaw (2003) noted that nearly 50% of all Australian students reported being bullied at least once during their school years. Rigby and Bagshaw added "that about one child in six is bullied on a weekly basis" (p. 536). In an effort to prove the worth of a whole school approach to bullying, Rigby and Bradshaw conducted two studies with early adolescents in Australian public schools. The first study was designed to determine whether or not students believed that teachers were concerned with stopping bullying and collaborating with

students in positive ways to deter bullying. The Olweus (1993) definition of bullying

was included in the questionnaire to help students answer questions about the nature of

bullying. Of the 7091 Australian students (4080 males and 3011 females) involved in the

study sample, 40% of the students believed that "teachers were not really interested or

only sometimes interested in doing so" (p. 538). Rigby and Bagshaw noted that this

sentiment existed largely among males with fewer females believing that their teachers

were not interested in intervening when bullying occurred. Among ten year old students,

17.9% of male students and 17.1% of female students believed that teachers were not

interested in stopping bullying when it occurs. However, the percentage of middle school

students who believed teachers were not interested in stopping bullying dropped to 38.5%

for male students and 37.8% for female students. This finding suggested that the

developing adolescent in the middle school years has more distrust about teachers'

responses to student bullying than elementary school students.

In the second part of the study, Rigby and Bagshaw (2003) focused on student

perceptions of teacher helpfulness in their efforts to stop bullying. The second part of the

study included 239 male students and 639 female students in Grade 9 who attended high

schools in Adelaide, Australia. Rigby and Bagshaw asked students how they "perceived

their teachers as people who were, or who were not, making an impact, positively or

negatively on the issue of conflict between students" (p.539). They found that more than

50% of the students believed that teachers were not helpful in stopping bullying and

harassment. In addition, they found that 20% of the students believed that teachers

showed little respect to students and would not make attempts to understand their

concerns about bullying. They also found that 20% of the students believed that teacher

attitudes negatively influenced bullying situations because teachers made little effort to

listen to their concerns and often took sides in the bullying situation. Rigby and Bagshaw

also found that 40% of all students negatively judged responses made by teachers,

agreeing that some teachers engaged in bullying themselves or unfairly picked on

students. Rigby and Bagshaw suggested that teachers should take note of these student

concerns when responding to bullying situations. They also suggested that teachers

might improve their credibility and trust with students by taking the time to collaborate

with those students who were willing to meet with them and discuss ways to deter

bullying. Rigby and Bagshaw recommended that teachers should take a non-punitive

approach to bullying behaviors by employing a method of shared concern or a no-blame

approach that might reduce resentment toward those students who report bullying. Rigby

and Bagshaw concluded that adolescents lack trust in their teachers' ability to respond

appropriately to their bullying concerns, a finding which has implications for professional

development for teachers.

In another study about student perceptions of bullying, Harel-Fisch, Walsh,

Fogel-Grinvald, Amitai, Pickett, Molcho, and Craig (2011) conducted an investigation

into negative school perceptions and involvement in school bullying. Harel-Fisch et al.

reviewed data from two international surveys administered by the World Health

Organization in 12 countries in 2002 and 40 countries in 2006. The two cross-national

surveys, known as *Health Behavior in School-Aged Children,* involved nearly 255,000

student participants. Surveys were conducted every four years in over 40 countries.

Participant samples included a minimum of 1500 students who were 11, 13, and 15 years

old and who were in Grades 6, 8, and 10. Harel-Fisch et al. sought to ascertain student

perceptions of social and academic pressure for achievement including perceptions of

peer acceptance and helpfulness and to determine student perceptions of the fairness of

school policies, school culture, and their relationships with teachers.

Results of the Harel-Fisch et al. (2011) study were measured against the

cumulative number of negative perceptions about school that were expressed by students

according to the following five groupings: (a) one negative perception, (b) two negative

perceptions, (c) three negative perceptions, and (d) four to six negative perceptions.

Harel-Fisch et al. found that a higher number of negative school perceptions by students

correlated to higher number of incidents in bullying involvement. Harel-Fisch et al.

noted that increased negative perceptions correlated to higher rates of bullying

involvement was nearly "universal across almost all 40 countries" (p. 645).   They

characterized bullying involvement with the individual actions associated with the

definitions of a bully, victim, or bully/victim. Students who self-reported as bullies or

victims indicated more negative experiences in school than non-bullies. Harel-Fisch

cautioned that the possibility of reciprocal relationships may exist, skewing the data with

the prospect that students who are the subjects of pervasive bullying behaviors will

indicate higher numbers of negative perceptions of school. Harel-Fischer al. suggested

that bullying "does not occur in a vacuum but rather among children for whom school is

not experienced as a positive place to be" (p. 647). Harel-Fisch et al. also noted that this

study was one of the first to gather international data that sought to determine how an

increase in students' negative perceptions and experiences about school can lead to involvement in school violence and bullying behaviors. They recommended that schools take a whole school approach to the issues of bullying by focusing on positive teacher-student relationships and social interaction, fair and tolerant bullying policies and programs, and positive student achievement within a caring school culture.

In another study about student perceptions of teacher actions during conflicts and responses to peer victimization, Aceves, Hinshaw, Mendoza-Denton, and Page-Gould (2010) asked 136 high school students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds to respond to a questionnaire after viewing vignettes of events where students were physically victimized. Responses to the questionnaire indicated participant perceptions of teacher actions and responses to bullying and their willingness to seek help from teachers. Aceves et al. hypothesized that "students who perceive teachers' actions during conflicts as positive are more likely to turn to school authority (e.g., a teacher) when victimized, thus minimizing the probability of a reactively aggressive response" (p. 659). They noted that few studies had approached student perceptions of teacher responses in high risk environments where physical conflicts often occur. They also contended that bullying behaviors in high risk school environments may be accepted as part of the school culture, hindering the willingness of students to either trust or confide in teachers. In addition, Aceves et al. contended that this high risk environment must be controlled in order to make a reliable determination of how teacher actions in bullying situations might deter student aggression and reassure students to seek help.

Aceves et al. (2010) predicted four findings in their study: (a) that students will seek help in bullying situations when they perceive teachers as being effectively competent in their actions, (b) that students who acknowledge that they would seek help would be less likely to victimize others, (c) that males would be less likely than females to look for teacher assistance, and (d) that pre-conceived notions of student aggression and negative teacher associations may impact student responses to teacher actions in the vignette models, but would not diminish student perceptions of teacher actions in actual conflicts. Aceves et al. found that 52% of the students reported witnessing or experiencing "at least one form of physical victimization" while 10.5% of the students reported "no experience or witnessing of physical victimization on school grounds since the start of the school year" (p. 660). Aceves et al. also found that, during discussions, these same students later related having witnessed bullying incidents. Aceves et al. reported that the data supported their predictions that "positive perceptions of teachers' actions during conflicts may influence adolescents to respond to victimization with less violent means, regardless of sex" (p. 665). They found that when students witness positive responses displayed by teacher's interventions concerning bullying, they may feel encouraged to turn to teachers when victimized.

Aceves et al. (2010) presented three possible outcomes from their study. First, students who seek help from teachers and school authorities might not only avoid being victimized, they may also avoid "feelings of isolation, rejection, and hopelessness" (p. 666). Second, if students believe that teachers are willing to participate in positive interventions, students might engage in fewer acts of aggression, which can lead to a

safer school climate. Third, when students believe that teachers and adults are approachable, perhaps more students will turn to teachers rather than to violent acts of aggression in school. Aceves et al. concluded that not only should teachers strive to foster positive relationships with students; they should also receive professional development in conflict mediation skills. Evidence of teacher skills and commitment to responding to student conflict in a competent manner will create a sense of trust and willingness among students to ask for help. Aceves et al. also concluded that in respect to school climate, trust in teacher competence to respond with skill and care might result in the reduction of bullying incidents and peer aggression.

In another study about student perceptions of bullying, Frisén, Holmqvist, and Oscarsson (2008) investigated student opinions regarding how to define bullying, reasons why bullying occurs, and student perceptions of teacher responses to bullying situations. Frisén et al. conducted two studies in 2000 and 2003 with the same 877 adolescent students from Gothenburgh, Sweden. The mean age of all students was approximately 13.5 years. They found that adolescent definitions of bullying differed from research definitions of bullying because students neglected to include the pervasiveness or repetitive nature of bullying. Even though female students defined bullying from the perspective of the victim, male students noted a power differential between the engaging parties and the persistence of the behavior toward the victim. Adolescent reasons for bullying focused on students who had a different or "deviant appearance" (p. 114). Frisén et al. found that more 10 year olds (23%) reported telling adults of bullying than 13 year olds (9%), suggesting that older students may be more protective of their peers,

less dependent on help from teachers or adults, or distrustful of teacher intervention. Frisén et al. also found that if students define bullying differently than the adults in the school, fewer student reports of bullying are likely to occur. They also suggested that inconsistent levels of tolerance and responses by adults toward bullying might impact student definitions of bullying. They also suggested that "the lack of intervention from the school staff may be seen by the adolescents as an acceptance of the behaviour" (p. 115), which might influence students to believe that some forms of bullying may be less serious than others. Frisén et al. reminded their readers that a fifth of student participants had not shared their experience with an adult staff member and that over a third of the students who reported experiencing bullying did not receive a response or intervention from an adult.

In another related study, Troop-Gordon and Quenette (2010) examined student perceptions of teachers' responses to bullying and their effect on the social and emotional adjustment of students to school. Troop-Gordon and Quenette noted that "little is known regarding teachers' responses to students' peer victimization and children's perceptions of those responses"(p. 335) and that their study was the "first investigation to examine children's perceptions of their teacher's responses to peer harassment" (p. 336). Troop-Gordon and Quenette presented the following hypothesis:

> Children may come to view their teacher and adults more generally, as responding to peer victimization in ways that are (a) supportive and validating of the victim, (b) critical and rejecting of the victim, or (c) indifferent to the victim's maltreatment. (p. 335)

They hypothesized that when teachers respond to bullying behavior with interventions that include warnings, redirection, correction, or separation of the students, as well as consequences that include contacting parents, students will sense teacher empathy and interest in the well-being of the student who has been victimized. They also hypothesized that when a student perceives that the teacher supports the notion that the victim is not at fault, the risk of student social and emotional maladjustment to school is likely to be lessened. Troop-Gordon and Quenette conjectured that when teachers ask students to walk away from or avoid bullying situations, students might believe that teachers are unable to handle a situation or that the teachers are not interested in responding. They noted that this lack of trust or unwillingness to respond on the part of the teacher may lead to a student's sense of "rejection, incompetence, and helplessness" that often "leads to social isolation, feelings of marginalization, and disengagement from classroom and school activities" (p.337), which may contribute to further peer aggression.

To implement their study, Troop-Gordon and Quenette (2010) surveyed 264 student participants in Grades 4, 5, and 6 in two elementary schools in the upper Midwestern region of the United States. Students were asked to indicate how often teachers responded to the following interventions: (a) contact parents, (b) reprimand aggressors, (c) separate students, (d) advocate avoidance (i.e., ask students to walk away from or ignore aggressive peers), (e) advocate assertion (i.e., ask students to stand up to aggressors), and (f) independent coping (pp. 338–339). They found that male students (*n* = 124) internalized their problems with peer abuse because of their perception that

teachers often cope with the situation by choosing to avoid the conflict.   In contrast,

Troop-Gordon and Quenette found a significant correlation between emotional

dysfunction and peer victimization among female students (*n*=140) because they

perceived that teachers were not actively engaged in helping them cope with incidents of

peer abuse and aggression. They found that victims often feel anxiety when teachers do

not directly respond to a bullying incident, but tell the victim to just walk away or stand

up to the offender. When this type of response occurs, victims often experience a lack of

self-efficacy leading to low self-esteem. Troop-Gordon and Quenette believed a victim's

sense of inadequacy can lead to social isolation and emotional dysfunction resulting in

the victim's refusal to attend school. Troop-Gordon and Quenette found that when

teachers are perceived as taking an active role in responding to bullying behaviors and

peer aggression, little negative impact on the student's social and emotional adjustment

results. Troop-Gordon and Quenette cautioned that their findings "suggest children's

perceptions of their teacher may be symptomatic of underlying emotional distress" (p.

354). However, they concluded that more research must be conducted to determine how

students arrive at their perceptions of teacher effectiveness and whether or not their

perceptions have a correlation with their self-efficacy, social inclusion, and emotional

adjustment to school.

In another study about perceptions of bullying, Thomas, Bolen, Hester, and Hyde

(2010) sought to determine the perceptions of bullying among students according to

gender, grade, and class level in a "dated, crowded middle-school" (p. 78). Thomas et al.

noted that a new school was under construction for students in Grades 7 and 8, but it had

not yet opened, resulting in crowded conditions for the Grades 5-8 students who numbered over 1300. The survey was administered to 546 students in Grades 7 and 8 and included questions regarding perceptions of student fears of bullying, teacher responses to bullying, and various aspects of bullying behaviors. Thomas et al. were interested only in perceptions related to gender, grade level, and class levels. They found that differences in male and female perceptions were non-significant. They also found a slight significance in the differences between grade levels and class levels, concluding that bullying "in this middle school is characterized by differences in perceptions of students in the seventh and eighth grades" (p. 80). They could not determine a level of positive school climate because the perceptions of students from the two grades levels were widely disparate. Thomas et al. urged school authorities to develop a program to address the issues of bullying raised by student participants in their study.

As a follow-up study about contrasting environments, Hester, Bolen, Hyde, and Thomas (2011) sought to determine whether or not the new school environment had an impact on the cause and effects of bullying. They noted that little research had approached the issue of bullying perceptions of students in a newly opened school. Hester et al. were interested in differences of perceptions among Grade 7 and Grade 8 students in terms of gender, grade level, and class levels in a newly opened school that offered students a larger physical space for interaction both in the classroom and in common areas. Approximately two-thirds, or 262 members of the Grade 8 class, viewed a presentation on bullying, which included definitions of bullying, examples of kinds of bullying, and the effects of bullying. These students were given four open-ended

interview questions regarding the presentation. All 475 students in Grades 7 and 8 completed surveys during their English language arts classes. Hester et al. found no significant differences in perceptions of bullying in all three groups concerning gender, grade level, and class level. They noted that differences in perceptions were largest between those students who had taken part in the bullying presentation and the rest of the student participants. Although the results from each of the three groups were not significant in areas of gender, grade, and class level, slight differences did exist in student perceptions of bullying, suggesting a need for bullying intervention programs for students at all grade levels.

In another related study, Berkowitz and Benbenishty (2012) examined student perceptions of teacher support, safety, and absence from school in relation to their fears about victims, bullies, and/or bully victims. Berkowitz and Benbenishty hypothesized that the category of bully victims would indicate a more negative perception of school climate that the category of those students who reported themselves as not involved, victim only, or bully only. Their study was conducted in 259 schools in Israel and included all students in Grade 7-11. The participant sample included 13, 262 students with an even distribution of males and females. Participants completed questionnaires based on the *California School Climate Survey* that Furlong et al. (1995) developed. Data from the self-report questionnaire indicated that 80.7% of the participants had not experienced bullying as either a victim or bully. In addition, 8.5% of students reported that they had been victimized, 7.2% of the students reported that they had engaged in bullying, and 3.6% of the students viewed themselves as bully victims. Berkowitz and

Benbenishty found that among those students who identified themselves as bully victims, twice as many were male students. They also found that 21.9% of male students identified themselves as bully victims while 11.2% of female students reported themselves as bully victims. The study revealed a higher percentage of bully victims at the junior high level (22.4%), as opposed to students at the high school level (17.3%). Berkowitz and Benbenishty noted that among the four categories, the bully victim group was reported as having the "most feelings of insecurity, lowest teachers' support, and highest level of missing school because of fear" (p. 70). Those students who had reported themselves as victims believed that they had more support from teachers than those students who reported themselves as bullies. Berkowitz and Benbenishty concluded that their hypothesis of bully victims as the most vulnerable and highest risk group was correct.

In a study about student perceptions of bullying in the Oklahoma Public Schools, Hughes, Middleton, and Marshall (2009) included a sample of 7848 students in Grades 3, 5 and 7 in 540 school districts in Oklahoma. The participants answered a questionnaire that sought their perceptions of the "seriousness of bullying, the hurtfulness of bullying, their involvement in bullying (as victim or perpetrator), their responses to being bullied or seeing someone else being bullied, and what they wanted adults to do to make the situation better" (p. 216). Hughes et al. found that 91% of the student participants agreed that bullying was hurtful to others. Thirty-three percent of the students responded that bullying was sometimes hurtful, and 58 % of the students responded that bullying was very hurtful, although this response rate lessened as students grew older, suggesting that

students may become desensitized to the harmful effects of bullying. Hughes et al. also found that older students tended to avoid telling the teacher or chose not to report a bullying incident at all, suggesting a lack of trust in an adult who will resolve the situation. Over half of the students believed that teachers needed to supervise their environment better, especially on the playgrounds (52%) and in the halls (33%). Only 22% of the participants believed that better supervision was needed in the classrooms. Hughes et al. also found that almost two-thirds of those students most frequently bullied not only wanted better teacher supervision, "they wanted teachers acting more by making rules enforcing them teaching lessons about how to get along better"(p. 229). Hughes et al. concluded that teachers and school administrators should listen to the responses of victimized children regarding the responses of their teachers to help deter bullying.

In summary, research has shown that student perceptions of bullying are often quite different from the perceptions of teachers. Hughes et al. (2009) found that over 50% of the student participants believed that teachers lacked awareness about bullying incidents and failed to support students victimized by others. In relation to teachers' responses to bullying, students perceived that teachers who responded to bullying paid more attention to the victim and less attention toward the offending bully or bullies. These discrepancies between student and teacher perceptions of bullying reflect the need for educators to consider the perceptions of all members of the school community about bullying. Schools must clearly define bullying, move to understand the complex behaviors associated with the phenomenon, and recognize the seriousness of the mental and physical effects that bullying has upon victims as well as bullies. As Maunder,

Harrop, and Tattersall (2010) noted, once all members of the school community have a clear understanding of what bullying is and how it should be perceived, program implementation and teacher intervention strategies can commence and progress.

Teacher Responses to Bullying

Olweus (2006) argued that teachers can be a decisive factor in reducing and preventing incidents of bullying. Olweus found that a majority of students in primary and secondary levels in Norway and Sweden believed that teachers had done little to address and clarify the problems of bullying. Olweus concluded that "teachers did little in 1983 to put a stop to bullying at school, according to the bullying students" (p. 20). Other research also indicates that many students believe that their teachers either do nothing or take inconsistent action to intervene in bullying issues (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003; Crothers& Kolbert, 2004). Teachers may also misunderstand the seriousness of bullying and are often unaware when indirect or relational bullying occurs (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Ellis & Shute, 2007). Many teachers reported that they feel ineffective when intervening to deter bullying, have had little training, and lack the time to address bullying in the classroom (Mishna, Scarcelo, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005; Mishna, Pepler, & Wiener, 2006).

Therefore, this section of the review includes an analysis of current research that explores teacher beliefs, assumptions, understanding, and awareness of the seriousness and complexities of bullying in relation to their actions and responses to bullying. The review also includes an analysis of current research about how personal attitudes, perceptions, and moral orientation impact teacher responses to bullying. In addition, this

section of the review includes an analysis of research that examines the influence of the organizational structure of the school, its discipline codes, and its anti-bullying policies on teacher intent and involvement when responding to bullying.

Teacher Awareness of Bullying

Teacher awareness of bullying is a critical factor when determining the effectiveness of teacher efforts to deter bullying in the classroom. In a preliminary evaluation to their 1994 study of the prevalence of bullying and bullying reduction in Canadian public schools, Pepler, Craig, Ziegler, and Charach (1993) conducted surveys and held discussion forums with students, parents, and teachers in 22 elementary schools in Toronto. They administered a survey adapted from the *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire* to 211 students who were between 8 and 13 years old. In the qualitative portion of the study, 457 students in Grades K-8 participated in class discussions after reading a bullying story. Pepler et al. noted that all data were used to for the development and implementation of an anti-bullying program for the Toronto Public Schools. They found that 49% of the participants had been victimized during the school term with 24% of students reporting that they had engaged in bullying others during the school term. In addition, they found that 81% of the students believed that "playgrounds and hallways" (p. 77) were the common areas where bullying was most likely to take place. Pepler et al. noted that a general disparity in perceptions of the prevalence of bullying existed between students and teachers as well as parents. Pepler et al. also found a disparity in perceptions of teachers' responses to bullying. Nineteen percent of the students believed that teachers almost never respond to bullying while 45% of the

students believed that teachers either almost always (25%) or occasionally (20%) intervened when bullying occurs. In contrast, in the data collected from teacher participants, "71% indicated that teachers almost always intervene, 14% indicated that teachers occasionally intervene, and none of the teachers reported that teachers almost never intervene" (p. 78). When Pepler et al. posed a question regarding how teachers might provide more help in bullying situations, students (67%) and teachers (85%) believed that teachers should talk to students about the problem.

The *Toronto Bullying Survey* led to the development of a whole school anti-bullying program, which was implemented in four Toronto schools in 1991, included three K-8 schools and one Grades 7-8 school. Pepler et al. (1993) noted that results confirmed "Olweus' contention that the optimal intervention" is the implementation of a whole school collaboration of teachers, and parents to create "school rules against bullying and classroom discussions to influence the attitudes of 'neutral' students" (p. 78). Pepler et al. also noted that the primary goal of the anti-bullying program during the first year was to ensure that teachers and administrators work to together with a collaborative motivation to implement the program with consistency and fidelity. All students (n=898) were surveyed in the autumn and spring of the implementation year using an adapted version of the *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire*. After the first year of implementation, Pepler et al. also interviewed adults who acted in leadership roles during the first year of implementation.

In relation to teachers' responses to bullying, Pepler et al. (1993) noted that a major goal of the program was to increase the awareness of bullying in teachers and staff

and offer clear strategies for teachers to intervene when bullying does occur. Pepler et al. found that 19% of the students surveyed in the fall believed teachers intervened in bullying situations, which decreased to 13% of the students surveyed in the spring. Pepler et al. believed that this unexpected and significant drop in the student perception of teacher intervention might have occurred because of the increase in student awareness of bullying due to the program's informational design. They also found no differences in student perceptions from autumn to spring in terms of teachers taking the time to talk to them about bullying. Pepler et al. found that many teachers expressed difficulty in determining when bullying occurs, when to intervene on the playground, and what strategies to use. Teachers reported facility in talking or giving lectures to collective groups about bullying, but they also reported a lack of capacity in helping students participate in collaborative and positive discussions about bullying. Pepler et al. suggested that teachers need to develop self-efficacy in determining strategies and interventions that bring the students together to resolve and reduce bullying. Pepler et al. recommended that in order to help teachers become more aware of bullying issues, parents should meet with teachers to more clearly understand the bullying and victimization that their children may be experiencing. Pepler et al. also suggested that teachers need to support both victims and bullies in developing social skills in their relationships with peers.

In another study related to teacher awareness of bullying in the classroom, Atlas and Pepler (1998) observed and videotaped 27 students from one school in Toronto. Students were identified through teacher nomination as either aggressive or non-

aggressive in their peer relationships. Participants for observation included 19 male

students and eight female students selected from 180 students in eight classrooms.

Participants were observed and videotaped for one hour in the classroom setting as either

engaging in the role of bully, victim, or peer observer. Atlas and Pepler believed that on-

site observations might reveal patterns of behavior that would provide an understanding

of bullying beyond data gathered from self-reports. Atlas and Pepler explained that the

"primary objective in the present study was to examine the prevalence and nature of

bullying interactions in the classroom" (p. 88). They also sought to describe the patterns

of behavior exhibited by students engaged in bullying behaviors.

In the findings, Atlas and Pepler (1998) suggested that while bullying was a

pervasive problem, teachers in the videos seemed to exhibit a general lack of awareness

of the phenomenon of bullying. In their observations of 60 incidents of bullying in the

classrooms, they found that teachers responded to only 11 of the 60 incidents (18%)

recorded on video. They observed that bullying behaviors often occurred "when the

teacher's back is turned or when the teacher is on the other side of the classroom" (p. 92).

Video data indicated that teachers who were observed "in the camera frame in 30 of the

60episodes" (p. 92) were aware of half or 15 of the 30 incidents. Atlas and Pepler also

found that teachers were unaware of 13 bullying episodes while they were in the camera

frame. Teacher awareness was unclear in two cases. When teachers were in proximity to

bullying behaviors, they exhibited an awareness of the incident about 50% of the time

that they were videotaped. Atlas and Pepler also found that teachers would intercede

consistently when aware of an incident, but they were often largely unaware of indirect or

covert bullying behaviors. In most cases, teachers were either uncertain of how to respond, did not perceive the issue as a bullying behavior, or did not observe the episode. Atlas and Pepler noted that classroom bullying often occurred in verbal interactions during solitary activities, particularly when students knew that teachers would not hear or observe the activity. They found that aggressive students were more likely to bully victims in classrooms that were characterized by low levels of teacher-student interaction. Atlas and Pepler addressed the need for expanded teacher awareness of not only of the physical classroom structure, but of the wide range of bullying behaviors, especially those that are indirect, relational, and covert in nature. They added:

> Teachers need to develop an awareness of the complexity of the problem in order
> to identify bullying in their classrooms. This enables them to be more vigilant
> and responsive to bullying problems which, in turn, may give children more
> confidence to seek teachers' assistance when bullying occurs. (p. 94)

Atlas and Pepler concluded that the reduction of bullying should not rest on the awareness, detection, and response of teachers alone; instead, teachers must be supported by a systemic whole school approach with bullying interventions that are directed toward the student, family, and community.

In a study about teachers' understanding of bullying, Mishna, Scarcelo, Pepler, and Wiener (2005) examined how teachers personally reflect on the phenomenon of bullying. They built their study on the socio-ecological framework of influence that includes the school, students, family and community (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Pepler, Craig, & Roberts, 1998). Mishna et al. interviewed 13 teachers regarding the experiences

of 17 students who were described as self-reported victims of bullying. Teachers were asked to define bullying prior to reading the Olweus (1993) definition of bullying In relation to their methodology, Mishna et al. (2005) administered an adapted version of the *Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire* to students in Grades 4 and 5 in four schools in order to determine the level of bullying victimization occurring at each school. Questionnaire data indicated that 17 students reported being victimized, yet during the teacher interviews, Mishna et al. found that teachers were not aware that 10 of the 17 students had been victimized. While teachers were aware of the seven students who had been victimized because they had reported the incident, teachers had assisted only five of these seven students.

In interpreting these findings, Mishna et al. (2005) listed five levels that impact teacher understanding and responses in bullying episodes: (a) level of seriousness, (b) level of victim responsibility,(c) level of victim insecurities, (d) level of empathy for the victim, (e) level of school cultural influence, and (f) level of school support (p. 724-725). Mishna et al. reported that teachers expressed an inability to respond to classroom bullying issues because of the demands of teaching. Teachers also believed that their inability to recognize the seriousness of a wide range of bullying behaviors may have contributed to their inability to respond. Teachers were able to describe the seriousness of physical bullying, yet had little knowledge of the complexities of nonphysical or indirect bullying. Teachers knew that school policies addressed direct bullying, but they noted that there were no guidelines for addressing indirect or relational bullying. Mishna et al. viewed this concern as a lack of school support and training in bullying

intervention. They found that few participants received training in identifying and

responding to bullying, although most teachers noted the need for such training.   Mishna

et al. suggested that teachers need to realize that their perceptions and responses to

bullying can negatively impact students. They added:

> It is important for teachers to recognize that how they understand and respond to
>
> bullying can have an effect on their students. It would be beneficial to provide
>
> information to teachers on the factors that can influence individuals' decisions
>
> about what constitutes bullying and to help them recognize discrepancies between
>
> their espoused views and their reactions to bullying incidents. (p. 732).

Mishna et al. found that even though some teachers expressed empathy toward victims,

others expressed doubt regarding the integrity of the victim's need for help. Mishna et al.

found that teacher assumptions about the personality, insecurities, and responsibilities of

the victim hindered their concern for the victim and resulted in appropriate responses. In

a similar study, Mishna, Pepler, and Wiener (2006) found that teachers and adults in

general had difficulty empathizing with students when they perceived victims as

overstating the seriousness of the interaction, suggesting that they acted as instigators that

provoked bullying behaviors. Mishna et al. concluded that the process of their research

created a stronger sense of bullying awareness for teachers who participated in the study,

which they believed might encourage students to share their bullying experiences.

Mishna et al. concluded that their research indicated a change in the attitudes and

perceptions of bullying among the students, parents and teachers who took part in their

study. They recommended that training for students, parents, and educators is needed to

build an awareness of bullying and help dispel confusion in reporting and dealing with the complexities of bullying.

Teacher Perceptions About Seriousness of Bullying

A significant number of studies have also been conducted in relation to teacher perceptions about the seriousness of student bullying. Ellis and Shute (2007) explored teacher responses to bullying by conducting a quantitative study that focused on teacher perceptions of the seriousness of bullying incidents. Their study involved 127 teachers from five schools in South Australia. Ellis and Shute examined the differences between the moral orientations of care and of justice in the responses of teachers to scenarios of bullying incidents. Ellis and Shute were interested in separating teacher responses as either "rules sanctioned" or "problem solving" (p.651) with the moral orientations of justice and care as predictor variables within the perception of three levels of seriousness in three bullying scenarios. Ellis and Shute noted that they measured the seriousness of bullying incidents through teacher perceptions that were dependent on Rigby's (2002) notion of the seriousness of bullying, which included a "degree of victim duress, level of parental concern, and duration of bullying" (p.10). Ellis and Shute also noted that teachers perceived acts of physical bullying, such as spitting on or striking another student, as more serious than name calling. The act of spitting on someone was regarded as more serious than social exclusion bullying, often characterized by spreading rumors and giving "dirty looks" (p. 11). Ellis and Shute noted that, in each of these three levels of behavior, "relatively high numbers of teachers believe it best to let students sort it out for themselves, see it as too minor to bother with, and are more influenced by whether

they have time to deal with it" (p.12). Ellis and Shute believed that teacher perceptions of the seriousness of bullying behaviors are an indicator of their willingness to intervene. They suggested that teachers should be helped to understand that the impact of social bullying is serious and can have deleterious effects on the victim or victims (Olweus, 1993, 2006; Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Buckman, 2011).

In relation to the results of this study, Ellis and Shute (2007) found that teachers believed that their responses to bullying were intended to either stop the incident or to intervene in order to "get students back on track" (p. 659). Contrary to the findings of Mishna et al. (2005) who discovered that the demands of the curriculum impeded teachers' ability to respond effectively, Ellis and Shute found that a "small minority of teachers considered the incidents to be someone else's responsibility, or that they are too busy to deal with incidents" (p. 659). Ellis and Shute found that moral orientation is correlated with teacher willingness to follow school anti-bullying policies and procedures. They also found that when a teacher's moral orientation leans toward a resolution for justice, a rules-sanctions response is often applied to the bullying behavior. In contrast, when a teacher's moral orientation favors responding with care and empathy, a problem-solving response is often applied to the bullying situation. Ellis and Shute recommended that if anti-bullying policies were conceived and written with teacher input regarding their moral orientation, teachers might more successfully support, follow, and implement anti-bullying policies.

In a study about indirect bullying in Australia, Dedousis-Wallace and Shute (2009) examined predictors of teacher intervention and outcomes of a pilot educational

presentation about the impact on adolescent mental health. They pointed out that the objective of the *Australian National Safe Schools Framework of 2003* (rev. 2011) was to reduce bullying in schools by supporting teacher effectiveness in understanding and recognizing bullying through faculty training for consistent and proactive responses to episodes of bullying. They noted that, until recently, research on bullying had been largely focused on bullies and victims, yet "bullying research increasingly takes a social interactional or systemic perspective viewing bullying behavior as resulting from complex interactions between individual characteristics and the social context, which includes teachers" (p. 2-3). Dedousis-Wallace and Shute sought to reveal possible factors that may cause teachers to fail to respond to bullying. They were concerned with the negative impact of inconsistent teacher intervention, especially in cases of indirect bullying. They added:

> Intermittent reinforcement is well-established as a strong way of increasing a behavior, so inconsistent responding by teachers could actually increase bullying behaviors by providing a perpetrator with intermittent rewards, with a sense of power or fun, popularity with peers, or extorted lunch money. (p.3)

Dedousis-Wallace and Shute sought to determine the predictors for intervention and non-intervention when teachers are faced with an episode of bullying.

In relation to the methodology of their study, Dedousis-Wallace and Shute (2009) followed up the Ellis and Shute (2007) study on teacher perceptions of the seriousness of bullying with a study that involved secondary teachers in a school for girls in Melbourne, Australia. Dedousis-Wallace and Shute hypothesized that if teachers gained knowledge

about indirect bullying and became aware of the effects of indirect bullying on students,

teacher intervention would predictably improve. They wanted to know whether or not

teacher perception of the seriousness of bullying and the ability to empathize with victims

in episodes of indirect bullying might be effective predictors of teacher intervention.

Dedousis-Wallace and Shute used the *Australian National Safe Schools Framework of*

2003 to present the seriousness of indirect bullying and its impact upon the mental health

of victims of indirect bullying to an experimental group of teachers. They also used

vignettes to gather teacher perceptions of the seriousness of bullying, assess teacher

inclinations to empathize with victims, and determine the likeliness of teacher

interventions.

Concerning the results of this study, Dedousis-Wallace and Shute (2009) found an

increased familiarity with the effects of indirect bullying on adolescent mental health was

not a significant predictor of teacher intervention. However, they also found that the

perception of the seriousness of an incident of indirect bullying and empathy for its

victim were "positive predictors of the likelihood of teachers intervening" (p. 11). The

perception of seriousness in cases of indirect bullying increased only in the experimental

group because teachers had gained insights and knowledge from the informational

presentation on the effects of indirect bullying. Dedousis-Wallace and Shute noted that

empathy toward victims did not increase after the presentation to the experimental group,

which suggested that perhaps empathy already exists to a certain degree among teachers.

Even though the level of teacher perception of seriousness of indirect bullying increased

after their presentation, there was no increase in teacher intervention, and therefore,

teacher self-efficacy in addressing indirect bullying issues may have been a factor in the lack of increase in interventions. While the presentation offered knowledge about the effects and impact of indirect bullying, it did not provide specific intervention strategies or skills training to address indirect bullying. Dedousis-Wallace and Shute concluded that adding a skills component to a presentation about indirect bullying might provide teachers with self-efficacy when responding to the complexity of indirect bullying behavior.

Teacher Intent and Involvement in Responding to Student Bullying

In their qualitative study, Marshall et al. (2009) categorized their interview data of teachers' responses to bullying within the domains of teacher intent and involvement. Their two dimensional conceptual model distinguishes teacher intent in relation to punitive or constructive responses and teacher involvement in relation to of direct or indirect responses. Thirty teachers who provided instruction to students in Grades 4 through 8 in a large metropolitan area in the United States were asked to give their own definition of bullying and to describe their responses to bullying incidents in the classroom and common areas of school.

Marshall et al. (2009) categorized teacher responses within a two by two conceptual framework of four types: (a) constructive-direct, (b) constructive-indirect, (c) punitive-direct, and (d) punitive-indirect. Marshall et al. pointed out that these responses were categorized based on teacher perceptions, not student perceptions. Constructive-direct responses were those in which the teacher responded to the situation in a non-punitive and supportive manner. Interventions within this response category included

mediation and victim protection. Teachers viewed this response as redirecting

inappropriate behaviors while educating and raising the awareness level of effects of

bullying. Constructive-indirect responses were considered to be supportive and non-

punitive because the teacher would refer the issue to a counselor, support staff member,

or parent. In many bullying incidents, teachers reported sending both the bully and

victim to a counselor because they believed that they could not reasonably and effectively

resolve the issue. Within this response mechanism, teachers also reported that they

would discuss bullying issues with other teachers in an effort to determine the veracity of

their perceptions as well as to determine whether or not the bullying was pervasive or

only limited to their classroom environment. The third type of response, punitive-direct,

occurred when the teacher responded "in a manner perceived to be undesirable and/or

punishing for the student(s)" (p. 150). These responses singled out the bully through

shame, embarrassment, or negative commentary. Punitive-direct responses often resulted

in physical separation of students involved in the incident followed by immediate

removal from the classroom, a determination of punitive consequences, and "yelling" (p.

150). Punitive-indirect responses were relegated to offenders and in situations when the

teacher believed that calling the parent or referring the student to an administrator would

be punishment for the bullying student. Although participants believed in the importance

of informing parents, they also noted unexpected and inconsistent responses from

parents, which indicated that they were concerned that perhaps the incident would not be

addressed in the home. Marshall et al. noted that the severity of a bullying incident had

an impact on whether or not teachers would refer bullying behaviors to administrators.

Marshall et al. found that teacher perception of the seriousness and severity of bullying often resulted in immediate referral to an administrator.

In relation to this model of teacher responses, Marshall et al. (2009) described its value in terms of "concurrent examination of both teacher intent (the rationale of the response) and teacher involvement (in implementing the strategy), without solely focusing on the type of bullying or involved student(s)" (p. 153). Marshall et al. found that participants did not consider options such as not responding to bullying incidents or even ignoring them, which is contrary to much of the bullying research in which students reported their teachers' lack of attentiveness to bullying (Atlas & Pepler, 1998: Crothers & Kolbert, 2004; Olweus, 2006; Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003). They also noted that teachers believed that students "were surprised to learn that their teachers perceived their behaviors as bullying" (p. 153), an issue that points to the need for a clear and consistent definition of bullying.

In a qualitative study about staff experiences in managing bullying in secondary schools, Maunder and Tattersall (2010) interviewed 14 staff members from four secondary schools in northwest England. They were interested in gathering participant experiences in managing the complexities of bullying behavior. Their analysis revealed the following three themes in their study: (a) identification of bullying, (b) organizational factors affecting staff behavior, and (c) dealing with bullying (p. 118). Maunder and Tattersall found that teacher participants identified bullying in three ways: (a) student reporting, (b) personal observation, and (c) parental reports. They also found that student reporting of bullying was inconsistent among the participants. Participants believed that

some staff members were more approachable than others, which reflected various levels

of student trust and willingness to tell adults about bullying incidents. Participants also

noted that students were often unwilling to talk about bullying situations because of their

fear that the bullying would become worse. Maunder and Tattersall concluded that the

quality of information staff receive was "related to the quality of communication

channels between them" (p. 120), indicating the importance of building and sustaining

trust in order to develop positive communication between students and teachers when

bullying situations occur.

Concerning the themes that emerged from this study, Maunder and Tattersall

(2010) found that participants believed they were able to identify physical bullying by

observing cues that might indicate a separation from normal play activity. Maunder and

Tattersall inferred that this ability to use cues to identify bullying behaviors symbolized

an understanding that participants had developed regarding their experiences with

students. In the second theme, which involved organizational factors affecting staff

behavior, Maunder and Tattersall found a hierarchical system of reporting that some

participants believed hindered their control in solving the bullying problem themselves.

They found that participants quickly reported physical bullying to a staff member of

some authority, which signaled that participants considered direct bullying as serious

behavior that needed immediate attention. Yet, Maunder and Tattersall found that some

teachers struggled with deciding whether or not to resolve the problem in class or to

follow policy procedure by referring the incident to someone else in the organizational

structure. Maunder and Tattersall believed that this finding indicated the teacher's

willingness to "objectify the bullying incident into a solvable task" and thereby

"reconceptualizing a distressing incident into a solution focused problem… to regain

some control and emotional distance" (p. 121). They found that erosion of student trust

was another factor that participants struggled with in following organizational policies

and procedures for reporting bullying. Maunder and Tattersall called this "inner tension

with the decision to refer, a conflict of disclosure" (p.121). Participants believed that

their relationships with students might be put at risk if they were to refer the incident to

someone else in the organizational structure. Another concern was that participants were

frustrated by a "lack of feedback from senior colleagues" regarding consequences to

student referrals (p. 121). This frustration created a tension among teachers who believed

that they had little control over the situation. They also found that participants often felt

overwhelmed by a growing student population and increasing incidents of bullying. In

relation to the third theme, dealing with bullying, data revealed that participants "went

through a process of analyzing the situation and considering whether or not it was their

responsibility to act" (p. 122). One participant revealed that she would respond to a

bullying incident only if no other teacher were available. Maunder and Tattersall

described this response as "a diffusion of responsibility," indicating that the responsibility

to respond should fall upon another person nearby (p. 122). Maunder and Tattersall

believed that teacher avoidance might indicate an erosion of trust among the participants,

although "there appeared to be an inherent trust between staff that they had all the

relevant knowledge or acting in the appropriate way" (p. 122). The significance of

"inherent trust" as a cultural phenomenon became evident when teachers reported using

communication signal phrases such as "leave it with me" when informed of a bullying concern by another staff member. Maunder and Tattersall noted that the referring person would be absolved of responsibility, thereby satisfying any inner conflict of disclosure by passing on information with the "inherent trust" that the matter would be handled appropriately (p. 122).

In relation to the results of their study, Maunder and Tattersall (2010) found that teachers often mediated bullying situations and were careful to monitor the effectiveness of mediation in the days that followed the incident. Participants expressed their frustration with the community and with difficult parents who would not accept their child's behavior, often resulting in an inability to resolve the issue outside of the organizational structure. Maunder and Tattersall found that the relationships between students and teachers had an influence on student trust and willingness to mediate bullying issues. The referral process and organizational response structure were subject to teacher discretion regarding the kind of bullying that occurred, the perception of seriousness and responsibility to resolve the issue, and trust issues with students and colleagues. Maunder and Tattersall concluded that bullying could be considered as a "symptom of a situation problem rather than an inevitable part of school life" (p. 126) and that systemic and hierarchical structures, as well as organizational policies and procedures, can be factors in resolving the complexities of school bullying.

In a study about a whole school approach to bullying, Richard, Schneider, and Mallet (2011) pointed out that elements of social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) emerge when bullies receive attention and encouragement from peers who may also imitate their

aggressive behaviors. They also noted that the "social processes underlying bullying are not, however, the exclusive domain of children" (p. 265). Richard et al. believed that teachers responses to bullying situations "can also have an effect on the bullying process by, for example, being vigilant and intervening when appropriate or, alternatively, overlooking or ignoring bullying when it occurs" (p. 265). They described the bullying phenomenon as a group process and argued for more attention to a systemic, whole school approach to intervening and reducing bullying.

In this study, Richard et al. (2011) surveyed 18,222 students, 701 teachers, and 478 principals from middle schools throughout France. They focused on the impact of positive school climate and teacher-student relationships in reducing bullying in the school. In relation to the purpose of their study, Richard et al. articulated the differences between a direct approach and the whole school approach to bullying. They noted that the direct approach was designed to develop intolerance toward bullying behavior and was dependent on policies of punitive determination. Conversely, they argued that the implementation of a consistent and meaningful whole school approach was dependent upon "high-quality collegial communication, togetherness and mutual respect" (p. 266) in determining policies and appropriate interventions.

Concerning the results of this study, Richard et al. (2011) found that "there was less bullying in schools that are perceived as safer, that have higher achieving students, and that have more positive student-teacher relationships" (p. 276). They also found that students who described themselves as having strong friendships were bullied less frequently than those students who described themselves as lower achieving, impulsive,

or prone to anxiety because of conflicts with friends. Richard et al. pointed to the influence of school psychologists in promoting a safe school environment and suggested that they might offer a holistic view of the school climate by visiting classrooms as opposed to meeting with only one student at a time. Richard et al. concluded that the behavior of teachers and teacher-student relationships were factors in the reduction of bullying behaviors, although students reported that bullying often occurred when adults were not watching closely.

In a related study about teacher responses to student bullying, Yoon (2004) attempted to predict teacher intervention and involvement in bullying episodes. Yoon examined levels of teacher self-efficacy for 98 elementary school teachers in relation to classroom management, empathy towards those students victimized by bullying, and teacher perceptions of the seriousness of the complexities of bullying. In making a case that teachers are responsible for a wide degree of responses to bullying, Yoon referred to Stephenson and Smith (1989) who found that "25% of teachers in their study reported that ignoring bullying behavior was helpful, suggesting that some teachers are less willing to intervene' (p. 38). Yoon conceded that a lack of teacher awareness of bullying and its effects on students may hinder teacher intervention. Yoon also pointed to a study conducted by Pepler et al. (1994) who found that while 85% of teachers believed they often or always intervened in bullying situations, only 35% of the students agreed. Yoon also noted the findings of Song and Swearer (2002) who found that students often reported teachers and staff members as contributing to the bullying situation by their negative and threatening actions toward students. Yoon hypothesized that "teachers who

report more empathy toward victims, perceive bullying more seriously, report higher self-efficacy in behavior management" (p. 39) would be more responsive in their responses to bullies and those victimized by bullying behaviors. Yoon suggested that further research might uncover specific characteristics of teachers that may influence their responses to episodes of bullying in the classroom.

When the study was implemented, Yoon (2004) gave teacher participants six vignettes describing bullying incidents with which to rate their perception of seriousness, self-efficacy, feelings of empathy, and likeliness of response. Yoon found that the characteristics of teacher self-efficacy, perceived seriousness, and empathy are predictors of teacher intervention in bullying situations. The perception of seriousness emerged as the strongest characteristic in influencing teacher intervention. Yoon suggested that this perception of seriousness leads to a stronger awareness of the negative impacts of bullying, which renders more purposeful teacher responses. Yoon urged further training in teacher management skills to improve self-efficacy in handling the complexities of bullying behaviors. Yoon cautioned that while the presence of the three characteristics suggested that an intervention likely would take place, the range or strength of the intervention is not indicated. Yoon added that "teachers' responses to the open-ended questions indicated a great deal of variability in how teachers handle bullies" (p. 42). Yoon also found that teachers who expressed strong feelings of empathy, personal self-efficacy, and a sense of seriousness toward bullying were "more likely to report that they would intervene" (p. 42) strengthening the impact of these three variables on teacher reporting. Yoon suggested that when teachers have an enhanced awareness of the

harmfulness of bullying, teacher recognition of the seriousness of a bullying episode with determinations of appropriate responses would likely occur. Yoon also suggested that educating teachers about the effects of bullying on bullies as well as victims might increase their empathy toward all students impacted by bullying. Yoon believed that teacher training should focus on the role that teacher responses play in the contribution to student perceptions of the expectations for a safe school environment. Teachers should be schooled in the various kinds of bullying behaviors for consistent implementation of interventions enhanced by their perceptions of the levels of seriousness of bullying incidents. Yoon cautioned that school cultures might have a permissive tolerance of bullying could subject teachers to respond with lenience. Yoon concluded that a systemic school structure with clear policies and programs to reduce bullying may lend support to teachers that will positively impact their willingness to respond to incidents of bullying.

In another study about teacher responses to student bullying, Sairanen and Pfeffer (2011) surveyed 136 teachers from junior high schools in Finland in an effort to determine whether or not anti-bullying training and teacher experiences could be predictors of teacher intervention in bullying situations. Sairanen and Pfeffer predicted that teachers would have clear attitudes regarding the harmful nature of bullying and would choose to respond rather than ignore bullying situations. Sairanen and Pfeffer developed the following central research question based on teaching experience as a predictor of response: "Is teachers' handling of school bullying influenced by the length of teaching experience?" (p. 332). They also noted that all public schools in Finland had anti-bullying policies and that the percentage of students victimized by bullying ranged

from 7% to 8%. In addition, they noted that a number of participants voluntarily took

part in anti-bullying training that was not controlled by the research team. In their study,

Sairanen and Pfeffer set out to determine the differences in teacher responses between

trained and untrained teachers, particularly in terms of short, medium, and long-term

teacher experiences and the choices that teachers make when responding to bullying.

They assigned teacher responses to bullying incidents according to five levels: (a)

working with the victim, (b) working with the bully, (c) ignoring the incident, (d)

enlisting other adults to help them, and (e) disciplining the bully (p. 334).

Concerning the results of the study, Sairanen and Pfeffer (2011) found that

teachers chose to discipline the bully as their first option. Other options, in descending

order, were enlisting the help of other adults, working with the bully, working with the

victim, and lastly, ignoring the incident. The effect was statistically significant for those

teachers who had undergone anti-bullying training as opposed to those teachers who were

not trained. Sairanen and Pfeffer found that trained teachers scored higher in all options

except ignoring the incident, which they had correctly hypothesized would be statistically

higher for those teachers who were not trained in anti-bullying interventions. Sairanen

and Pfeffer also found that the order of response options was the same for trained and

untrained teachers. However, they added that the depth of the intervention was stronger

for trained teachers. Yet, the small increase among untrained teachers concerning the

option to ignore the situation indicated that untrained teachers might not be aware of the

negative impact of bullying on victims or they may not have the skills to intervene. High

scores in disciplining the bully and in enlisting the help of other adults indicated that,

whether trained or not, teachers will predictably lean toward consequences involving

discipline and support from other staff members. Sairanen and Pfeffer found that

teachers who had undergone anti-bullying training exhibited more skill at handling a

bullying scenario than non-trained teachers. They also noted that teachers often chose to

work less with victims than with bullies. Therefore, Sairanen and Pfeffer suggested that

anti-bullying training "place more emphasis on assisting victims" (p. 339) and include

awareness of the harmful effects of bullying on the victims. Sairanen and Pfeffer also

found no significant difference among the subscales of teacher experience and that long-

term teachers scored higher in the option of working with the bully than those teachers

with short-term experience. They also found that 97% of all teachers had spoken about

bullying with their students. Sairanen and Pfeffer concluded that while their study relied

on the self-reports of teachers, qualitative studies that focus on teacher perceptions of

their handling of bullying incidents might help teachers become more skillful in

responding to the complexities of bullying.

In another related study, Bauman, Rigby, and Hoppa (2008) conducted an online

survey of 735 teachers and school counselors in the United States regarding their choices

of responses to a bullying scenario. Bauman et al. noted that little research exists

regarding teacher responses to bullying. Their study examined the difference in

approaches to bullying taken by counselors and teachers. Bauman et al. believed that

responses to bullying occur in relationship to five actions: (a) ignore the incident, (b)

apply disciplinary consequences, (c) assist victims in skills to counter bullying

aggression, (d) look to other adults for assistance (e) employ constructive interventions

with bullies rather than punitive determinations (p. 838). Their survey also included questions that contrasted the perceptions of both counselors and teachers in their approaches to bullying, including their "professional role (whether teacher or counselor), gender, the presence or absence of school anti-bullying policies and programs, and previous anti-bullying training" (p. 838-839). The scenario presented to teachers and counselors described an incident of indirect or relational bullying, the results of which led to the notion that counselors might be more empathetic to the psychological impact of relational bullying than teachers who may have not had psychosocial training.

In relation to the results of this study, Bauman et al. (2008) found that most teachers would not ignore a bullying incident, although counselors were less likely than teachers to ignore a situation, perhaps because of their psychosocial training. They also found a wide variety of responses from both groups to the hypothetical bullying scenario, which Bauman et al. thought might be attributed to the lack of anti-bullying training for 82% of the teacher participant teachers. According to Bauman et al., nearly half (42%) of the schools had no anti-bullying policy, which may have contributed to the wide disparity and differences in responses of the teachers and counselors. Bauman et al. noted that when asked about working with a bully, "many of the respondents endorsed the item saying they would work to increase the self-esteem of the bully" (p. 849). Bauman et al., however, cited research (Rigby, 1996; Seals & Young, 2003) that indicated that high self-esteem is a character trait of bullies, which led them to concur that the teacher participants of their study lacked some knowledge about these traits, indicating a need for training in bullying awareness and intervention strategies.

In addition, mediation between the bully and the victim was found to be the intervention most likely to be employed, although Bauman et al. believed that mediation between the bully and victim might not be appropriate or successful because of a power differential. Bauman et al. also found that, in general, the respondents viewed ignoring a situation as inappropriate and agreed with appropriate disciplinary procedures in bullying episodes. Both groups favored mediation procedures between victims and aggressors, but counselors favored working with the victim more than teachers and were less likely to approve of determinations of punishment as consequences of bullying. In addition, Bauman et al. found that less than a third of the respondents had received bullying training and discovered that teachers and counselors in schools with anti-bullying policies and programs were more aware of bullying issues and appropriate responses associated with a variety of bullying behaviors. Bauman et al. found a significant disparity in approaches to bullying among counselors and teachers, and they concluded that training in bullying intervention skills should be firmly in place and for all staff within the school organization.

In another study about teacher perceptions about the seriousness of bullying, Yoon, Bauman, Choi, and Hutchinson (2011) administered the *Handling Bullying Questionnaire* online to 146 teachers from South Korea and 282 teachers in the United States. Questions in the survey focused on the use of five bullying intervention styles in relation to the following scenario:

A 12 year old student is being repeatedly teased and called unpleasant names by another, more powerful, student who has successfully persuaded other students to

avoid the targeted person as much as possible. As a result, the victim of this

behavior is feeling angry, miserable and often isolated (p. 319).

In the questionnaire for teachers in the United States, Yoon et al. used the same scales

that Bauman et al. (2008) employed in their study of the differences in approaches to

bullying among teachers and counselors in the United States. Yoon et al. explained the

"five scales were identified based on principal components analysis with 735 United

States teachers and counselors [who] are (a) working with the victim, (b) working with

the bully, (c) ignoring the incident, (d) enlisting other adults, and/or (e) disciplining the

bully" (p. 319). However, Yoon et al. noted that these five interventions were not

included in the questionnaire for the South Korean teachers. Yoon et al. attributed this

omission to differences in language, culture, and perceptions of bullying factors In South

Korea. Teachers' responses to bullying differed little whether or not the school had an

anti-bullying policy or reduction program. They also found that anti-bullying policies did

not have prescribed procedures or plans for teachers to follow and that anti-bullying

programs often have no teacher training module. However, Yoon et al. found little

difference in the choice of interventions between those teachers who received training

and those teachers who did not receive training. Although their findings indicated a need

for better training for teachers, Yoon et al. conceded that the complexities of bullying

cannot be taught in a one or two-day training session. Yoon et al. noted that training

sessions are generally designed to improve teacher awareness of bullying, but do little to

enhance teacher bullying management skills. Yoon et al. concluded by calling for

research into teacher attitudes towards bullying, including training strategies to improve

teacher skills when responding to incidents of bullying.

In another study, Scholte, Sentse, and Granic (2010) surveyed 2547 students in

middle schools in the Netherlands to discover whether or not bullying behaviors in the

classroom were associated with the classroom environment and context. Scholte et al.

depended on self-reports from all participants through the administration of the *Olweus*

Bully/Victim Questionnaire adapted as a Dutch version. Scholte et al. found that when

adolescents believe that bullying in the classroom is understood as acceptable behavior,

bullying is more likely to occur. Scholte et al. pointed out the "effectiveness of targeting

classroom attitudes in anti-bullying intervention programs to decrease bullying in

schools" (p. 795). Scholte et al. found a relation between individual bullying and general

bullying that occurs in the classroom. They pointed out that the impact of bullying on

individual behaviors correlates with Bandura's (1973, 1977) theory of social learning in

that adolescent aggression is passed on to peers who often observe and model bullying

behavior for attention and increased social status. Scholte et al. concluded that teachers

should be provided with assistance concerning classroom management strategies that

build a classroom culture that acknowledges the seriousness of bullying and reduces the

notion of bullying as an accepted behavior. Scholte et al. believed that because student

attitudes in the classroom impact bullying behaviors, anti-bullying interventions should

focus on the reduction of bullying behaviors in the classroom.

In an effort to discover how teachers recognize and respond to bullying, Glasner

(2010) conducted a quantitative study with 145 teacher participants in Massachusetts.

Glasner found that 70% of teachers depended on student reporting of bullying rather than

relying upon their recognition of "signs or other objective evidence of bullying" (p. 536).

Sixty-one percent of the teachers reported that they could identify bullying because of

training in bullying recognition, and nearly all teachers reported they were aware of

cyber-bullying. Glasner found that more than 80% of teachers understood bullying as a

form of verbal and physical aggression and were aware of social exclusion practices in

relational bullying. Glasner also found teachers believed that anti-bullying policies

assisted their attempts at resolving bullying incidents when procedures for interventions

are clearly described. Teachers reported that 97% of their school districts had anti-

bullying policies, although teachers reported that intervention procedures varied

according to different policies. In addition, 54% of the teachers believed that district

anti-bullying policies provided clear procedures that described how to respond to

bullying. A third of all teachers reported calling parents and using counseling and

mediation for victims and bullies as useful strategies. Glasner conceded that the study

had several limitations, including a small sample and little opportunity to enable

participants to answer questions reflectively.   Even though teachers reported a

"willingness to intervene and mediate" (p. 538), Glasner concluded that they had few

opportunities to describe their experiences and effectiveness in responding to the

problem. Glasner recommended better training for teachers with clearly prescribed

interventions supported by school policies and procedures.

In summary, research has revealed several factors that need to be considered

concerning teacher responses to bullying. Students reported a consistent lack of teacher

awareness of bullying as it occurs in the classroom and in common areas of the school. Research has shown that teachers lack a common understanding of the seriousness of bullying in relation to the effects of victimization. Research has also indicated that teachers acknowledge their inability to recognize bullying, especially with indirect or relational bullying. Teachers also reported a lack of efficacy in responding to bullying and implementing strategies because they may not have been trained in how to respond or because they have little time beyond their instructional duties to respond to these incidents. Finally, research indicated the need for improved training to help teachers develop skills to use appropriate bullying intervention strategies and techniques.

Summary and Conclusions

Chapter 2 included a review of the research literature in relation to responses to bullying by researchers, legislators, policymakers, and educators over the past 25 years. Each of the five topics included in this review of the literature focused on a review of research literature in relation to teacher responses to bullying. These five topics included: (a) definitions of bullying, (b) anti-bullying legislation and school district policies, (c) bullying reduction and prevention programs, (d) student and teacher perceptions of bullying, and (e) teacher responses to bullying.

Several themes emerged from the review of this literature. The first theme is that a standard definition for bullying does not exist among teachers, students, parents, educators, and researchers. These multiple definitions have resulted in differences in perceptions and responses to bullying from all subgroups. The ability to recognize various forms of bullying is an important skill when educators, teachers, students, and

parents are faced with identifying and responding to bullying among adolescents. The

second theme is that a shift has occurred from mandatory and inflexible punitive

responses of retributive justice to responses that offer more flexibility in determining

consequences for bullying. such as those found in practices of restorative justice and

shared concern (Skiba et al., 2006; Rigby, 2010). The third theme is the critical role that

teachers play in consistently implementing anti-bullying interventions and programs,

including building positive relationships with students in a whole school effort to reduce

bullying. Olweus (2006) and Rigby and Bradshaw (2006) noted that effective anti-

bullying programs employing whole school approaches rely on the fidelity and

consistency of implementation by teachers and other staff. The fourth theme to emerge

from this literature review is the discrepancy between student and teacher reports of

perceptions of bullying. Teacher and student perceptions of bullying are often widely

disparate (Olweus 2006; Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007; Marshall et al., 2009).

Bradshaw et al. (2007) found that when teachers perceive bullying differently than

students, effective responses from teachers to bullying situations may be overlooked or

lost. The fifth theme is that a wide disparity exists concerning teacher awareness of the

complexities of bullying, teacher perceptions of the seriousness of bullying, inconsistency

of teacher responses, and the degree of teacher intent and involvement when responding

to bullying. Teachers often misunderstand the seriousness of bullying and the effects that

bullying has on those students who are victimized (Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008;

Yoon, Bauman, Choi, & Hutchinson, 2011). While teachers recognize physical and

verbal bullying, they are often unaware when indirect or relational bullying occurs (Atlas

& Pepler, 1998; Ellis & Shute, 2007). Teachers also acknowledge that they feel ineffective in handling bullying issues because they receive little or no training in bullying intervention management (Mishna, Scarcelo, Pepler, & Wiener 2005; Mishna, Pepler, & Wiener, 2006).

In spite of this significant research, a gap still exists in the research literature in terms of qualitative studies about teacher perceptions and responses to bullying (Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008; Marshall et al., 2009). Marshall et al. (2009) noted that much of the research on bullying has focused on measuring the prevalence of bullying through self-reported surveys and questionnaires with few qualitative studies that include data about how teachers define, perceive, and respond to bullying. Instead, surveys and questionnaires often compare teacher responses to student responses concerning bullying situations in the classroom and common areas of the school.

The qualitative study conducted by Marshall et al. (2009) remains one of few studies that explored teacher intent and involvement when responding to student bullying. Marshall et al. gathered qualitative data through an interview process designed to enable teachers to express their perceptions and responses to bullying in their own words. Marshall et al. believed that "a better understanding of teachers' direct experiences and perceptions of bullying is vital for developing effective prevention-intervention efforts in schools" (p. 155). Marshall et al. also believed that their conceptual model of teacher intent and involvement in relation to student bullying "provides a more comprehensive approach to bullying than exists currently in the literature" (p. 155). They believed that this conceptual framework is an important tool that might lead teachers and school

authorities to engage in more productive interventions to reduce and prevent bullying. Marshall et al. called for further research that might validate and revise their two-tiered conceptual framework.

This study was a response to the call for more research by Marshall et al (2009). The central research question of this comparative case study asked: How are teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies? Therefore, this study, driven by its central research question, attempted to further validate the conceptual model developed by Marshall et al. in order to understand how the intent and involvement of middle school teachers when responding to student bullying is impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies.

In the next chapter, the research methodology for this multiple case study will be described. The data collection and data analysis procedures will be presented in relation to how the interview and reflective journal data address the research questions pertaining to teacher definitions of bullying, teacher perceptions of their effectiveness in dealing with bullying, and teacher descriptions of how they respond to bullying. Related documents will also be analyzed in order to understand how school policies and procedures have influenced teachers to act in certain ways when responding to bullying.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying were impacted by district and school antibullying programs and policies at two middle schools located in disparate regions of the United States. In order to achieve this purpose, I described how middle school teachers defined student bullying behaviors based on their own experiences. In addition, I described how middle school teachers responded to incidents of student bullying in their classrooms and on the school campus and how they perceived their effectiveness in responding to bullying behavior in the classroom and on campus. In addition, I reviewed district and school documents to reduce and prevent student bullying to determine the influence of district programs and policies on teacher responses to student bullying.

Chapter 3 includes a description of the research design and rationale for this study. In relation to the methodology, this chapter includes a description of the role of the researcher and the sample size and sampling technique. This chapter also includes a description of the data collection instruments, the plan for recruitment, participation, and data collection, and the plan for data analysis. In addition, strategies for enhancing the trustworthiness of this study and a discussion of ethical considerations are presented.

Research Design and Rationale

The following research questions for this study were based on the conceptual framework for this qualitative study, which is the two-dimensional conceptual model that Marshall et al. (2009) developed. The two dimensions of their conceptual model include teacher intent and teacher involvement when responding to incidents of bullying in the

classroom. Teacher intent refers to teacher responses that are either punitive or constructive. Teacher involvement refers to the role of the teacher when intervening with either direct or indirect responses.

Central Research Question

How are teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying impacted by district and school antibullying programs and policies?

Related Research Questions

1. How do middle school teachers define student bullying?

2. How do middle school teachers describe their responses to incidents of student bullying in their classrooms and on the school campus?

3. How do middle school teachers perceive their effectiveness in responding to and reducing incidents of student bullying?

4. What do district and school documents and archival records reveal about programs and policies to reduce student bullying?

The research approach for this study was a qualitative approach. Merriam (2009) noted that qualitative research is focused on meaning and understanding in which the researcher becomes the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. The researcher employs an inductive process to build concepts, hypotheses, or theories from rich descriptions to find meaning within the context of the study, the participants, and the findings. For this study, the qualitative approach was selected because this study was focused on the meaning and understanding that teachers bring to the topic of student bullying. In addition, the purpose of this qualitative study was not to test a theory or

hypothesis but to use an inductive process to describe how teacher intent and involvement in incidents and student bullying is impacted by district and school antibullying policies and programs.

The research design selected for this study was a multiple case study design. Yin (2014) defined a "case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident" (p. 18). Yin expanded this definition by noting:

> The case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide collection and analysis. (p. 18)

Yin believed that case study research is unique because it explores the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context, which are often not clear. For this study, the phenomenon was defined as student bullying in the classroom and on the school campus, and the context was defined as teacher intent and teacher involvement in relation to school district policies and programs. The case or unit of analysis for this study was the antibullying programs and policies at middle school in relation to their impact on teacher intent and involvement in student bullying incidents. Two cases, one at a middle school in the Pacific region of the United States and the other at a middle school in the Midwest region of the united States, are presented. These two research sites were selected because

faculty at each middle school developed similar antibullying programs and policies that are aimed at significantly reducing bullying behaviors at school. Both schools incorporate the slogan "We don't do that here!" on signs posted across the school campus. The slogan represents a proactive agreement that staff and students are building a school culture that does not accept threatening attitudes, bullying, or violent acts against others. Participants included six teachers from each middle school who teach courses in a variety of subjects to students in Grades 7 and 8 for a total of 12 participants. Yin also noted that case study relies on multiple sources of evidence to present a rich picture of the phenomenon under investigation, and therefore, data were collected from several sources, including teacher interviews, reflective journals maintained by these teachers, and documents related to antibullying programs and policies at both sites.

Other qualitative research designs were considered for this study. A phenomenological design was considered and rejected because the purpose of this study was not to describe the lived experiences of teachers with student bullying incidents, but rather to describe their beliefs and responses to these incidents. In addition, a grounded theory design was considered and rejected because the purpose of this study was not to develop a theory about teacher intent and involvement as Marshall et al. (2009) had created but rather to find supporting evidence to support their theory. An ethnographic research design was considered and rejected because the purpose of this study was not to discover the ethno-social influences that may impact the bullying phenomenon.

Role of the Researcher

Stake (1995) described the role of the case study researcher as teacher, advocate, evaluator, and biographer, but noted that from a constructivist point of view, "of all the roles, the role of interpreter and gatherer of interpretations is central" (p. 99). Stake added that "for science to build a universal understanding," the aim of research is "to construct clearer and sophisticated realities, particularly ones that can withstand disciplined skepticism" (p. 101). For this study, I was the only person responsible for all data collection, analysis, and interpretation, and for that reason, the potential for researcher bias existed. Therefore, it was my responsibility to use specific strategies such as reflexivity that would reduce the potential bias of this study. These strategies are described later in this chapter. It was also my role to follow specific procedures for data collection and analysis to ensure the trustworthiness of this study. In addition, it was my role to conduct an ethical research study that relied on informed consent and protected the confidentiality of participant responses.

In my role as a single researcher, I collected data from a middle school located in a public school district in the Pacific region of the United States where I am employed as vice principal. I also collected data from a middle school located in a public school district in the Midwest region of the United States. It was important to the integrity of this study that my role of the vice principal remained separate from my role as a researcher, and to that end, I used specific strategies such as voluntary participation and informed consent. It is also important to note that my role as vice principal did not include evaluations of any of the participants. In order to enhance the trustworthiness of

this qualitative study, I also followed strict protocols for the collection and analysis of data. I used pseudonyms for the names of the school district, the schools, and the participants in order to ensure confidentiality of the data. All interviews were conducted in a private office at both sites during noninstructional hours. All participant data were stored on a password protected computer in my home office. All participants were able to withdraw from the study at any time.

Stake (1995) also offered several choices in role determination for the researcher, two of which are endemic to the purpose of this study. The two choices are about how much to participate personally in the activity of the case, or how much to pose as expert and how much knowledge to reveal about the phenomenon under investigation (p. 103). These choices only pertained to my role as interviewer. It was important for me as the researcher to maintain a professional demeanor during the interviews that did not yield to anecdotal storytelling with participants who may be familiar with the school's antibullying policies. Stake acknowledged that the researcher must determine how much of his or her personal self to reveal but cautioned that the "role should be an ethical choice, an honest choice" (p. 103). Therefore, it was important that I followed these strict protocols in order to ensure the trustworthiness of this qualitative research.

Participant Selection

For this study, the participants included three teachers from Grade 7 and three teachers from Grade 8 for a total of six participants at each middle school. Therefore, 12 participants representing both middle schools were selected for this study. These participants were selected using purposeful sampling, which is described by Patton

(2002) as sampling that "focuses on selecting information rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study" (p. 230). Patton noted that "studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations." (p. 230). Purposeful sampling was used to provide the richest data possible about teacher responses to student bullying.

Teacher participants were selected according to specific inclusion criteria that emphasized their experience with student bullying in the classroom and on the school campus. These inclusion criteria included the following: (a) the teacher should have at least three years of experience as a certified full-time teacher at the designated middle school in order to ensure rich responses to the interview and reflective journal questions, and (b) the teacher must be a full-time teacher either in a core subject such as English language arts, mathematics, social studies, science or in a non-core elective subject such as health, band or chorus, computer science, and physical education. The principal at Snowfall Middle School asked a school counselor to provide me with a list of potential participants who met the inclusion criteria. The counselor at Sunshine Intermediate School provided me with a list of potential participants who met the inclusion criteria. The relationship between saturation and sample size is sufficient because I purposefully selected six participants from each site in order to obtain the richest data possible.

Instrumentation

For this study, I used two instruments that I designed to collect data. The first instrument was the oral questionnaire that I used to conduct the initial and follow-up individual interviews with the teacher participants. The second data collection instrument

was a reflective journal that teacher participants maintained for 5 school days. An explanation of these instrument designs is presented in the following sections.   I also asked ask an expert panel of educators with advanced degrees in education to review both of these instruments for their alignment with the central and related research questions of this study. In addition, I aligned the interview and reflective journal questions with the research questions(see Appendix E).

Oral Questionnaire

The oral questionnaire that was used to conduct the individual teacher interviews was based on Merriam's (2009) guidelines for conducting effective interviews (see Appendix C). Merriam noted that "interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them," and that it "is sometimes the only way to get data" (p. 88). Merriam also noted that researchers need to determine the amount of structure desired in the interview, which can be highly structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. Because the interview questions and their order were predetermined, this interview could be considered highly structured. However, the interview was semi-structured because probing questions were used to elicit more in-depth responses from participants if needed. The semi-structured interview questions for this study were closely aligned to the central and related research questions for this study. These interview questions were influenced by the interview questions that Marshall et al. (2009) used in their study about how teachers respond to student bullying. Questions adapted from the Marshall et al. study were related to teacher perceptions and personal definitions of bullying. Questions were also designed to focus on how state,

district, and school anti-bullying programs or policies influence teacher responses to

student bullying. Initial interview questions asked teachers to define student bullying, to

describe their beliefs about bullying, and the types of interventions they make when

responding to bullying incidents. Teachers were also asked how they expect staff

members to support them when they respond to student bullying and to describe their role

in implementing state and district anti-bullying policies and procedures. In addition,

teachers were asked whether or not their local school anti-bullying program (if one

exists) supports their responses to bullying. Teacher participants were also asked if they

had received professional development related to appropriate interventions for

responding to bullying. Participants were also asked what kinds of skills they believed

were needed to respond effectively to incidents of bullying. Finally, teachers were asked

if they believe state and district policies about student bullying are effective. Follow-up

interview questions asked participants about their perceptions of where and when

bullying happens and how they believe other teachers react when they observe a bullying

incident. Participants were also asked what happens to students who are identified as

bullying offenders or victims of bullying. They were also asked to describe one

intervention that they believed works best when responding to bullying. I also used

probing questions to explore how teacher responses could be considered direct and

indirect as well as punitive and constructive.

Reflective Journal

Teacher participants were asked to maintain a reflective journal for 5 days by

providing a response to a specific question for each day (see Appendix D). The rationale

for including reflective journals as a data source was that I wanted to pose specific questions that were not addressed in the interviews but were needed to address the research questions. The number of journal questions determined the length of the reflective journal process. The journal entries also allowed participants to reflect in writing as opposed to providing oral responses that did not always provide them with enough time for reflection.

The journal questions were designed in relation to the central and related research questions. Related Research Question 2 asked how middle school teachers described their responses to incidents of student bullying. Therefore, the Day 1 journal entry asked participants to describe their experiences in responding to students who were subjected to indirect or relational bullying such as rumor spreading and social exclusion in class. The Day 2 journal entry asked participants to describe their experiences in responding to physical or verbal student bullying that they may have observed in their classrooms or in the hallways. Therefore, the Day 3 journal entry informed participants that a widely accepted definition of bullying among researchers included three criteria: a pervasiveness or repetition of bullying upon the victim, a power differential between the bully and the victim, and intent to harm the victim physically or emotionally. Participants were then asked if they had been involved in a bullying situation that met the definition of repetition, power imbalance, and intent to harm, and to describe how they responded or might have responded. The central research question asked how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying were impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies. Therefore, the Day 4 journal entry asked

participants to describe their beliefs about suspending students from school who had

bullied others and if approaches other than (or in addition to) suspension should be used

to help offenders reduce their bullying behaviors. Related Research Question 3 asked

how middle school teachers perceived their effectiveness in responding to and reducing

incidents of student bullying. Therefore, the Day 5 journal entry asked participants to

discuss factors such as time, student familiarity, and personal sense of effectiveness (self-

efficacy), in determining their level of involvement and intent to resolve bullying

incidents.

Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

For this case study, I recruited participants from two research sites and collected

data from multiple sources at both schools. The sections below explained how I recruited

these participants, how they participated in this case study, and how I collected data from

all sources in order to answer the central and related research questions for this study.

Recruitment and Participation

For this case study, I first sought a signed letter of cooperation from my research

partners, which included a public middle school district in a state located in the Pacific

region of the United States and a public middle school district located in the Midwest

region of the United States. For the school located in the Pacific region, I completed the

online *Application to Conduct Research in State Public Schools* document through the

state data governance office. For the school located in the Midwest region, I contacted

the superintendent of schools and the school principal to explain the purpose of this study

and to obtain signed letters of cooperation indicating their willingness to be my research

partners. For the school located in the Pacific region, I received approval to conduct this study from the state data governance office. The principal at this middle school also signed a letter of cooperation, indicating a willingness to be my research partner.

I purposefully selected three Grade 7 teachers and three Grade 8 teachers from each middle school, based on specific inclusion criteria. To select these teachers located at the school in the Midwest region, I contacted the lead counselor who acted as the gatekeeper by giving me a list of those teachers who met the inclusion criteria. I also contacted the principal at the school located in the Pacific region, who also acted as the gatekeeper. From that list, I provided a letter of consent to potential participants, asking them if they were interested in participating in this study. If more than three teachers per grade level applied, I selected the first three potential participants who returned their signed consent forms to me. At the request of the principal and the data governance office, consent forms for potential teacher participants at the middle school located in the Pacific region were placed in their school mailboxes, and potential participants were asked to return their signed consent forms to me in my school mailbox. I asked a counselor at the Midwest region middle school to place letters of invitation and attached consent forms in the school mailboxes of Grade 7 and Grade 8 teachers who met the inclusion criteria for participation. Potential participants who were interested in participating in this study were asked to return a signed letter of consent to me in a few days. Once the participants had been confirmed, I contacted them to schedule the initial and follow-up interviews and to explain the procedures for the reflective journals.

Data Collection

For this case study, I collected data from multiple sources, including individual initial and follow-up interviews with teachers, reflective journals, and documents related to state, district, and school anti-bullying policies and programs. Documents included school disciplinary policies and procedures as well as whole school programs for positive behavior. The data collection process that I used for each of these sources is explained in the sections below.

Interviews. At both schools, I asked each participant to participate in an initial and follow-up individual interview. The initial interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes and was audio recorded for accuracy of transcription. The follow-up interview was about 15 minutes in length and was audio recorded. All interviews with teacher participants at the middle school in the Midwest region took place in an office conference room assigned by the principal for privacy, and all interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the teacher participants. All interviews with teacher participants at the middle school in the Pacific region took place at a public place during non-school hours at the convenience of the participants. I provided all participants with a copy of the questions prior to each interview session. I also informed all participants that that I would use probing questions to elicit more in-depth responses when needed. At the end of each interview, I thanked the participants for their time and support of this study.

Reflective Journals. At the end of the initial interview, I explained the data collection procedures that I used concerning the reflective journals. I emailed the five reflective journal questions to all teacher participants within a few days of the completion

of the interviews. Participants emailed their responses to each question to my designated Walden University email address.

Documents. Yin (2014) noted that documents are often collected in case study research to support interview and observation data. Documents may include school policies and procedures, memoranda, and reports. Yin noted that documents can "corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p. 103), including verification of details and contradictory evidence. According to Yin, the researcher must realize that documents are "written for some specific purpose and some specific audience other than those of the case study being done" (p. 105).

For this study, I collected two different types of documents. From school principals, I requested documents about existing school-wide anti-bullying policies as well as state and district policies procedures about responding to and preventing bullying. I also sought documents about anti-bullying programs and records of professional development sessions in relation to school safety procedures, including those documents about how to address school violence and bullying and how to build a safe school culture.

<center>**Data Analysis Plan**</center>

Merriam (2009) described two stages of analysis in case study research. The first stage is a "within case analysis" or single case analysis in which "each case is treated as a comprehensive case" (p.204). For this study, interview responses, reflective journal responses, and district and school documents were analyzed separately for each case. Level 1 analysis of these two cases included coding and categorization of all interview

and reflective journal data. The coding process used for this study followed the coding procedures that Marshall et al. (2009) used for their study, which included line-by-line identification of free codes and codes in-vitro, driven by the Marshall et al. conceptual model of teacher intent and teacher involvement related to student bullying. Level 1 coding analysis continued with axial coding in which common themes and patterns were condensed and categorized. All documents were analyzed using a content analysis, which involves a description of the purpose of the document, the organization and scope of the topics, and the use of the document.

The second level of data analysis involved a cross case analysis. Yin (2014) and Merriam (2009) believed the second level of data analysis is dependent on theory development or the development of theoretical propositions that "helps to focus on certain data and to ignore other data" (Yin, 2009, p. 130). For this case study, the theoretical proposition was based on Marshall et al.'s (2009) two-tiered conceptual model, which represents teachers' responses to bullying within the two domains of teacher intent and teacher involvement. The theoretical proposition was that teacher intent and involvement in student bullying incidents is impacted by state and district anti-bullying programs and policies.

At the second level of analysis, which was the cross case analysis, the coded and categorized data was examined across all sources of data for both cases to determine themes and discrepancies. The constant comparative method (Merriam, 2009) was used to identify these emerging themes and discrepant data, which were the basis for the findings of this study. These findings were presented in relation to the central research

questions, using the lens of the Marshall et al. (2009) conceptual model to analyze and interpret these findings.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Yin (2014) and Merriam (2009) noted that the trustworthiness of a study is particularly important in qualitative research. Because case studies are one type of qualitative research design, specific constructs were relevant to this study. These constructs included credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Each of these constructs is described below in relation to the strategies that I used to improve the trustworthiness of this qualitative research.

Credibility

Internal validity, which is referred to as credibility in qualitative research, is dependent on the researcher's ability to investigate, assess, and analyze the realities constructed by the participants in the study (Merriam, 2009). Credibility addresses the question of how the research findings match reality. In this study, I used the strategy of triangulation by collecting and comparing data from multiple sources, including interviews, reflective journals, and documents. Merriam noted that triangulation also means comparing and cross-checking data collected from people with different perspectives, and therefore, I compared responses from six teachers at each site. I also used the strategy of member checks, or "respondent validation" (p. 217), by asking each participant to determine if the tentative findings for this study were plausible.

Transferability

Merriam (2009) defined external validity as "the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations (p. 223). The element of transferability is best accomplished by using the strategy of rich, thick description in reference to the setting, the participants, and the findings of the study. It is also the responsibility of the qualitative researcher to describe the context of the study and its participants in detail so that the possibility of replication exists. In an effort to ensure transferability, I provided a rich description of the context of the study and the participants from each school. I also supported the findings of this study through the use of direct quotes from participants. In addition, I employed the strategy of typicality by selecting two middle schools that are typical of schools across the United States that have implemented policies and programs to reduce student bullying in the classroom and on the school campus.

Dependability

Reliability is "the extent to which research findings can be replicated" (Merriam, 2009, p. 220). Reliability or dependability is generated when a consistent research design, set within a "single reality" (p. 220), produces similar or matching results when replicated. Strategies for improving reliability of a study include triangulation, clarification of the researcher's position, and maintaining a record of data analysis. As stated earlier, I used the strategy of triangulation by comparing multiple data sources. I also clarified my beliefs and assumptions about how teachers should respond to student bullying in a researcher's journal that I maintained during the data collection and analysis process. I also maintained data collection files indicating the time span and specific

coding and categorization practices related to the data analysis process. In the appendices, I have also included letters of cooperation and informed consent as well as the data collection instruments.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the qualitative counterpart to objectivity. The strategy that Merriam (2009) recommended to maintain the integrity of a research study is reflexivity or "the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher" (p. 219). Merriam argued that researchers need to explain their biases, dispositions, and assumptions in relation to their investigation. Merriam also noted that this clarification of the researcher's position "allows the reader to better understand how the individual might have arrived at a particular interpretation of the data" (p. 219). For this study, I used the strategy of reflexivity by maintaining a researcher's journal. In this journal, I reflected on any biases that I may have had about teacher responses to student bullying.

<div align="center">

Ethical Considerations

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Merriam (2009) noted that "in qualitative studies, ethical dilemmas are likely to emerge with regard to the collection of data and the dissemination of findings" (p. 230). Merriam described three critical elements that can ethically impact the researcher-participant relationship: (a) a clarity and transparency of the purpose of the study, (b) a participant consent request that is appropriate and informed, and (c) a level of privacy afforded with protection from harm. I addressed all three elements during the data collection process.

First, I addressed the ethical concern of clarity and transparency in relation to the purpose of this study by explaining the purpose of this study to potential participants.   In the initial interview with participants, I explained the purpose of this multiple case study, which was to explore how teacher intent and involvement in incidents of student bullying were impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies. I explained to participants that potential outcomes of the study may impact discipline and anti-bullying policies and programs as well as determine a need for professional development that focuses on strategies to help teachers respond to bullying. I explained that all interview questions are derived from a previously published study (Marshall et al., 2009), which I provided to all participants if interested. I explained that this study was designed to add to the knowledge that Marshall et al. found in their research on teacher responses to student bullying.

Second, I addressed the ethical concern of informed consent by asking all participants to sign a consent form once they agreed to participate in this study. The consent form was an invitation for participants to take part in this study by their own volition and included specific procedures designed to ensure privacy and confidentiality. That consent form assured participants that their responses would be held in confidentiality and that pseudonyms would use for their names, the name of the school, and the name of the school district. The consent form also stated the length and location for the initial and follow-up interviews and that these interviews were to be audio recorded. Participants were also asked to review the tentative findings of the study for their plausibility. The consent form also stated that participants could change their minds

or discontinue their participation at any time. Risk and benefits of participation in this study were also stated in this consent form. Participants understood that no compensation was provided for their participation.

In summary, I addressed the ethical considerations for this study by adhering to all procedures set by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Walden University. After this research proposal was approved, I submitted an application for IRB approval, and I understood that I would not be able to collect data until that application was approved. My IRB approval number was 201237423252, received from Walden University IRB in an e-mail dated 04/22/2013.

Summary

Chapter 3 included a description of the research method for this study, particularly in relation to the research design and rationale and the participant selection process for this study. This study used a multiple case study design, and participants were teachers purposefully selected from Grade 7 and Grade 8 from a middle school located in the Pacific region of the United States and a middle school located in the Midwest region of the United States. The central research question for this study asked how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying were impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies. In addition, this chapter included a description of the data collection instruments, the data collection plan, and the data analysis plan. Strategies to improve the trustworthiness of this study were also presented. Potential ethical issues were also discussed.

The direction of this case study evolved from a study on teacher responses to student bullying that Marshall et al. (2009) conducted. I was impressed by the qualitative design of the study and the conceptual model that they conceived and developed from interviews with teachers who were faced with student bullying in their classrooms and on the school campus. When Marshall et al. called for more research to determine the validity of their two-dimensional model on teacher responses to bullying, I designed this study in order to contribute to this significant research. Therefore, this multiple case study followed the interview process established by Marshall et al., using interview questions that had been adapted to this study. Chapter 4 includes the results of this study.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this multiple case study was to explore how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school programs and policies designed to reduce that behavior. Therefore, the central research question asked: How are teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying impacted by state, district, and school antibullying programs and policies? The related research questions were as follows: (a) How do middle school teachers define student bullying? (b) How do middle school teachers describe their responses to incidents of student bullying in their classrooms and on the school campus? (c) How do middle school teachers perceive their effectiveness in responding to and reducing incidents of student bullying? and (d) What do state, district, and school documents and archival records reveal about policies and programs to reduce student bullying?

This chapter is about the results of this study. In this chapter, I describe the setting, the participant demographics, and the data collection process that I used. In relation to data analysis, I first describe how I conducted a single case analysis of the data sources for each case, including the initial and follow-up interviews, the reflective journal questions, and policy documents. I also describe how I conducted a cross-case analysis of all data sources for both cases to determine emergent themes and discrepant data that form the key findings for this study. In addition, I discuss evidence of trustworthiness for this study. The key findings are presented in the results section in relation to the research questions.

Setting

This multiple case study was conducted at two public school sites. One site was

Snowflake Middle School (pseudonym), which was located in a small suburban public

school district in the Midwest region of the United States. For the 2013–2014 school

year, Snowflake Middle School enrolled approximately 1,300 students in Grade 6–8. The

structure of Snowfall Middle School was designed and built in the mid-1990s to support

the middle school team concept. The design of the building provided a separate space for

two grade-level teams for each grade. Teams of teachers provided instruction for

students in a pod of several classrooms. Teacher teams and their students spent most of

the school day in their designated pods and only had contact with other grade levels

before and after school and during elective classes, recess, and lunch. Students at

Snowfall Middle School rarely left the building during the day, because all school classes

and activities were self-contained in one large building. The daily schedule accounted for

nine periods or hours, which varied between 43 and 47 minutes in length. The

instructional school day began at 7:30 a.m. and ended at 2:37 p.m. In terms of student

achievement, results from the state assessments in reading at Snowfall Middle School for

the 2012–2013 school year indicated that, of 1248 students, 6.4% scored at the advanced

level, 45.3% scored at the proficient level, 38.5% scored at the basic level, and 9.8%

scored at the minimal level. Results from the mathematics state assessments indicated

that 17.1% of the students scored at the advanced level, 45.3% at the proficient level,

29.1% at the basic level, and 8.5% at the minimal level. In relation to free and reduced

lunch eligibility, an indicator of the socioeconomic condition of the community, only

16% of the students were eligible for the program. In terms of ethnic or racial identity,

90% of the students reported they were White not Hispanic, 3.4% Hispanic, 3.1% Asian

or Pacific Islander, 2.6 %, Black, not Hispanic, and .9% Native American or Native

Alaskan. During the time that I collected data at this site, I did not observe any evidence

of organizational conditions that may have influenced my interpretation of the results,

such as changes in personnel, budget cuts, or other trauma.

The other site in this multiple case study was Sunshine Intermediate School

(pseudonym), which was located in a small suburban public school district in the Pacific

region of the United States. For the 2012–2013 school year, Sunshine Intermediate

School enrolled 630 students in Grade 6–8. At Sunshine Intermediate School, there were

no grade level teacher–student teams as was the practice at Snowfall Middle School, but

some core academic teachers provide instruction across grade levels. For example, an

English language arts, science, math, or social studies teacher provided instruction for

four or five Grade 8 classes and two or three Grade 6 or 7 classes. The results from the

state assessments in reading and mathematics for the 2011–2012 school year indicated

that 58% of students in Grade 8 were proficient in reading and 54% of students were

proficient in mathematics. In relation to free and reduced lunch eligibility, 50% of the

students were eligible for the program. In relation to ethnic or racial identity, 35.5% of

the students reported they were Filipino, 17.5% Hispanic, 16.2% White non-Hispanic,

16.7% Native Hawaiian, 6% Pacific Islander, 4.1% Asian, 1.8% multi-racial, .8% Black,

non-Hispanic, .8% Native American or Native Alaskan, and .6% Portugese. I also did

not observe any organizational conditions at this site that impacted data collection.

Participant Demographics

Participants included three Grade 7 teachers and three Grade 8 teachers from each school for a total of 12 participants. I purposefully selected these teachers based on the following inclusion criteria for potential participants: (a) the teacher must have at least three years of experience as a certified full-time teacher at the designated middle school in order to ensure rich responses to the interview and journal questions, and (b) the teacher must be a full-time teacher, either in a core subject such as English language arts, mathematics, social studies, science or in a noncore elective subject such as health, band or chorus, computer science, and physical education.

Case 1: Snowfall Middle School

All teacher participants at Snowfall Middle School were highly qualified teachers, which meant that, according to the NCLB Act, they were licensed in their discipline or subject for the middle school level. The three Grade 7 teachers, Ms. Snow (pseudonym), Mr. Yukon (pseudonym), and Mr. Kelvin (pseudonym), had taught at Snowfall Middle School for many years, ranging from 7 to 20 years. The Grade 8 teachers, Ms. Frost (pseudonym), Ms. Tundra (pseudonym), and Ms. Celsius (pseudonym), had taught at Snowfall Middle School from 6 to 12 years. All of these teachers lived in the area, and one teacher had attended the school as a student. Two of the three teachers served as administrative and site coordinators at the school. Table 2 presents a summary of these demographics for the seventh and eight grade teacher participants at Snowfall Middle School.

Table 2

Case 1: Snowfall Middle School Teacher Participant Demographics

Teacher Participants	Grade	Subjects	Years
Ms. Snow	7	Mathematics	6
Mr. Yukon	7	Social Studies	20
Mr. Kelvin	7	Mathematics	14
Ms. Frost	8	U.S. History	6
Ms. Tundra	8	Science	10
Ms. Celsius	8	Science	12

Case 2: Sunshine Intermediate School

In contrast to the teacher participants at Snowfall Middle, the teacher participants at Sunshine Intermediate represented a variety of elective and core subjects across all grade levels at the school. According to the NCLB Act definition, all of the teacher participants were all highly qualified or licensed in their discipline. Years of experience ranged from 4 years to 25 years. Two teachers had taught at the school for 10 years and one for 14 years. In relation to courses, of the Grade 7 teachers, Ms. Fairer (pseudonym) taught choir and piano to all grade levels, Mr. Regal (pseudonym) taught health classes to Grade 6 and 7 students, and Ms. Kinder (pseudonym) taught social studies to Grade 7 students. Of the Grade 8 teachers, Ms. Divine (pseudonym) taught math to both Grade 7 and 8 students, Mr. Golden (pseudonym) taught science to Grade 6 and 8 students, and Mr. Patent (pseudonym) served as an inclusion teacher supporting Grade 8 special education students in the general education classes. Table 3 presents a summary of the participant demographics for the seventh and eight grade teacher participants at Sunshine Intermediate\School.

Table 3

Case 2: Sunshine Intermediate School Teacher Participant Demographics

Teacher Participants	Grade	Subjects	Years
Ms. Fairer	7/8	Music	4
Ms. Kinder	7	Social Studies	25
Mr. Regal	7	Health	10
Ms. Divine	8	Mathematics	6
Mr. Golden	8	Science	12
Mr. Patent	8	Special Education	14

Data Collection

For this multiple case study, I collected data from multiple sources, including individual initial and follow-up interviews with teachers, reflective journals that each teacher maintained, and documents related to the antibullying programs and policies at each school. I describe the data collection process for each case in the sections below.

Case 1: Snowfall Middle School

In relation to the interviews, I conducted all initial interviews during school hours in the privacy of a counselor's office. I conducted three interviews on May 1, 2013, with the remaining three interviews on May 3, 2013. Interviews ranged from 35 to 45 minutes. I recorded the nterviews on iPads and an electronic recording device. I conducted the follow-up interviews by phone during the first ten days of June before the school year ended and after I had received all journal responses. I made appointments with participants and scheduled follow-up interviews at their convenience. Follow-up interviews ranged from 15 to 20 minutes.I recorded these interviews using iPads and a digital recording device.

Concerning the reflective journals, during the week of May 13, 2013, I emailed five journal reflection questions, one each day, to each participant over a period of five days. All participants responded to each daily reflective journal question and emailed their responses to me at my Walden University email address.

In relation to the documents, a grade-level counselor at Snowfall Middle School provided me with several documents including the following: (a) T-chart of behaviors, (b) behavior tracking form, (c) PowerPoint presentation of the initial faculty meeting, (d) positive behavior intervention support (PBIS) brochure, and (e) the state bullying policy. In addition, I used the district and school websites to find documents relating to school and district policies and procedures regarding student behavior and discipline as well as operational information such as daily schedules and local school rules.

Case 2: Sunshine Intermediate School

In relation to the interviews, I conducted all initial interviews at a public site away from the school. Five of the six participants met with me at the local senior citizens center on the morning of Monday, October, 7, 2013, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. during the week-long school intercession following the end of the first term. I scheduled each interview in one-hour increments, although each interview averaged 45-50 minutes in length. The sixth participant met with me on Monday night at 6:00 p.m. at the main office of my condominium complex. I conducted follow-up interviews in the last two weeks of October with the final interview concluding on October 31, 2013. I recorded all initial and follow-up interviews on IPads and a digital recording device.

Concerning the reflective journals, I emailed reflective journal questions to all participants using their personal email addresses. The research agreement with the state data governance office stipulated that no communication regarding research between me and teacher participants could take place at the school or by using school email addresses. The data governance agreement stipulated that communication by memos in teacher mailboxes in the school's main office was acceptable. All participants were informed of this communication restriction.

In relation to the documents, I used only those documents available within the public domain. Documents included the school's demographic reports as well as state bullying and discipline policies that were available online through the State Department of Education website. I also referred to local school documents and school policies that administrators and faculty made available to students, parents, and the general public on the Sunshine Intermediate School website or sent to them in the mail.

In terms of variations in relation to the research sites, I did not observe any personal or organizational conditions in either school that might have influenced data collection, particularly in relation to participant responses to the interviews or the reflective journals. However, an unexpected snowstorm occurred in the region of Snowfall Middle School that resulted in the closure of school for May 2, 2013, the second day of my interview schedule. Therefore, I needed to reschedule the interview times for the remaining three teachers for May 3, 2013, which was not a problem. Another variation in the data collection process occurred when the school district for Sunshine Intermediate School did not give me approval to conduct my study until late

August, 2013.   Therefore, I collected interview and journal data from teacher participants during September and October, 2013, even though I had planned to collect data during May and June of 2013.

Single Case Analysis: Interview and Reflective Journal Data

For each single case, I began the data analysis process by coding the interview and reflective journal transcripts for each participant for each case. I conducted line-by-line coding that Charmaz (2006) recommended in order to stay as close to the data as possible. I coded data for each question on a two-sided template that included specific responses from participants in each case for comparison purposes. Some codes appeared more frequently from participants in the first case and less frequently for participants in the second case. I noted recurring codes and calculated the number of participants from each case whose comments fell within the recurring specific codes. This coding enabled me to construct categories for each case and across both cases.

Based on my coding of all of the interview and reflective journal transcripts, I constructed the following six categories: (a) Category 1: Teacher Beliefs about Bullying, (b) Category 2: Teacher Responses to Bullying, (c) Category 3: School-Wide Anti-Bullying Programs, (d) Category 4: Professional Development, (e) Category 5: District and State Anti-Bullying Policies, and (f) Category 6: Conceptual Framework: Teacher Intent and Involvement. For each category, I constructed sub-categories and presented data to support these sub-categories. A summary table of these sub-categories is also presented for each of these six categories.

Category 1: Teacher Beliefs about Bullying

Category 1 pertained to how teachers define bullying and where and when they believe it happens at their school. This category included responses from participants to the following: *Interview Question 1*: How do you define bullying? *Interview Question 2*: What do you believe about student bullying? *Follow-up Interview Question 3*: Describe your perceptions about when and where student bullying happens in your classroom or on this school campus.

Case 1: Defining bullying. The majority of Snowfall Middle School teachers defined bullying as behavior that involves the following: (a) intimidation, (b) an imbalance of power, (c) social, emotional, and physical harm, and (d) social hierarchies.

Three Snowfall Middle School teachers defined bullying as intimidating behavior toward victims, which means to make someone fearful or afraid especially with threats which can affect one's ability to function in an educational environment. Mr. Yukon remarked, "There's a demeaning element to it, and it's not an enjoyable communication for the other student at all, and [it is] often intimidating". Ms. Snow noted that bullying included "trying to make student[s] feel bad about themselves or feel foolish". Ms. Frost believed that peer-to-peer harassment is critical to the definition of bullying, which is a form of intimidation. Ms. Frost added,

> The key would be the unwelcomed part of it because, in my opinion, something
> would be harassing to me if someone said that, but to the student, 'well that's my
> best friend and that's how we talk to each other'. Whether they should or

shouldn't talk to each other, I think that's where the difference between bullying
and that relationship with a peer comes in.

Mr. Yukon noted that demeaning tones of conversation may signal the possibility of
intimidation,

It's more involving observation and watching the way two kids are interacting,
but it's when one student says or does something and it's the tone of it. There's a
demeaning element to it, and it's not an enjoyable communication for the other
student at all and often intimidating.

Three Snowflake Middle School teachers spoke to the imbalance of power
between the offender and the victim that is involved in bullying behavior. Ms. Frost
remarked, "It's not two sided." Ms. Snow described bullying as "taking advantage of
someone else in order to get a gain of some sort. A lot of times it has do with control and
students picking at another student." Mr. Kelvin added, "It definitely has something to
do with somebody taking advantage of someone else in order to get a gain of some sort."

Four Snowflake Middle School teachers reported bullying as causing social,
emotional, and physical harm to students. Ms. Frost noted, "I would say bullying is any
verbal or physical or unwanted harassment." Ms. Celsius added, "It would be being
harmful emotionally, physically, spiritually to a person repeatedly." Mr. Kelvin reflected
on the impact of cyberbullying by stating, "You can't do physical bullying electronically,
but socially and emotionally," adding, "It's part of that physical, social, [and] emotional
[area] where another individual is making them feel uncomfortable, either in a physical
way, a social way, or [an] emotional way." Ms. Tundra remarked that bullying is

"harassing in a manner that is either emotionally or physically harm[ful] to someone in a targeted manner. It doesn't have to be physical. It's emotional and verbal, the intent to harm one in some form or fashion."

Three Snowfall Middle School teachers defined bullying as behavior that thrives in a social hierarchy that results in the social exclusion of some students. Ms. Frost remarked, "We see a lot more of social status bullying. You're cool, you're not cool. I'm an athlete, you're not. That's the type of student bullying I see more often." Ms. Frost added that higher status groups often target lower status groups:

Often it's the popular girls vs. the nerdy girls or the jock boys vs. the sissy boys. In many of these cases, if you asked the bully, they don't mean anything by it or they act as if there is a natural order to life that entitles them to treat others like this. The students here are almost more calculating and manipulative with their bullying than they are physical.

Mr. Yukon also noted the effects of adolescent social exclusion on children and parents:

There's a certain amount of cruelty that you see among adolescent girls sometimes towards each other and these parents come in, and they don't know what to do. Their child has been excluded from her group [so] they don't know why. There's no answer to it.

Mr. Yukon also noted that often one person does not like someone and that is the reason for the bullying behavior. Mr. Yukon pointed out that having social status may create insecurity for potential offenders because of a need to be admired and socially accepted by their peers. Mr. Yukon believed that these students "make up for that insecurity by

picking on other kids of lower status. It's often high status students, but not always. It's students within the group who have a certain amount of status within the group, who are doing the bullying to kids outside that group." Ms. Frost believed that the lack of diversity in the student population creates social hierarchies that can be devastating to some students:

> In our building, there's [a] lack of diversity. For the most part, we are a largely a homogeneous population. We are largely middle-class, some a little lower, some a little higher. We are largely Christian. We are largely white or Caucasian.

Ms. Frost believed that indirect bullying at school is often based on socio-economic differences within the student population rather than racial differences. She added, "We do have the occasional incidents where it is racial but not as frequently as you would see social class bullying."

Case 2: Defining bullying. The majority of Sunshine Intermediate School teachers defined bullying as (a) unwanted and unwelcome behavior, (b) intentional verbal and physical harassment, (c) persistent and repetitive, (d) involving power and control over victims, and (e) causing physical, spiritual, and emotional harm.

Three Sunshine Intermediate School teachers defined bullying as unwanted and unwelcomed behavior. Ms. Divine noted, "When one student expresses that they no longer want to receive that kind of teasing, verbal or physical, they don't even have to express it necessarily for it to be bullying." Mr. Regal added, "I would say bullying is an unwanted behavior that is important to another student." Mr. Golden believed unwelcomed behavior is never appropriate and added that he "would take a direct

approach and talk to the student exhibiting the unwelcome behavior. There is not any situation where this type of behavior is justified."

Four Sunshine Intermediate School teachers defined bullying as intentional verbal and physical harassment. Ms. Kinder stated, "Bullying to me is any act a student does to intentionally hurt another person, whether it's physical or verbal abuse of any type." Ms. Kinder added, "Anytime we hear about someone doing something to themself or kill themself because they have been relentlessly bullied, that just breaks my heart. I wish I was there to help them." Ms. Divine noted, **"Bullying essentially is causing another student or students to feel maybe fearful or attacked in some way."** Mr. Patent defined bullying as "making fun of the other person." All of these teachers believed that this verbal and physical harm was intentional.

Three Sunshine Intermediate School teachers defined bullying as persistent and repetitive behavior. Ms. Fairer noted that **"**it can't be just one lone situation." Ms. Divine noted, "If they no longer want it [bullying] and the other person keeps doing it, then I think it becomes bullying and then it's persistent." Ms. Divine continued, "The thing that does come to mind in terms of repetitiveness is repeat offenders. I've dealt with students who continually bullied others, but not necessarily the same victim every time." Mr. Regal added, "Repetitiveness of bullying is that something bad is probably going to happen if there is not an immediate and direct intervention."

Three Sunshine Intermediate School teachers defined bullying as using power to gain control over others. Ms. Fairer noted, **"**Bullying is [a] true attempt at getting at some other student by a group of students or one student [or] anything that totally strips a

student of their identity and their feelings with [the] intent to hurt the other student." Mr. Patent believed bullying is perpetuated "by somebody that tries to show that they're stronger, they're better, or making fun of the other person." He added, "If they're [potential victims] sitting in a class worrying about what some kid's going to do, they're absolutely not going to learn. I mean it could be a power that goes way beyond what anybody thinks it could." Mr. Regal commented, **"**It usually involves a kid trying to get something from somebody or to establish some sort of power over somebody to gain control." Mr. Golden added, "Someone has to feel like they have power over somebody else, and the bully does what he or she does because of that power differential." He added that "there has to be a perceived power differential because, if not, if the person you're picking on was more powerful than them, they would never do it." Mr. Golden qualified his notion that power is not dependent on size differential by stating, **"**It doesn't necessarily have to do with size because a bigger kid could be picked on by a smaller kid as long as there is that perception of 'I have some power over you.'"

Four Sunshine Intermediate School teachers defined bullying as behavior that subjects victims to physical, social, or emotional harm. Ms. Fairer noted, **"**It can be bullying in a lot of different areas, whether bullying about a physical appearance, bullying about the type of social economic background." She added, "Bullying is true attempt at getting at some other student by a group of students or one student, anything that totally strips a student of their identity and their feelings with intent to hurt the other student." Ms. Divine noted that bullying is defined as **"**students who are basically picking on other students, whether it's individually or by group. It may be threats or

emotional kind of teasing, picking on them in some way."   Mr. Patent defined bullying as making fun of the other person and added, "The bullies, all bigger, older and stronger, will take over an area and will enforce all underclassmen to stay away. This enforcement can be both physical and/or emotional." Mr. Regal added, "I would say bullying could be something socially [or it] could be physical."

Case 1: Teacher beliefs about bullying. A majority of Snowfall Middle School teachers shared beliefs that bullying (a) happens when they are not around, (b) has deep and long-lasting effects, and (c) requires teacher awareness to control it.

Four Snowfall Middle School teachers believed that bullying happens often, if not all the time beyond a teacher's awareness and visibility. Ms. Frost believed, "I would say the majority of the outright bullying happens when we're not around. Students for the most part understand that what they are doing is wrong and don't want to get caught doing it." Ms. Snow commented, "[Bullying] happens all the time. We're only aware of a very small amount of it. Kids are less apt to do it in front of an adult." Ms. Tundra said she must always monitor students because "I think that the where and when could occur at any time and could occur in any place." Mr. Kelvin believed that bullying "happens out of the earshot and visually away from the teachers." Mr. Yukon agreed adding, "Bullying occurs in the lunchroom, in the bus, pretty much out of the earshot of people that are monitoring."

Three Snowfall Middle School teachers believed that bullying has deep and long-lasting effects for victims in school and in later years. Ms. Frost noted that "the effects are far more reaching than we as adults believe initially." Ms. Frost added, "The more

you allow something, the more it becomes, in their eyes, okay. If that continues, then eventually the bully believes it's okay to do it, and the victim believes that it's okay to have that done to them." Ms. Frost continued, "I believe the effects of student bullying can be extremely long-lasting. Repeated bullying can completely reshape a person's opinion of themselves, and it can completely wipe away everything that they know to be true." In the school setting, Mr. Yukon noted bullying often happens in the restrooms because there are no cameras or adult supervision, and it has a negative and unhealthful effect on students who are fearful of entering these facilities. Mr. Yukon added, "I know there are some students who just refuse to go to the bathroom during the day. They won't use our bathroom. They just won't go to the bathroom, but I've heard students say they just hold it all day long." Ms. Snow believed that adolescent bullying is worse at the middle school level than at the elementary or high school level because students become victims of taunting, teasing, and rumors that often negatively impact their self-esteem later in life.

Three Snowfall Middle School teachers noted that teacher awareness is critical in preventing bullying. Mr. Kelvin noted the importance of being aware of what may be going on in the locker bay areas where he believed most of the bullying behaviors occur. He added that when observing possible bullying, he tries to focus on a student's body language, "If they're just kind [of] sitting, isolated to themselves, their body language tells you so much, and their eyes are the other ones. Middle school students' eyes do not lie". In relation to observing student emotions, Mr. Kelvin noted, "[You've] got to make a conscious effort [to pay attention to the individual's needs], because you could be so

worried about your content that you forget about these are human beings and individuals that are your number one priority." Ms. Snow commented, "There is more going on than we're aware of. We know it's there, but we don't see it. We don't when you have hundred 145 students in your house area." In a three minute passing period, Ms. Snow noted that teachers must get ready for the next class, and therefore, they cannot always watch for incidents of bullying behavior. Ms. Tundra noted, "I think it's important that I'm always monitoring the students and I think that [bullying is happening] because of the environment, certainly of a middle school, where in a large middle school, we've got students interacting with each other all day long, at all times, and in all places."

Case 2: Beliefs about bullying. The majority of Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed bullying (a) is an inevitable part of life and (b) demonstrates a lack of adolescent maturity.

Five of the six Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed that bullying is an inevitable part of life, a rite of passage that is wrong. Ms. Kinder commented, "I feel that student bullying is wrong. I do not like it. It really bothers me if I see it happen, which is mostly going to be in the classroom when someone's making remarks [about] someone. It's wrong." Ms. Divine added, "I think of bullying as almost this inevitable part of life but not necessarily everyone's life." Ms. Divine noted, "It's something that I don't think all kids will do or all kids will necessarily be a part of, but I think that most kids experience it in some way." Mr. Patent commented, "I think that student bullying used to be like a rite-of-passage that the older kids always bullied the younger kids, and people seemed to think that that was okay." Mr. Golden agreed by adding, "In our days, we

didn't think about that, if somebody stepped out of line, they were put back in place, and my feeling is bullying is the same thing." Mr. Regal noted, "I think it could potentially be the most destructive behavior, have the greatest impact on the kid that's being bullied, not only throughout school, but it could be something that stays with them lifelong."

Three Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed that bullying behavior may be due to a lack of maturity. Ms. Fairer remarked, "I think many of our students aren't intentionally trying to bully" and added that many students lack maturity because they are junior high school students. Ms. Fairer also noted, "They don't have the maturity or the ability, some of them, to sort out different things, so that when some of this behavior appears, their reaction is not expected because their feelings are all of a sudden hurt." She added, "I feel that students should be aware of what they're doing, they should know what it looks like, they should know what the results are and how it feels." Ms. Divine believed that "bullying is going to happen because these kids are growing up; they're going through so much." Mr. Golden believed that adolescent students are fearful and lack the maturity to stand up and speak out about bullying. She added:

> Sometimes we allow it to continue because nothing is done to stop it, and part of that is because the people who are victims of bullying a lot of times don't speak out, because maybe they're afraid to say something because of retaliation or whatever by the bully or their friends. And that's the thing, unless kids are specifically asked, a lot of times they won't come forward.

Case 1: Bullying occurrences. Five Snowfall Middle School teachers believed that bullying occurs (a) in a variety of places, including the cafeteria, the playground,

classrooms, hallways, the school bus, locker bays, and restrooms and (b) anytime during

school and before and after school, particularly when teachers are not visible to students.

In relation to the cafeteria, Ms. Frost remarked:

> The cafeteria [is] a very defined social setting. This table is where we sit all the
>
> time. Don't come and sit at our table; we won't sit at your table, and so it blocks
>
> the students off so much more in the cafeteria because it's routine almost.

Ms. Snow agreed, noting that "it happens in the cafeteria because there's very little

supervision for the number of students that we have." Ms. Snow added that bullying also

occurs on the playground because supervision is not adequate. In relation to the

classroom, Ms. Celsius noted that bullying often occurs when students are in a large

group setting like the classroom, where teachers are not able to observe individual student

behavior. Ms. Frost added that bullying occurs when students are working in small

groups in the classroom because the teacher is unable to monitor all of the groups at the

same time. Ms. Snow agreed that bullying often occurs in small groups, particularly

when students do not like each other. Ms. Frost noted that a majority of bullying

incidents occur during free time such as passing in the hallways. Ms. Celsius agreed,

noting that when students see that teachers are talking to other students, "then they know

that you are preoccupied [and] they'll push each other." Mr. Yukon also believed that

"bullying occurs in the lunchroom [and] on the bus, pretty much out of the earshot of

people that are monitoring." Ms. Snow added that common areas [i.e. exits and bus

areas] are often places where bullying occurs. Concerning student lockers, Mr. Kelvin

noted, "They have their ways of doing it in large areas like the locker bay area when you

have 120 kids in there, and they pass each other, walking from class to class in the hallways and the locker rooms, places where the adults just aren't." Mr. Kelvin added, "Watch what's going on in those locker bays; I don't think we all do a good enough job of that. I try to get out of the house area every day [and] every hour but that's where the most of the bullying goes on, if you look at our surveys." In relation to bullying in the restrooms, Ms. Snow commented:

I think it happens most of the times in restrooms since there's no camera in there or anything so I think it happens in restrooms often. I know there are some students who just refuse to go to the bathroom during the day. They won't use our bathroom[s]. Three Snowfall Middle School teachers also believed that student bullying occurs anytime, but particularly when teachers are not present. Ms. Snow noted that bullying incidents happen whenever an adult is not looking. Mr. Yukon added, "Most the time I think it happens out of the earshot and visually away from the teachers." Ms. Tundra also noted:

I think that bullying can really occur at any time. I think that it's really because of the environment certainly of a middle school. We've got students interacting with each other all day long, at all times, and in all places. So I think that the where and when [of bullying] could occur at any time and could occur in any place.

Case 2: Bullying occurrences. Five Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed that bullying occurs (a) in a variety of places, including classrooms, restrooms, and hallways and (b) whenever students know that adults are not present. In relation to the classroom, Ms. Fairer noted, "Yes, it happens in my classroom if my back is turned, but my back is rarely turned." Ms. Divine also added that note passing and obscene

gestures are difficult to observe in the classroom, and she commented that she has seen "signals across the room, like pointing, as if there's some sort of knowledge about some kid or a rumor going around. I'll see kids acknowledging that they know something about somebody." Mr. Regal reported that bullying sometimes occurs in the classroom when he is preoccupied:

> If I'm over here visiting on the left side of the room with some kids, the bully might see that as an opportunity, if he's on the other side, to put a little poke in there. It has happened when I am giving direct instruction where a kid will speak out, and the bully sees that as an opportunity to pounce on him right away.

Mr. Patent added, "If there's a group of kids in the classroom sitting there and you know that one of them looks like they're not happy while the rest of them are talking, then it's probably some bullying going on." Ms. Fairer also described threatening activities that occur in the restrooms. She added, "Sometimes it's the restrooms that aren't monitored", indicating that these facilities may not have enough supervision. Ms. Kinder believed that bullying occurs in the hallways, particularly when students are passing between classes. Mr. Golden also noted, "I hear about incidents from students during passing in the hallways and at recess. I don't know if there's any bullying involved." Mr. Patent, however, believed that bullying can happen in the hallway right in front of the classroom door:

> If everybody blocks that door, then the bully could be waiting to try and pinch him as they come through, preventing him from getting out, and then he could start [shouting,] Oh, what did you do? You shoved me! You touched me!

Ms. Fairer said "I think whenever there's no authority figure present or there's not a strong presence of one. They (students) know that if there's any chance at an adult will not be able to see something, that's where it can happen." Ms. Kinder said, "it [bullying] happens outside in the yard, I think it happens in private, maybe in bathrooms, in places where there's not a lot of supervision". Mr. Patent added that the "first thing that comes to mind would be that it would happen if there was a lack of adult supervision".

Table 4 below includes a case comparison of the sub-categories that I constructed after I analyzed the data from the interview and journal responses.

Table 4

Case Comparison of Sub-categories Related to Category 1: Teacher Beliefs about Bullying

_____

Case 1	*Case 2*
Defining bullying	*Defining bullying*
--Intimidation	--Unwanted and unwelcome behavior
--Imbalance of power	--Intentional verbal and physical harassment
--Social, emotional, and physical harm	--Persistent and repetitive
--Social hierarchies	--Power and control over victims
	--Physical, spiritual, and emotional harm
Beliefs about bullying	*Beliefs about bullying*
--happens when they are not around	-- is an inevitable part of life
--has deep and long-lasting effects	--demonstrates a lack of adolescent maturity
--requires teacher awareness to control it	

(table continues)

Case 1	*Case 2*
Bullying occurrences	*Bullying occurrences*
--in a variety of places, including the cafeteria,	--in a variety of places, including
classrooms, the playground, school bus, restrooms,	classrooms, hallways, and restrooms
and hallways locker bays,	--whenever students know that adults are not
--anytime during school, before and after school	present.
--when teachers are not visible to students	

Table 2 is a summary of how teachers from both schools define their beliefs about student bullying. Teachers at both schools defined bullying in similar ways. Snowfall Middle School teachers defined bullying as controlling behavior meant to socially, emotionally, or physically harm the victim or victims within the context of student-created social hierarchies Sunshine Intermediate School teachers also defined bullying as persistent, controlling, and causing physical, spiritual, and emotional harm. Teachers at both schools also reported some differences in their beliefs about bullying. Snowfall Middle School teachers believed bullying has long-lasting effects on student victims, happens when they are not around, and requires their awareness to control it. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed that bullying arises from issues of adolescent immaturity and happens all the time because it is an inevitable part of the middle school adolescent experience. In terms of where bullying occurs, teachers at both schools reported some differences due to the physical structure of the campuses. Snowfall Middle School teachers observed student interactions within the team pod area that included locker bays and classes for their team alone. These teachers believed that

physical bullying rarely happens in their team areas. They believed indirect bullying that results in social exclusion and emotional harm is more prevalent among their students than direct bullying. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers were not teamed with other teachers and students. Their classrooms were situated throughout an open campus comprised of portable classrooms and permanent buildings. Rather than working with the same students all day in one pod area, Sunshine Intermediate School teachers observed students as they arrived and entered their classrooms from different areas of the campus. Their interactions and observations of student behaviors were limited to class sessions and recess duty on campus. Students stayed together in teams all day at Snowfall Middle School, while students at Sunshine Intermediate School moved freely about the campus and met each other at different times of the day and week. Despite differences in interaction with students, teachers at both schools agreed that because bullying happens when teachers are not looking, teacher awareness and visibility are key factors in controlling it.

Category 2: Teacher Responses to Bullying

Category 2 pertained to how teachers intervened when faced with student incidents of bullying, the skills they might need, support from others, and their interventions when responding to indirect bullying (relational) or direct bullying (physical and/or verbal). This category included responses from participants to the following: *Interview question 3:* When responding to a student bullying incident, what kinds of interventions have you made? *Reflective journal question 1:* Describe your experiences in responding to students who are subjected to indirect or relational bullying

such as rumor spreading and social exclusion in class. *Reflective journal question 2:* Describe your experiences in responding to physical or verbal student bullying that you have observed in your classroom or in the hallways. *Reflective journal question 3*: A widely accepted definition of bullying among researchers includes three criteria: (a) the impact of the pervasive nature or repetition of bullying upon the victim, (b) a power differential between the bully and the victim, and (c) the intent to harm the victim physically or emotionally. Have you been involved in or responded to a bullying situation that fulfills the definition of repetition, power imbalance, and intent to harm? Please describe. If not, how might you respond? *Interview question 8:* What skills do you believe you need to effectively intervene with a bully or a victim in a bullying incident? *Follow-up Interview Question 4:* Describe one intervention or strategy that works best for you when responding to a bullying situation? *Reflective journal question 5***:** When you approach a bullying situation, what factors such as time, student familiarity, and personal sense of effectiveness (self-efficacy) determine your level of involvement and intent to resolve the situation? *Interview question 4:* How do you expect staff members to support you when you have responded to incidents of bullying?

Follow-up Interview question 2: How do you believe other teachers react when they see a student bullied**?**

   Case 1: Talking with students. All six Snowfall Middle School teachers noted that their first interventions involved talking to students about the bullying incident. Ms. Frost explained that her first intervention is to make light of the issue by using humor "to diffuse the immediate situation." If students are slow to respond to the humor, the next

step is to offer students the choice of stopping the incident or meeting with her outside

the classroom to discuss the problem. Ms. Celsius noted that she takes students aside,

usually one-on-one, and talks about the effects of bullying. Mr. Yukon noted that his

method of intervening is to confront the offender and point out that it might be necessary

to report the incident. Ms. Snow noted that teachers have a "low tolerance for bullying"

and that student conferences between both parties are scheduled at the first sign of

bullying. Mr. Kelvin noted teachers work to develop relationships to improve

communication with students when they are troubled by bullying and teasing. He

explained that teachers intervene in minor bullying conflicts and "build that relationship,

that rapport… that they [students] can come talk to us and we can work it out." Ms.

Tundra reported, "I try to use a whole number of interventions. I mean, first and

foremost, I've intervened. I step in, physically step in, and I talk with students, interview

students, and I follow up with students." Ms. Tundra added that she would call parents

and inform them as well.

  Case 2: Talking with students. Six Sunshine Intermediate School teachers

reported that talking to students is one of their first interventions when they are faced

with a bullying incident. Ms. Fairer noted that she tries to address these situations

immediately by taking the student aside for a private conversation. Ms. Kelvin

commented, "First of all, it's immediate. I don't wait. I do make an immediate

intervention by taking them to the side and telling the person." She added, "Usually I see

it in the classroom, and it's a putdown of some type. I don't like to draw attention to

them." Ms. Divine noted, "I think most of it is just responding verbally and then seeing

what they need and deciding who needs to be contacted next and getting physically in between the students." In relation to intervening, Ms. Divine reported that she talks with the bully and the victim, making it clear that bullying is unacceptable. She added, "I want to send a message [that] it's [bullying] never okay." Mr. Patent believed that his interventions depend upon the severity of the bullying, noting that "I take someone aside, talk to them verbally and if it's a physical fight, I stay in I take care of it. I split the students up." Mr. Regal noted,

> I tend to just jump right in. I just go for it. I stop the behavior immediately. I have a no tolerance policy myself too, and unless I feel that I'm going to be in danger, I don't have a problem breaking up something that's physical. I don't have a problem stepping in to verbal [bullying]. A lot of times reflect it back on them. I ask them to step back and see what you're doing and the possible outcomes of your actions.

Mr. Regal added that if he hears students spreading rumors, he will stop the behavior and address it immediately. Mr. Golden also noted that if he detects students who are participating in bullying behaviors, he will sometimes talk with them.

Case 1: Understanding the situation. Four Snowfall Middle School teachers noted the importance of trying to understand what was happening when intervening in a bullying incident. Ms. Frost commented, "I always try to assess the situation and try to figure out how students are feeling. Is it a situation where they are two friends joking? Is it more than that?" Ms. Celsius concurred that she would try to find out what is going on by taking students aside and talking to them. If that does not work, she takes the next

step of informing "the counselor and then, if we can't get it resolved, we bring it to the principal, and they usually get some sort of consequence if it goes that far." Mr. Kelvin noted that it is important to find out what sparked the incident and how it evolved because he believed that often there is a trigger about why the bullying started. Ms. Tundra relied on former experiences with bullying to understand the situation. She added, "The emotional reaction is the only thing I rely upon so that students know that I am aware and understand and care what's occurring." Ms. Tundra also relied upon her awareness of the issue in order to ensure her understanding of the situation when making a report to the counselors.

Case 2: Understanding the situation. Four Sunshine Intermediate teachers described their beliefs about coming to a better understanding of the bullying situation. Ms. Kinder reported that she would take the bully aside and ask, "How would you feel that was you? Put yourself in their shoes. Think about it. Is it right what you're doing? Does it make you feel good? I try to get them see it from the other side as much as I can." Ms. Kelvin added that she would discuss the situation with the victim and "try to help because they have to be feeling something from it, whether it's a small or big issue, and then help by saying what happened is wrong; it shouldn't be happening in that type of situation." Ms. Divine noted she would find out what the victim needed and added, "I think most of it is just responding verbally and then seeing what they need and deciding who needs to be contacted next." Mr. Regal shared an anecdote that he believed indicated his desire to understand a victim's needs and to respond appropriately:

I had a couple instances where I'll be walking down my room and I see a girl

sitting by herself, just bawling. I stopped and talked to her and said, 'What's

going on?' It was as simple as 'You know what, I've got some great kids hanging

out in my room at recess, why don't you come on down?' and then she showed up

five days in a row. I knew some students in there who were great kids and I pull

them aside and said, "Just go talk to her, just say hello.' Fortunately she had that

reputation of being a little bit quiet, but they did it, and the girl still remembers it.

I don't know what the impact is, but we do all we can and who knows. She might

remember that for the rest of her life. I think that being a teacher we're in a

position where we could have that impact on a kid.

Mr. Golden also noted the bullying situation may not be what it appears to be. He

commented, "I want to find out what the situation is because sometimes the cause of the

incident isn't always clear." Mr. Golden believed that sometimes students are actually

standing up for themselves and fighting back, but he did not know that until he asked

questions about the incident.

Case 1: Reporting bullying incidents. Five Snowfall Middle School teachers

described how they determine whether or not to report bullying incidents to counselors

and administrators. Ms. Frost noted:

[Snowfall Middle School] has a two-step system with formal write-ups and

behavior tracking forms. There is the yellow [form] which is less severe. It can

be handled between myself and the parent or guardian. The white slip

immediately goes to our administrators, and they handle it from there. Small

incidences of bullying, ones that are not continual, we handle in the classroom.

Ms. Frost noted that "the larger incidences, every day this kid is just hounding on this

other kid, that's something that we then hand up to the administration because they have

more control." Ms. Celsius added, "The first thing I usually do is talk it over with the

counselor if it continues, then I will bring it to a principal." Ms. Celsius noted an

improved attitude among school leaders regarding the referrals for student bullying. She

added, "I've seen in this school alone the growth [in responding to bullying by

administration] because before when I would report it, they'd say, 'Oh that's kids.'. And

now they'll even get police involved in everything. So this school alone has grown a lot

in bully prevention." Ms. Snow added, "There's some type of behavior tracking form

that's filled out, which would result in a call to the parents or parent contact and then

detention for the student that was doing the bullying." Mr. Kelvin believed that the team

will inform parents and added, "Hey, this is going on, if your kids are talking about it,

you'll know we've started to deal with [it] already just to reassure you." Mr. Kelvin also

noted that teachers usually refer bullying incidents to counselors or administrators. Mr.

Kelvin described three levels of intervention: (a) in-house, which includes a team of

teachers, (b) referral to the grade-level counselor, and (c) referral to the assistant

principals or principal. Ms. Tundra noted that her experiences as a temporary assistant

principal have helped her to intervene in bullying situations in the classroom. She added,

"I have had some unique experiences as far as interventions are concerned because I have

my principal's license and often times will fill in as an associate principal. I have done

some formal reports and formal reporting of incidents of bullying where I've interviewed a number of students [and] talked with parents. I've handed down consequences like suspensions." Ms. Tundra also noted that she relied on those experiences when reporting incidents to counselors.

Case 2: Reporting bullying incidents. Three Sunshine Intermediate School teachers described the process they used when they referred a bullying situation to counselors or administrators. Depending upon the severity of the situation, Mr. Patent would "refer them to the counselors, the grade level counselors or contact administration and let the procedures that are in place take over." Ms. Fairer noted that "if it's a one-time offense, I'll talk to them about it; if it's nothing, if they truly feel surprised that I actually overheard them or look a little remorseful, I'll write it up or report it." Ms. Divine reported that she often refers victims to counselors and sometimes administrators. Ms. Divine also noted that if she knows the student who has done the bullying, she refers him or her for counseling.

Case 1: Responding to indirect bullying. Four of the six Snowfall Intermediate teachers emphasized the value of creating a positive climate for learning. Ms. Frost reflected that teachers can never undo a rumor once it has been released, but they can create an environment where negative talk is unacceptable. She also noted that adolescent students are struggling with making sure they fit in with their peers at school:

> I think this is a huge issue for the age group I work with the most. At this age
> they are all trying to figure out who they are, how they fit into the larger world,
> and who are their friends. This is also the age where students figure out that the

easiest way to get ahead or on top is to make sure there are plenty of people below you.

Ms. Celsius noted that the staff at Snowfall Middle School "launched a year-long bullying program initiative in in which a book [on relational bullying} was read by the whole school." Ms. Celsius believed that this reading activity had a positive impact on student behavior. She added, "We really pride ourselves in creating as a conducive, friendly, positive environment to learning." Mr. Yukon reported that he works to prevent social exclusion and bullying by positively interacting with students in the classroom, which often helps him stop incidents before they occur. Ms. Snow reflected that students who are victims of bullying are often withdrawn in class. She added, "They don't usually report the problem and may just act sad or have troubles concentrating." She also noted that these classroom indicators may lead some teachers to investigate the situation further, but many adults are not aware that indirect bullying is happening. Mr. Kelvin added, "Relationship bullying is also difficult due to the fact that kids change 'best friends' quite frequently." He noted that there are times when a teacher can bring students together to work things out, while at other times these efforts seem to make the situation worse. Mr. Kelvin pointed out that nonverbal bullying is often difficult to observe or address because students will claim they did not do anything and had no responsibility for the incident. Ms. Tundra noted that she tries to lessen opportunities for indirect bullying in her classroom by creating a cooperative and inclusionary environment for students.

Case 2: Responding to indirect bullying. Five of the six Sunshine Intermediate School teachers reported that they respond to social exclusion and rumor spreading related to indirect bullying by establishing risk-free, proactive, and positive classroom environments built on trust and mutual respect for all members of the class. One teacher, Mr. Patent, focused instead on the impact of cyberbullying that occurs within social networks that he believes damages the targeted student and his or her family. Ms. Fairer, in referring her vocal performance class as a team, noted, "Any act of bullying or indifference to each other [or] social exclusion is a detriment to the team, and we work at the beginning of the year establishing the importance of [the] team." Ms. Kinder related an experience with a female student who confided that she was going to a new school in three days and had fears of being bullied at the school because of her shyness. Ms. Kinder asked a counselor to speak to her. Ms. Divine also commented about the secretive and hidden aspect of indirect bullying, which she believed is difficult for her to detect and stop, especially when students are uneasy about sharing the problem with adults. Ms. Kinder noted, "All I can really do is talk with a student who is willing to talk, refer them to a counselor, and maybe talk to the other kids involved, hoping that all the talking leads to resolution." Ms. Divine added:

> When students have openly shared with me about the situation, I try to spend more time listening and asking them questions to get them to think and talk about their actions and their thoughts and how it all fits into the bigger picture. I encourage them to show kindness and empathy, and I basically try to get them to

come to some conclusion that it is important to be good to others and to not bully

them in any way.

Mr. Regal described a proactive approach in response to the disrespect that he observes

from students. He commented, "At the beginning of the year, in every class, I cover our

TRIBE agreements of mutual respect and no put downs." Mr. Regal stated that once he

realizes a student has been subjected to rumor spreading or social exclusion, he steps in

and stops the bullying behavior immediately. Mr. Regal also believed that the victim

needs additional support from a counselor or administrator. Mr. Golden, on the other

hand, believed that he has had few issues with social exclusion in his classes because he

endeavors to promote positive relationships for students. He added:

I also constantly remind them that making mistakes is ok and part of the learning

process. This tends to lead to a classroom environment where all the students feel

comfortable and are willing to take risks, knowing that if they fail, there will

always be another opportunity to succeed.

Mr. Golden also noted that whenever a student appears to be unwilling to work with a

peer, he reminds the student that the challenge is to find ways to go beyond personal

differences and contribute productively to the class project. Mr. Golden encourages his

students to build self-confidence that will give them personal strength to face all kinds of

bullying behaviors. Mr. Patent also reflected on the damaging results of cyber bullying to

the family and their child who is targeted on Facebook and in text messaging. Mr.

Golden wrote, "Given the wide audience that Facebook connects to, rumors are not only

easily started but can be covertly spread to a wide variety of people." Mr. Patent believed

hostile text messages cause distress to students and their families and has led to a number of teen suicides.

Case 1: Responding to direct bullying. Six Snowfall Middle School teachers reported that they respond immediately to direct verbal and physical bullying. Ms. Frost noted little experience with physical bullying, but more experience with verbal bullying. In cases of verbal bullying, Ms. Frost reported that she responds immediately with a corrective intervention, although she categorized most of the verbal teasing of other students as random, mean-spirited behavior, not as bullying. Ms. Frost is more concerned with a need to be aware of indirect verbal bullying, which she would attempt to stop immediately. Ms. Celsius pointed out that she makes sure to take the time to stop direct bullying. Ms. Snow has also responded to physical and verbal bullying, but believed that she sometimes has difficulty discerning the differences between rough play and intentional physical bullying:

> I've noticed that 8th grade boys are very physical with one another. Outsiders could see some of their contact as bullying or assault but the kids will swear up and down they are just playing around. This makes it trickier to identify bullying versus your typical middle school behavior. Verbal and physical bullying are more easily recognizable, much of that kind of bullying is done in areas that adults might not see.

Ms. Frost believed that many physical confrontations are due "to impulsiveness at this age or kids trying to claim their order in the pack." She believed that "verbal bullying is generally seen between the students as they try to find their identity and to identify

others." Mr. Kelvin believed that direct physical and verbal bullying is easy to detect

unless there is a crowd of students in the locker bays, hallways, lunch lines, and bus areas

where purposeful physical bumping and whispers of rude comments and threats can

occur without notice. He also believed that teachers would only know about these

behaviors if students reported them. Mr. Kelvin added that "what tends to happen is that

subtle physical and verbal bullying turns into a retaliation event where the person being

bullied lashes out physically and or verbally." He also described several occasions where

he stepped in to stop a physical confrontation between two students to find that "the one

who started the fight was the one who was the one being bullied and just had enough of

it." Ms. Tundra noted that she has had experiences in responding to bullying as an acting

assistant principal, performing "formal investigations including student interviews [and]

parent contacts that have upon occasion concluded with consequences or even a police

liaison contact." As a teacher, Ms. Tundra noted that she steps in to stop direct bullying

incidents, whether they occur in the classroom or in the hallways. Her next step is to talk

with students involved, and she reports the incident to the counselors or administrators.

    Case 2: Responding to direct bullying. Six Sunshine Intermediate School

teachers indicated that they immediately step in to stop any direct physical and verbal

bullying. Ms. Fairer noted that she reacts immediately to any incident of physical or

verbal bullying. She added, "With our middle school students, I have learned to step

back and observe. If I sense what is happening is truly just kidding around and horse

play, I may give a little look over in their direction and leave it at that." Ms. Fairer also

noted that if she believed the situation is more complex, she makes an effort to talk with

each student individually to stop to the behavior. Ms. Kinder also described verbal

bullying in the classroom, usually among female students "who snicker or make snobby

remarks about another female student under their breath after that student has contributed

to a discussion." She described responding by "giving them the 'eye' that I heard them

and know what they are doing." When she witnesses direct bullying, Ms. Divine believes

it is "important for me to be less reactive and to remain calm as I take the time to listen in

a private setting to each student's perspective of the situation." Ms. Divine tries to focus

on the choices that each student makes and less on who starts the incident. Mr. Patent

described how a bully's constant and intentional bumping of a victim in the hallways can

lead to confrontation. Mr. Patent reported that he immediately stops the bullying and

refers the situation to administrators or counselors. Mr. Regal reported trying to stop

bullying behavior by immediately getting involved when he witnesses acts of physical or

verbal bullying. He also follows up by asking another adult for assistance. Mr. Golden

described creating a risk-free classroom environment by enabling his students to feel free

to stand up to those students who may be bullying others in the classroom setting.

    Case 1: Creating teachable moments. Four Snowfall Middle School teachers

described their efforts to help offending students understand the impact of their actions.

Ms. Frost noted that after she makes her attempt to stop a bullying situation, she tries to

uncover the reasons why the behavior had occurred. She stated, "If it sounds like just

gossip, I tell the students the power of gossip and that rumors have devastating effects. I

talk to students and try to have them realize what they are doing." Ms. Celsius reported

that she always attempts to make the bullying issue a teachable moment:

I try to get them to realize what it would be like to walk in the victim's shoes. I
always ask them what causes them to want to act this way. Is it something at
home? Many times just talking to the bully works wonders. I give the bully
pointers as to how he/she could be a positive role model and what good things
they could do in society.

Ms. Snow reported that she is concerned with losing the opportunity to change the
bullying situation by responding with too much emotion. She added, "My biggest
challenge in dealing with verbal bullying is to not get into 'Mama Bear Mode' and try to
attack the person caught bullying." In relation to helping students learn from their
bullying experiences, Mr. Kelvin believed "the continued issue to deal with is giving kids
the tools they need to stand up for themselves and allow the adults in their life the
opportunity to help them help themselves."

Case 2: Creating teachable moments. Three Sunshine Intermediate School
teachers reported a desire to help students learn from their choices. Ms. Kinder described
her response to verbal abuse by female students toward another peer:

I take them to the side and ask why they did what they did. They usually say they
don't know why or say nothing. I will then tell them, 'Put yourself in her shoes.
How would that make you feel? Not a good feeling, right?

Ms. Divine agreed:

My goal in responding to verbal bullying is to not only [to] discipline when
needed, but to help students think about their actions and choices in a way that
considers what is ultimately right and wrong and not just what feels right in the

moment so that they can hopefully make better choices and try to practice better self-control in the future.

Mr. Golden also noted, "When dealing with verbal bullying, sometimes I try to use peer pressure to put a stop to the inappropriate behavior." He believed that bullying usually ends when students feel empowered to stand up for each other.

Case 1: Responding to three-part definition of bullying. In the third reflective journal question, teachers were asked how they responded to or would respond to bullying incidents that includes evidence of repetition, a power imbalance, and intent to harm. Five Snowfall Middle School teachers wrote about their experiences with bullying at school or in their personal lives rather than describing their responses to specific incidents of bullying. In relating a personal experience with bullying, Ms. Celsius noted that she believed in the importance of educating parents about how to talk to their children about bullying. Ms. Snow gave an example of a group of popular girls who repeatedly humiliated unsuspecting boys, but she did not describe how she responded to any specific incidents of bullying. Instead, Ms. Snow noted that other teachers and staff respond to bullying by referring incidents to counselors or administrators because of the perceived impact of the incident on the victim. Ms. Snow believed that "administrative interventions are done to try to regain that feeling of safety [for the victim]. Sometimes it includes a schedule change, a chaperone on the bus, [or] counseling. We do the best we can to support victims of repeated bullying." Mr. Kelvin also related a scenario in which a fellow teacher found a notebook with "horrible entries" about a female student and those school counselors, administrators, and police eventually addressed this bullying

situation. Mr. Yukon wrote that if he referred a student to administrators, he would also tell the offender how disappointed he was with his or her behavior and why he felt that way. On the other hand, Ms. Tundra described her response to a specific bullying situation that had gone on for several weeks involving a male student kicking a female student in the hallways. Ms. Tundra talked to the perpetrator and investigated the incident, which resulted in the suspension of the student from school for one day.

Case 2: Responding to three-part definition of bullying. Two Sunshine Intermediate School teachers indicated they would refer the bullying behavior to a counselor or administrator for further action. Ms. Fairer noted that she had never been involved in this type of bullying, but she would notify administrators and grade level counselors if she was. Ms. Kinder added that she had been "involved in pervasive or repetitious bullying and [the] intent to harm the victim emotionally." Ms. Kinder added that when victimized students come to her for help, she refers the incident to the school counselor.

The other four Sunshine Intermediate School teachers wrote that they would respond to a bullying incident by talking to the student first before referring the incident to a counselor or an administrator. Ms. Divine added:

> As I reflect on these situations and consider how I would respond to future
> [incidents] of repetitive bullying that also involves a power differential and intent
> to harm, I believe it is incredibly important to respond immediately and to make
> sure that the response includes a definite plan of action that is immediately put
> into effect.

Mr. Patent presented an example of bullying on the basketball court. He stated, "My response might be to empower the leaders of the group to no longer exclude the underclassman by using their influence with the group." Mr. Regal noted that his involvement requires tact and respect when dealing with offenders and victims. He believed that "when a bullying situation has been repeated, a power imbalance has been established, and there is intent to harm, it is extremely important to cease the behaviors immediately." Mr. Regal added that once he has stopped the conflict, he inform counselors and administrators. Mr. Golden added, "If I had to respond to all three, I think I would use the approach I normally do. I would take a direct approach and talk to the student exhibiting the unwelcome behavior." Mr. Golden noted that he would focus on supporting the victim by encouraging the student to stand up to the bully because there are many people on campus who will step up to help.

      Case 1: Teacher skills in responding to bullying. Snowfall Middle School teachers believed they needed awareness skills to respond to bullying issues with care and understanding and to be able to listen, counsel, and support the offenders and victims. Ms. Frost believed that teachers need to know the kinds of bullying trends that may be happening so that teachers can be aware and respond appropriately. She added, "We need to have an opportunity to have a more open dialogue [with staff]." She also noted that when teachers are aware of student trends in bullying, they improve their skills in discerning what they are seeing so they could ask students appropriate questions regarding their behavior. Ms. Frost gave an example of a bullying trend she had heard on the radio and shared it with the teachers. She described a group of female students who

planned to humiliate some boys by leading them to think they are interested in dating

them and then breaking up with them in front of their peers. Ms. Frost also believed that

no formal training is needed to know what behaviors may be trending among students.

Ms. Celsius believed that teachers need skills in listening to the victim and the bully

when working through a bullying situation. She added it is important to have these skills

to "find the root of the problem and then work your way back from that." She added,

"You have to dig to find that a lot of times. You don't want to say the wrong thing and

then something negative happens." Mr. Yukon believed that the ability to assist and

counsel the victim during and after the incident is an important skill to learn in a

professional development activity, particularly in helping the victim. Ms. Snow believed

she needs to develop better listening and observation skills in understanding the bullying

situation, rather than allowing the behavior to trigger her strong feelings against bullying.

Ms. Snow added:

> So I have a hard time when I'm dealing with bullying cases to not just attack. My
>
> instinct is that I want to attack that bully and put them in their place and make
>
> them   feel how that kid is feeling so that's for me self-control and patience, to
>
> not just ream the kid and make it a teaching moment first of all.

Ms. Snow also expressed the need to be able to skillfully follow-up and counsel a victim

after the incident is over, noting that she makes sure to check how victims are doing and

whether they are feeling safe in the classroom. Mr. Kelvin believed he needs the skills to

be a good observer and listener as well as a critical thinker because "there may be many

facts that are coming at you that you'll need to be able to sort out get all the information

down to make sure it's dealt with appropriately." Mr. Kelvin also believed that teachers

need to be skillful in understanding the bullying situation and finding the appropriate help

or resources to follow through. He added:

> You're going to have to discern what the situation is, how severe is it. You can't
>
> be the final judge of it, but you have to really know that this could be bigger or
>
> this may be more to this than you [may] realize. You need to get it to the right
>
> people instead of just saying, 'Oh this will be okay, I'll talk to the person'.

Ms. Tundra also believed that teachers need to be open-minded when responding to

bullying situations; they need to be "objective and observational without jumping to

conclusions." She noted that teachers need to use questioning skills that enable victims

and bullies to feel comfortable when telling their side of the story. She believed that

"sometimes students may feel intimidated or feel as though they can't talk, and I'm not

sure that that provides, in some cases, a good way for an intervention to be successful."

If students are unwilling to talk, Ms. Tundra noted that there will be little opportunity for

a successful intervention and resolution to the problem.

Case 2: Teacher skills in responding to bullying. Five Sunshine Intermediate

School teachers believed that teacher skills in building relationships with students is a

critical factor in reaching students so that the bullying issue can be resolved. Ms. Kinder

believed professional development is needed to help teachers understand bullying

behavior. She added, "What are the signs to look for? How do you react in a case? What

do you do? What should you do?" She noted that it is important for teachers to be

skillful in giving students the confidence to speak with the teacher about ongoing

bullying issues. Ms. Divine noted that skill is involved in determining when to talk to a

student in private or respond to a bullying situation in front of the whole class. She noted

that this skill comes with knowing students and developing "relationships with them [to]

get your own gauge on whatever is most appropriate." Ms. Divine believed that listening

is an important skill because of the importance of "hearing with they're saying and being

able to filter what they say" and sifting through student misperceptions of what really

happened. Mr. Patent believed that building relationships with students is an important

skill. He noted, "If you have some type of relationship with the kids, and they know you,

you're way ahead; you have a good chance of being able to diffuse the incident right

away." He added that when student approach him with issues of being victimized, he

gives students the choice of meeting with both the victim and the offender or meeting

with a counselor or administrator. Mr. Regal believed in the skill of building

relationships with students and noted that "when you build it, they'll listen to you." Mr.

Golden agreed with Mr. Regal and Mr. Patent about the importance of building

relationships and establishing a positive rapport with students. Mr. Golden believed that

"if a student knows that they can trust you, [that] we're talking about the victim, they are

more likely to speak out about it." In relation to the person doing the bullying, Mr.

Golden remarked, "If they have a good relationship with you, then they're more likely to

listen what you have to say and work out whatever needs to be worked out." Ms. Fairer

also noted that teachers need specific skills to address bullying incidents, including being

open-minded when responding to a bullying situation because what an individual thinks

he or she are seeing may not be actually occurring. Ms. Fairer wondered if observing and

talking to students was a "learned behavior" and didn't know if "there is a special skill that you need to effectively intervene." She added that conversing with students "may be best done through the counselor or administration."

Case 1: Most effective interventions. Five Snowfall Middle School teachers described similar interventions when responded to a bullying conflict; they believed in responding as quickly as possible, finding out what is happening, and following house and school protocols. One teacher described his most effective intervention as visibly interacting with students**.** Ms. Frost believed 'the best intervention is to immediately address it." After reviewing the protocols described in the school policy, Ms. Frost requires the offending student write a letter to the victim, which enables the offender to think about his or her behavior and try to explain it to another peer. Ms. Celsius noted that her best intervention was "to take the bully aside, talk to him about bullying-to explain, try to get him to see if he would will be like to walk in their shoes-in the victim shoes." Ms. Snow noted that she would meet with the bully and the victim outside of class to find out why the person bullied the victim. Ms. Snow would first ask how the victim felt about being bullied, and then she would decide how she could help resolve the situation. Mr. Kelvin stated he would try to deal with both students in private as quickly as possible. Mr. Kelvin also attempts to intervene "very personally, and make it a personal thing, because I don't want this to get blown out into a bigger thing if it's already going on. I want to avoid any others going after the kids". Ms. Tundra noted that her best intervention is to be in proximity to the students she believes may be in a bullying conflict. She said, "If I am observing a physical situation, I insert myself

physically in between. I make my presence known. I get in the middle of it, and then I stop the students and I separate them, and then I talk with them."   Mr. Yukon remarked that "bullying is not something we see a lot of. We know it's there but we don't see a lot of it". He said his first reaction would be to try and prevent bullying by being visible and interacting with students, something he found easy to do because of the team house concept that makes working with students feel like family.

       Case 2: Most effective interventions. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers also reported that they responded as soon as possible to stop the bullying behavior and to find out the cause of the conflict, often in private and away from other students. Each teacher noted that they would use the moment to help students understand their actions and how it affects the victims and others nearby. Noting that she has not had many experiences with bullying conflicts, Ms. Fairer believed that most effective intervention would be to "speak privately to the victim." Ms. Fairer reported that most offending students are very sensitive once they realize they have hurt someone's feelings:

> Many times I don't even realize and I'll say "You know, that can be thought of as bullying', and then their eyes open and [they] say 'Oh my God, you're right Ma'am.' That's all it takes.

Ms. Celsius noted "the most effective thing that I've ever done is when I try to make the perpetrator, the one doing the bullying, to put themselves in the other person's shoes." Ms. Celsius would ask offending students how they would feel if bullying was done constantly to them. Ms. Divine reported that her best strategy is to help students reflect when they are involved in a bullying conflict. Ms. Celsius believed in listening to

students and asking them questions that get them to think about what they are doing. Mr.

Patent noted that if he sees two students involved in a bullying conflict, his first

intervention is to separate them in different parts of the classroom and talk to them in

private after class. If that doesn't work, Mr. Patent refers the issue to a counselor or

administrator. Mr. Regal initially takes a proactive approach toward bullying, but looks

for teachable moments when observing interactions with students. Mr. Regal will remind

individual students to redirect their behavior, but he noted that if the conflict continues,

he will seize the teachable moment to talk with the offending student. Mr. Golden related

an incident in which he described the interventions he uses:

> There was an incident where one student seemed to be threatening another, [and] I
>
> tried talked to them. First one of them walked away, so I went to go get that
>
> student. My initial reaction was to just send them to the office. But I went back
>
> and talked to the first student who was involved, who explained what happens
>
> because he does this. Security brought the other student, and we had a three-way
>
> conversation about the incident to make sure that first it would never happen
>
> again, and second that the two of them made up and were okay with this. So
>
> that's the kind of interventions I try to use.

Mr. Golden believed the incident could have been bullying, but he was not sure. He

believed teachers will refer to isolated incidents as bullying whether they really are or

not. There may be bullying behaviors, but not bullying itself.

Case 1: Time as a factor in responding. Four Snowfall Middle School teachers

believed that the time is a factor in responding to bullying incidents. Ms. Frost noted that

"time has little effect on whether I get involved or not, because I will always have time or make time to help a student." Ms. Celsius agreed and noted, "The time should never be a factor because you need to make sure and take care of it. [It] should be a top priority." Ms. Snow agreed that time is always a factor because teachers have to get to the next class. She continued, "If something happens in between classes, it must be dealt with quickly, but occasionally, serious problems are sent to the office." Mr. Kelvin added, "One of the issues we all face as teachers is time. We see a situation, and the bell rings and you have a class full of students waiting for you." When a bullying incident occurs in between classes, Mr. Kelvin will step into the classroom informing students that he will be with them in a moment and to begin working on the lesson. If he determines that the student conflict does not require his immediate action, Mr. Kelvin informs both students that that he has witnessed the incident and that he will talk to them later.

 Case 2: Time as a factor in responding. Six Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed that even though time can be a factor in responding to a bulling conflict, they all would make time to deal with the incident. Ms. Fairer believed that in some student conflict situations, "because of the time involved, sometimes it is in the better interest of the students to get a counselor or the administration involved." Ms. Fairer believed that responding immediately is critical and that counselors and administrators have more time than teachers to address the situation. Ms. Kinder agreed, "I will always find the time when I witness a bullying situation. These situations need to be dealt with immediately." Ms. Divine noted, "It is very easy to feel too busy to get heavily involved and easier to refer the student to a counselor and to follow up when

possible." Mr. Patent reported that he will handle most bullying situations, depending upon their severity. If he were to break up a fight, then he would spend as much time as needed to resolve that incident. For a conflict involving a verbal assault, Mr. Patent would refer the bully to a counselor. Mr. Patent added, "A person in a position of trust such as a teacher still needs to become involved and follow the procedures in place." Mr. Patent also believed that even with the appropriate use of time, effective responses might not be achieved. Mr. Regal believed that time determines how involved he will be in mediating the situation. However, Mr. Patent also believed that stopping a bullying conflict would be his first priority regardless of the time involved. Mr. Golden believed that time is not an issue, noting that bullying situations require immediate attention for interventions to be effective in resolving the issue.

Case 1: Familiarity with students. Four Snowfall Middle School teachers believed that familiarity with students is a factor in their confidence to step in, to stop, to investigate, and to resolve or report a possible bullying situation. Ms. Frost believed that student familiarity is the factor that has the greatest impact in determining whether or not she responds to bullying. She added:

> I do not mean to say that I would not get involved just because I don't know the students, like they are not my problem, I would still interject. It's just that I do not feel as confident stepping in when I do not know the students.

Ms. Frost believed when teachers know the students, they may have more confidence to step in and ask questions. She noted when students know the teacher, they may be more willing to tell the truth and accept help. Mr. Yukon believed student familiarity enables

teachers to take steps to prevent bullying by knowing who might be **"**apt to become involved in bullying, as well as those who might be bullied." Ms. Snow believed it is easier for teachers to work with students they know, which could be an issue because of the large number of student at Snowfall Middle School. She noted some teachers seem more confident in handling bullying situations and who have a greater awareness of bullying issues. She added, "The staff members in the building who have gone through administrative training seem to be more aware and willing to deal with bullying situations." Ms. Tundra noted she had a large number of resources available for accessing help. She explained that if she did not know the specific students [in a bullying incident], she would seek out an adult who with whom the students may be more comfortable in sharing the issue or conflict.

Case 2: Familiarity with students. Five Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed that familiarity with students is a factor in their level of involvement and success in responding to and resolving bullying conflicts between students. Ms. Kinder noted that "student familiarity is definitely a plus; however, it does not mean I will respond any less to a bullying situation." Ms. Divine noted that how well she knows a student is "probably the biggest factor in determining that level of involvement." She added that familiarity with the student and their teacher-student relationship will determine the depth of counseling she will feel comfortable in offering during a bullying conflict. Ms. Divine also noted:

> For students I know well, it is very easy to talk with them about what is going on,
>
> whether they are being bullied or being the bully, and try to find out more about

how they feel and why bullying things might be happening. There are some

students who are more likely to be honest with me than others and share more

simply because of an established relationship in which the student trusts me.

Ms. Divine believed the level of trust she can develop with students has an impact on her

ability to be effective in responding to bullying situations. She added, "The relationship

and trust between the student and me are reasons that affect my level of self-efficacy in

terms of helping to resolve a bullying situation." Ms. Divine also believed that she would

likely refer a situation to a counselor if the strength of trust is low or lacking with a

particular student. Mr. Patent noted that "being familiar with the student is one of the

most powerful tools we have as teacher in my opinion. If the students respect you the

outcome has a much better chance of being resolved positively." Mr. Regal agreed and

noted he will watch a student a little bit closer if he has had previous experience in

resolving bullying situations with the student. He added, "Student familiarity also plays

an important role in addressing the behavior. By building strong relationships or being

familiar with as many kids as possible, I typically have a sense of their personality and

motives." Mr. Golden believed the most important factor "in determining my level of

involvement and intent to resolve the situation is how familiar I am with the student. I

try to foster positive relationships with all my students." Mr. Golden also believed most

student know who he is, although he does find it a challenge to talks to students involved

in bullying conflicts if he is not familiar with them.

Case 1: Expecting support from other teachers. All Snowfall Middle School

teachers described their expectations for support from their team of teachers and support

staff, acknowledging that communication is a key ingredient. Because teachers in these teams work with the same students, Ms. Frost noted that they immediately inform team members about how they have handled bullying incidents. She added, "We need to have a united front so I expect them to side with me and have that united front." Ms. Celsius believed that if she takes the time to report a bullying incident, she expects that it be taken seriously by other teachers, support staff, and administrators. Mr. Yukon added, "The house system is a tremendous support system, not only for the students in the house, but the teachers in the house are something of a family. Support is unequivocal." Ms. Snow agreed, "We're always trying to support one another; we've got that stick together kind of thing." Mr. Kelvin reported that he expected staff members to listen when he is relating a bullying situation. Ms. Tundra described an open dialogue in the house, noting, "We discuss student behavior and observations of students in our classrooms, [including] what we see in the house area [and] what we see at any point in time. We are very open about what we observe with students." Ms. Tundra also reported that she seeks input and support from teachers in her house and other houses about bullying behaviors, adding:

> Do we think this is something that we need to report further? Is this something we need to make a phone call home [about]? Is this something I should be talking [about] with students? Have they been in your house area? We have to keep these people separated, [because] something's going on.

Ms. Tundra believed that open conversations give teachers and other staff the opportunity to obtain new perspectives about interventions strategies that teachers might use when faced with bullying situations.

    Case 2: Expecting support from other teachers. Six Sunshine Intermediate School teachers reported they expect teachers to communicate with each other, share situational information, and be provided with consistent support from administrators when they have reported or responded to incidents of bullying. Ms. Fairer noted, "I'm not one to spout off, and I'm not one to respond and overreact, but when I do, I would really want the staff to support me and what I've reported." Ms. Fairer also noted teachers at her grade level share student concerns, including bullying behaviors in the classroom. They ask each other:

> How are we going to take care of this? I don't want to just talk about a student; I want to figure out what's the next step? What do we do? Do we go to the counselor? Do we set this up? What steps are there, in a positive way, to move this forward instead of bringing the same thing up week after week, [and] don't waste time, especially if the student is in trouble, and we believe they are in trouble.

Ms. Kinder reported that she expects teacher "support of any kind" especially when sharing the elements of an incident in expectation that the teacher watch and follow up if necessary. She also noted how face-to-face and email communication to other teachers about bullying behaviors in her class enables teachers "to know who the students are, both the victim and the person who's doing the bullying." Ms. Divine believed that

teachers need to be watchful and willing to share with others their strategies in handling

and resolving bullying conflicts. Mr. Patent reported that he expects 100% support from

staff members and has never had less than that. He added, "I expect them [teachers] to

have my back at all times." He added that any differences of opinion with teachers

should be discussed in private and not in front of students. Mr. Patent also noted that

during their weekly grade level meetings, teachers will often discuss their perceptions

about behavioral problems with students and then collectively determine whether or not

to refer these problems to counselors or administrators or to solve the issue at the

classroom level. Mr. Regal also expected full support from teachers and other staff. Mr.

Regal noted that he had established credibility in his responses to and in his reports of

bullying incidents, and therefore, he believed that he would be supported by others. Mr.

Golden believed that "consistency is important; however, we're dealing with incidents

that we're all in it together, and we deal with it the same way." Mr. Golden added that

other Grade 8 teachers focused on student academic issues as well as on misbehaviors

that happen in class.

      Case 1: Expecting counselor and administration support. Three Snowfall

Middle School teachers believed that counselors and administrators should support the

referring teacher by following up with the students involved. Ms. Frost reported that she

expected an administrator to step in and take over with a bullying incident that she or

teachers are not equipped to handle. She noted, "I keep the administration aware of

what's going on, and I expect that they would also keep me aware of any situation that I

need to know about." She also expects the counselor to follow through. Mr. Yukon

noted that counselors play an important role in discussions regarding bullying situations because they know students by staying with one grade through three consecutive years. Ms. Tundra also noted the administration and counseling staff model open dialogue which is practiced throughout the grade level houses at Snowfall Middle School. She stressed the importance of the three counselors sharing information regarding behavioral situations with teachers across three grade levels in the school. Ms. Tundra believed sharing information enables counselors to step in and assist teachers who are not in their assigned grade level.

Case 2: Expecting counselor and administration support. Three Sunshine Intermediate School teachers noted the importance of reporting bullying incidents to counselors and administrators for assistance and follow-up to their own interventions. Mr. Golden believed in the need of consistent interventions "from the top down" and expressed concern withholding any information from administrators or counselors regarding bullying incidents or conflicts. He wondered whether it may be a good idea to handle things in the classroom without informing or referring the incident to an administrator for follow-up intervention. Mr. Patent noted that when teachers at his grade level discuss a repeated bullying issue, they generally refer students to the counselors or administrators to rectify the situation. Mr. Regal reported that he feels comfortable referring students to the counselors because everybody plays a role in addressing bullying.

Case 1: Beliefs about teacher reactions to bullying. Snowfall Middle School teachers believed that most teachers are assertive in their responses to students who either

break rules or exhibit bullying behaviors. Ms. Frost reported her team gives clear expectations to students that are consistent with following school rules. She added, "Inside my house, we don't all consistently follow the expectations when it comes to intervening with bullying. But I would say we do probably more so than the other houses." Ms. Celsius believed that most teachers respond to situations involving bullying, noting that "for the most part our staff is pretty good at reporting bullying and taking care of it." Mr. Yukon believed that the first impulse of teachers is to stop a bullying situation. Mr. Yukon also reported that "we react as a group, because the nature of the house concept; if we hear anything, we'll share it with the whole team and keep our eyes and ears open." Ms. Snow believed responses to bullying depend on the personality of the staff member witnessing the incident. She believed that teachers who are strict disciplinarians in their classrooms or those with administrative training would be more comfortable dealing with issues of bullying. She also believed that, while some teachers will "jump really quickly whenever they see anything," some teachers take on a supportive role. She cited the team effort in her house by commenting, "We are really working as a team. We trust one another's judgment and then support one another with [our] reaction[s] afterwards." However, Mr. Kelvin believed that some teachers will step in and deal with a bullying issue, while others may dismiss the action with comments such as "boys will be boys" and "girls will be girls." Ms. Tundra believed teachers do well at finding out what may be happening in a conflict and then intervening appropriately. She believed that in the immediate moment, teachers will approach a bullying situation, determine what is happening, and talk with students. She noted that

when teachers are not sure about what may be happening, they will ask other teachers or counselors who always make it clear that they are available for any assistance needed.

 Case 2: Beliefs about teacher reactions to bullying. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers expressed mixed beliefs about how they might react when a student is bullied. They believed that they would respond to bullying incidents, but the strength of their responses might vary due to the individual students and their sense of what they might be seeing. Two teachers thought that no one would turn away from a bullying incident while two other teachers thought that a teacher might let the incident go, depending on the student. Mr. Golden noted that he had never considered how teachers might react, but hoped they would make an effort to immediately stop the behavior. Ms. Fairer added she had seen teachers overreact to bullying situations while others remained calm, depending on the situation and students involved. Ms. Fairer believed that most teachers would respond immediately to blatant bullying action, and she did not think that "any of the staff or anybody would actually turn away intentionally." Ms. Divine believed that most teachers would intervene in a bullying situation and that it was not common for teachers to completely ignore a bullying behavior. Mr. Regal noted that teacher reactions to bullying is individual in nature because some teachers are able to step in and stop the behavior, but others feel "intimidated by it or the bully," and they "are a little bit more reserved to take that first step to stop it and more inclined to maybe ask for someone to help." Mr. Regal also believed "every teacher believes they can stop it right away. I'm not sure a lot of teachers feel they have the capacity to do that." He added that his size and presence helps when he responds to difficult behavioral situations and

that some teachers might lack confidence or the vocal presence to command a bullying situation. However, Mr. Patent believed that as teachers, "we should treat all the kids the same, and if there's bullying, whether it's someone you don't like or you like, or whatever it is, you treat them all the same." He pointed out the inconsistency that exists in responding to bullying and believed that some teachers might favor students and let things go, while others might "antagonize them any chance they have because they know they're bullies and they don't like them." Mr. Patent also believed that the intensity of a teacher's response to bullying could depend on what the teacher knows or believes about the students involved. Ms. Kinder expressed a hope that teachers would respond to bullying but believed that not everyone does, citing a lack of consistency regarding the responses of teachers to bullying. She believed that if a teacher suspects or witnesses an incident, the teacher must take the time to stop and investigate the situation. She added:

> It's easier just to look the other way and keep walking, right, but [to] stop and say
>
> something or to pull someone aside and talk to them, it takes that extra effort, and
>
> I honestly believe that there are some teachers who look the other way.

Mr. Golden noted that he had not thought about how teachers react to bullying. He believed there were few referrals for bullying at the Grade 8 level and that bullying did not seem to be prevalent. He hoped that teachers would use positive interventions such as counseling as an initial step in their first reaction to a bullying situation.

Table 5 is a case comparison of the sub-categories that I constructed after I analyzed participants' initial intereview and follow-up interview data and reflective journal responses.

Table 5

Case Comparison of Sub-Categories Related to Category 2: Teacher Responses to Bullying

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Case 1   *Case 2*

Teacher Responses to Bullying   *Teacher Responses to Bullying*

-Talking immediately to students   -Talking immediately to both students
-Understanding feelings of students involved   -Understanding victim's needs/offender's
                                                              motives

 Reporting bullying as a two-step procedural process   -Reporting dependent on severity
                                                            of bullying

-Responding to indirect bullying: -Responding to indirect bullying:
   -creating positive climate for learning   -building relationships of teacher-student
                                                                trust

-Responding to direct bullying   -Responding to direct bullying
   -immediate intervening to cease physical action   -immediately stopping and finding adult
                                                                assistance

-Creating teachable moments   -Creating teachable moments
     -helping offenders understand impact of bullying   -helping students learn from their choices

-Responding to three-part definition of bullying   -Responding to three-part definition of bullying
    -report and follow-up interventions for victim safety   -refer to counselor/admin. re: severity

-Teacher skills in responding to bullying   -Teacher skills in responding to bullying
   -empathic listening and bullying awareness skills   -building teacher-student relationships of
                                                                trust

-Beliefs about most effective intervention   -Beliefs about most effective intervention
   -immediately responding, understanding, determining   -immediately responding, determining
     team and school protocols/procedures   causes, and creating teachable moments

-Taking time to respond   -Taking time to respond
   -lack of time not a factor in making immediate responses   -lack of time not a factor but can limit
                                                                teacher effectiveness in resolving
                                                                bullying incidents

-Familiarity with student supports teacher confidence   -Familiarity with student contribute to
                                                             efficacy
                                                               -in stopping behavior
                                                               -asking good question
                                                               -successfully mediating

_____

In summary, teachers at both schools used the following similar approaches when witnessing incidents of bullying: (a) responding immediately, (b) listening and understanding, (c) determining severity, and (d) choosing to resolve the situation or referring the incident to a counselor or administrator. Teachers from both schools also reported the need to help victims feel comfortable so that they are able to share their experiences with an adult they can trust. Teachers at both schools also believed in creating positive environments for learning and building relationships with students in order to deter bullying in the classroom. One difference in the two cases involved how teachers received support in addressing bullying incidents. Snowfall Middle School teachers received ongoing support from their grade level team and house and followed specific team protocols for addressing bullying behaviors. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers had no team structure for immediate assistance. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers noted that they had find assistance from another adult when faced with bullying issues in their classrooms or on campus, while Snowfall Middle School teachers reported meeting in regularly scheduled team planning sessions to discuss behavioral issues. Teachers at both schools also gave examples of their efforts to build relationships of trust with their students. Building relationships and establishing familiarity with students may be easier to do at Snowfall Middle School because teachers and students see each other daily in one defined space. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers noted that their responses largely depended on their own awareness and ability to ascertain if a student seemed to be acting differently because of a possible harassment or bullying conflict.

These teachers might then respond directly or send a referral to counselors or administrators for further investigation.

Category 3: Schoolwide Antibullying Programs

Category 3 includes school-wide anti-bullying programs that are provided as resources for teachers and other staff members in responding to bullying behaviors. This category included responses from participants to the following: *Interview question 6:* Please explain how you think the antibullying program (if there is one) supports your responses to incidents of bullying?

Case 1: Booking reading activity. Three Snowfall Middle School teachers recalled a recent year when all teachers and students school participated in a book reading activity that focused on bullying at the middle school level. The book was titled *The Revealers*, a contemporary story of middle school bullying that offered group activities for teachers to use with students throughout the year. Ms. Celsius noted students at all three grade levels participated in the skits and activities while reading the book in their team settings. She added, "We blogged with the author, and I think that has changed the tone in the school tremendously. We're still doing that with our six graders as they come in." Ms. Celsius also noted that posters are still visible around the school with the slogan, "We don't do that here", which she described as "our catchphrase" from another whole school effort to create safe school environment. She added, "We need to be proud of what we do." Ms. Snow reported that the antibullying program was on the news because it was a school-wide awareness activity in which every student read the book, which was written from student's perspective. Ms. Snow added, "The whole idea is that it's coming

from the kid's standpoint and how it feels; it gets them, and they can identify with it a little better." Ms. Snow also noted that counselors used this book for sixth grade orientation. Ms. Tundra also referred to the school-wide book reading activity that included class readings and discussions and that gave adults a student perspective on cyberbullying. She believed this reading activity enabled teachers to have meaningful conversations with students, especially those students who did not feel comfortable in leading discussions on the topic of bullying. Mr. Kelvin believed that "the anti-bullying program is part of the way they go about working at this school." He added that the school staff was "continually working on with the behavior of the kids and working with them, building the relationships, and building the learning community here in the building." He pointed out that the disciplinary referral slip has a place where the teacher can specifically enter the incident as bullying or teasing. Thus, three teachers pointed out the value of the school-wide book reading activity.

Case 1: Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Program (PBIS).

Three Snowfall Middle School teachers noted that the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program may be considered a school-wide anti-bullying program. Ms. Celsius described PBIS as a statewide program that counselors and a committee of teachers implemented. PBIS as proactive approach to help students achieve academic success, while reducing problem behaviors in an established proactive culture of reward and recognition for positive behaviors. Ms. Celsius added that PBIS "is not where it should be yet, but it's coming along. I think it's doing some good things." However, Mr. Yukon remarked, "I have some disagreements with that particular program, mostly in

terms of giving the rewards." Mr. Yukon explained extrinsic rewards, such as special treats for positive student behavior, will not have a long lasting effect and only promotes temporary results. Mr. Kelvin also noted that PBIS tracks student behavior digitally and labels disciplinary referrals as to the kind of behavior and when and where the behavior occurred.

Case 2: Incident-Free Banner Program. All Sunshine Intermediate School teachers described the Incident-Free Banner Program, also known as the "We Don't Do That Here" Safe School Program, which focuses on bringing awareness to days free from incidents of bullying and harassment. Ms. Fairer believed the Incident-Free Banner Program evolved from a slogan to a process where "kids are more aware of appropriate behavior and what works and what does not cut it on our campus." She added:

> I like it because it can mean so many different things when you talk to the students. What does 'that' mean to you? When you say 'we don't do that here,' what is 'that'? It's taken on a little bit of life to itself and incidents have gone down, and why is that? Is it perfect? No, but incidents have gone down, and I think the kids are a lot more respectful on campus as far as what I can see.

Ms. Kinder noted that the vice principal presented videos of bullying that help students understand what it means to be bullied and how it feels. She also cited *Good Wolf Bad Wolf,* a Native American story of the struggle between the choices of good and evil because the students were familiar with it. Ms. Kinder added, "'We don't do that here' is awesome too, because it lets students know that it's not okay, it's not normal, it's not acceptable at school." Ms. Divine believed that the program is unifying for staff members

because other teachers and staff members use it. Ms. Kinder also noted that students

know what it ["We don't do that here"] means because it acts as a unifying idea that

helps students think about making good choices. When asked about the schoolwide

antibullying program at Sunshine Intermediate School, Mr. Patent noted,

> It is in place at our school. We have what we call incident-free days. We try to go
>
> ahead and meet criteria for a good day and then what we're looking for is, say 90
>
> to 100% of our days, incident-free from any bullying.

Mr. Patent also noted that before any consistent program was implemented, the number

of incidents was very high for a school with a small student population. He pointed out

that since the Incident-Free Banner Program was put into place, "not only do we have so

few incidents, but the kids actually applaud the good days that we have and the bullies

stick out." He added that "the students are happy, which also makes the staff happy. It's

real nice not to have to deal with behaviors and bullying every day." Mr. Regal noted

that the incident-free program had been in place for three years, adding that the program

"goes beyond bullying, so I'm not sure you could say that it's anti-bullying, but it's about

safety." Mr. Regal was not sure if the program was only meant to prevent bullying

because it also includes interventions for fighting and drug or alcohol use, "but it's

obviously working for bullying; that's a huge component of it." Mr. Golden also

believed that the Incident-Free Banner Program has improved student and teacher

awareness about antibullying and the school culture has changed because more students

are willing to speak out about bullying. In the past, Mr. Regal could not remember

"anyone, talking about bullying them or picking on them or anything like that." Mr.

Golden also reported that when an announcement is made in homerooms that the monthly

goal has been achieved, he hears students clapping, although he wondered if the clapping

is genuine. Mr. Golden also talks to students about inappropriate behaviors in school

such as swearing and using disrespectful language to others. He believed that the

program has helped in changing the school culture because there are fewer fights and

incidents of bullying, and student responsibility and ownership of school safety has

created more student pride in their school.

Table 6 below is a case comparison of the sub-categories that I constructed for

Category 3 on school-wide anti-bullying programs.

Table 6

Case Comparisons of Sub-categories Related to Category 3: School-wide Anti-bullying Programs

_____

Case 1	*Case 2*
School-wide Anti-bullying Programs	*School-wide Anti-bullying Programs*
-Booking reading activity	-Incident-Free Banner Program
-Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Program	

_____

In summary, teachers at both schools reported that they did not have a formal

schoolwide antibullying program that was implemented each year. However, Snowfall

Middle School teachers reported that a few years ago, the school counseling department

conducted a schoolwide book activity that focused on bullying. These teachers recalled

that this school-wide activity had a positive effect on student reflections about how to

prevent bullying. Teachers believed that this schoolwide antibullying activity should be

carried out on a yearly basis, perhaps as an annual sixth grade activity. Snowfall Middle School teachers also described a school-wide program, known as *Positive Behavior Interventions Supports* (PBIS) program, but noted it was not focused on bullying behavior. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers also described the Incident-Free Banner Program, which used the slogan "We don't do that here", to focus on making good choices and avoiding behaviors such as bullying, threats, fighting, and drugs or alcohol. Snowfall Middle School teachers noted that they used the same banner slogan, which was displayed throughout the school.

Category 4: Professional Development

    This category included responses from participants to the following: *Interview question 7:* Describe any professional development or program support that you have received from the school or school district in bullying awareness and intervention strategies.

    Case 1: Lacking professional development about bullying. The Snowfall Middle School teachers could not recall any formal professional development or teacher training about bullying prevention. Three teachers felt they received professional development training for PBIS; training that focused on proactive interventions, but not specifically on bullying. Mr. Yukon noted professional development training related to the school-wide book reading activity. Ms. Tundra recalled receiving professional development training in relation to a program, Love and Logic, which focused on classroom management and helping students make good choices. Ms. Celsius believed teacher training in bullying prevention would be a good idea, adding, "What I've learned

about it is all done on my own." Mr. Yukon could not recall any professional development but mentioned the school-wide reading activity concerning *The Revealers.* Ms. Snow noted that as a member of the PBIS committee, she received some training in behavioral interventions and different strategies to use, but added "it wasn't specific to bullying." Mr. Kelvin noted that counselors presented an explanation of bullying to students in their classrooms and suggested that teachers might be asked to write down where, when, and what kind of bullying they see in the building. Mr. Kelvin also noted that some staff development is provided during the school year, sometimes up to two hours, but never any training specifically on bullying or a discussion of what teachers see and hear about bullying behaviors in the school. Ms. Tundra also referred to the program called Love and Logic, which was introduced in her first year of teaching, noting that it is about classroom management skills. This program helps teachers explain behavioral choices to students in terms of "above the line and below the line," which gives students a clear line between good and bad behavioral choices.

Case 2: Lacking professional development about bullying. None of the six Sunshine Intermediate School teachers could recall that they had received professional development in bullying prevention. Ms. Fairer did not recall any professional development. Ms. Kinder added:

Actual professional development? I can't recall. I know we've received the anti-bullying book. We have the book that's in our book holders, but I can't recall that [it] came with something that we did or if it was just given to us. It's been a while.

> But we do have the anti-bullying book and how many of us have pulled it out,
>
> honestly, probably not many, because I myself don't get to those books.

Ms. Kinder recalled professional development related to Tribes Learning Community (TRIBES), which promotes as safe and caring school learning environment based on four agreements (a) attentive listening, (b) appreciation/no putdowns, (c) mutual respect, and (d) the right to pass. She also recalled a ropes course for teachers that included activities designed to build trust among staff members. Ms. Divine reported that she received formal training in TRIBES, but clarified that it is meant to build a positive school culture and did not address bullying prevention. Ms. Divine added, "I can't think of any anti-bullying workshops [or] formal training." Mr. Patent noted that school administrators provide teachers with written discipline procedures, but he could not recall receiving any professional development in bullying prevention, similar to Mr. Regal and Mr. Golden. However, Mr. Golden remembered receiving a book on bullying, but did not know if it was part of a professional development activity.

Table 7 below is a case comparison of the sub-categories that I constructed in relation to Category 4: Professional Development.

Table 7

Case Comparison of Sub-categories Related to Category 4: Professional Development

_____

Case 1	*Case 2*
Professional Development	*Professional Development*
Lacking professional development about bullying	Lacking professional development about bullying

_____

In summary, none of the teachers at both schools could recall that they had received any direct professional development training in bullying identification, intervention, reduction, and prevention. Snowfall Middle School teachers reported that some training had occurred in relation to conducting classroom discussion and activities related to the whole-school reading of *The Revealers,* a story about bullying in Grade 7. Snowfall Middle School teachers reported that some training had taken place regarding the implementation of the school's Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports Program. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers also reported that in recent years teachers were trained in the Tribes learning climate program, which has a goal to foster mutual respect among students and staff in order to prevent bullying incidents.

Category 5: District or State Bullying Policies

This category included responses from participants to the following: *Interview question 5:* What do you believe is your role in carrying out school and district anti-bullying policies and procedures? *Interview question 9:* What school and district policies exist about student bullying? Do you believe they are effective? Why or why not? *Follow-up Interview question 3:* What happens at this school to a student who is found bullying or is victimized by bullying behaviors? *Reflective journal question 4:* How do you feel about suspending students from school who have bullied others? Should approaches other than (or in addition to) suspension be used to help offenders reduce their bullying behaviors? If so, please describe them.

Case 1: Believing teachers have a significant role in implementing anti-bullying policies. Snowflake Middle School teachers agreed that they play a significant

role in implementing anti-bullying polices. Ms. Frost considered herself on the front

lines in responding to bullying incidents. She added, "We are the people who are in it;

we're seeing it or hearing it. We're involved in it." She viewed her role as implementing

the policies through her involvement with students and the conflicts they experience. Ms.

Kinder described her role as a persistent guardian of safety as well as a positive role

model to guide students in making good choices. Mr. Yukon reiterated the front line

metaphor, stating, "Teachers are really on the front lines. We're the eyes and ears.

We're around kids all the time, and still it's often a hidden from us. Our role is to try to

find as much of that as we can." Ms. Snow believed that teachers play a significant role

in implementing anti-bullying policies. One of her roles is as a member of the PBIS

committee. She noted, "Teachers are taking a strong leadership role in teaching our

students proper behavior and then holding them to it." She noted that students receive

rewards by complying and following PBIS expectations. Mr. Kelvin added:

> We are the front line, and we need to be ever vigilant. We can't sit here and be
>
> consumed by it either. But we just need to be vigilant. We need to be right there
>
> listening, watching, [and] seeing. Build those relationships with the kids, so [that
>
> when] one of those situations that you're not aware of arise, somebody is willing
>
> to come and talk to you and say, 'Hey, something's going on. I need help'.

When a teacher builds trust and positive relationships with students, Mr. Kelvin believed

that they will let you know about incidents because of the trust that they have that the

teacher will do his or her best to help them resolve the conflict. Ms. Tundra also noted,

"My role is to do my very best to follow through on those policies and procedures and to

make my full faith effort to complete them to the letter as they're written." She added

that it is important that she make her best effort to follow through when carrying out

policies and procedures.

Case 2: Believing teachers have a significant role in implementing anti-bullying policies. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers reported that they consistently

follow policies and procedures related to student bullying. Ms. Fairer wished she knew

all the procedures, but pointed out that as a teacher in the district, she would follow

through if she had been a witness to anything. She added, "I've got to report it, document

it, get it in writing, and submit it to administration or a counselor. I just can't stand back

and be a passive observer. I've got to be a part in reporting." Ms. Kinder believed that

her role is to make students aware of anti-bullying policy to help them become more

aware of bullying. Ms. Divine commented, "If there is a policy in place, I think I'm

supposed to create awareness of it. I'm supposed to enforce the policies whatever they

are." Mr. Patent believed that procedures at the school level need to be followed

correctly and consistently. He added, "I think that all students need to know what those

behavior policies are, and that as a staff, if we're consistent and the students know what

to expect from us, that alleviates all the problems." Mr. Patent noted that at the

beginning of the year all teachers review policies and procedures with students. Policy

documents are sent home for parents to sign and return to their homeroom teachers. Mr.

Regal also agreed that his role is to implement all policy procedures. He added, "As

much as I would have a no tolerance policy for bullying, I would expect that there should

be a no tolerance policy for myself as far as carrying out those procedures." Mr. Golden

believed that all teachers should be involved in reducing and preventing bullying by

following the policies and procedures about reporting bullying. He added, "I think all of

us need to be actively involved. If we [teachers] know about it [bullying] and don't hop

on it, then it's like us saying that's okay behavior and that only empowers the bully

more."

      Case 1: Being more aware of bullying procedures than policies. Five

Snowfall Middle School teachers described their beliefs about the procedures that they

need to follow when reporting bullying incidents. Ms. Frost noted that she was unsure if

emotional harm was addressed in the same context as physical harm. When asked about

an actual bullying policy, Ms. Frost remarked:

> Yes, we have [it] in our policy handbook, and it's also in our student handbook,
>
> and we go over it. It is the school's, the teachers', [and] the district's
>
> responsibility to address any situation and to protect our students. Yes, in terms
>
> of that policy, I am aware of that and we have all printed out the actual wordage
>
> of it.

Ms. Celsius was not aware of the exact policies. She wondered if a standard policy is

possible because each incident is different. She added, "I think we have a more specific

safety policy, but I don't know if we have an actual bullying policy." Ms. Celsius also

wondered, "I don't know if you can have one [policy] because each case is different.   I

think we have a more specific safety policy, but I don't know if we have an actual

bullying policy." Mr. Yukon stated that the school has harassment policies, and he

thought they were effective because they support teachers when telling students about

zero tolerance for harassment. He also noted the importance of having a policy, because once the form is used, it becomes a matter for administrators and counselors. Ms. Snow noted, "We have a zero tolerance for bullying with the idea that we address it immediately and there are consequences for it." She added that expectations for zero tolerance are explained to students, and she also noted, "It's got to help kids think a minute before they do it [bullying]." Mr. Kelvin added, "There are definite policies in place for our district. That's the yellow slip. That's the referral slip. We have major and minor infractions and we divide them as major and minor." He added the team takes care of the minor referrals, but major referrals are sent to the assistant principals. Ms. Tundra added, "I know that we do have a harassment and student bullying policy. The policies in themselves are not effective if teachers and staff, who work with kids day-in and day-out, are not addressing the incidents." She believed the team concept and the house concept are the best tools to address bullying and make significant progress in reducing and preventing bullying conflicts.

Case 2: Being more aware of bullying procedures than policies.   Sunshine Intermediate School teachers were familiar with the state *Chapter 19* policy on student misconduct, which includes topics such as student misconduct, discipline, school searches and seizures, reporting offenses, police interviews and arrests, and restitution for vandalism, but they were not aware of district policies that might be different from the state department of education policy. In fact, all districts follow state student misconduct policies as described by *Chapter 19, State Revised Statutes*. Ms. Fairer, Ms. Kinder, and Ms. Divine were aware of the state policy, but did not know of any district policies. Mr.

Patent stated that every year state administrators provide teachers the state *Chapter 19 Student Misconduct* booklet which includes policies and procedures related to anti-bullying, and teachers and staff are required to implement them in classes and school-wide activities and extra-curricular programs. Mr. Regal noted the uniqueness of participating in a state and a district school system. He added, "I'm not real familiar with what that would be on the district level." Mr. Golden admitted that he was unaware of district and state policies other than Chapter 19, yet he was aware of school procedures for responding and reporting bullying.

Case 1: Following reporting procedures according to state policies. Snowfall Middle School teachers noted they report bullying first to their team of teachers at the grade level. Teachers reported severe offenses of bullying to counselors for mediation and administrators for investigation and determination of consequences including suspension from school. Ms. Frost believed that counselors are responsible for counseling victims and bullies. Ms. Frost also noted that she addresses bullying situations that call for her immediate attention and that she will follow-up later when she is not teaching. Ms. Celsius noted that students who have bullied other students have been suspended, either in school or out of school. She added that a school police officer may come in "to scare them a little bit, talk to them, and tell them what could happen if they continue this type of behavior." Ms. Celsius noted that teachers and counselors will talk with offenders. Mr. Yukon also noted that teachers are required to complete a behavioral form to report student bullying for administrative action. Mr. Yukon added that victims of bullying talk to their teachers and the counselors. Ms. Snow also noted

that bullying often results in school suspension or in-school suspension after meetings

with counselors and assistant principals, which are taken seriously. She noted that

counselors and administrators also take measures to make sure victims feel safe. Ms.

Snow added:

> Sometimes accommodations are made, and then the classroom teachers will
>
> support those accommodations, whether it means schedule changes or seating
>
> arrangement changes or if they need to be chaperoned on the bus or other places.
>
> If they need an adult with them, we [teachers] will take care of those kinds of
>
> things.

Mr. Kelvin described responses in terms of layers starting with individual teacher and

house responses:

> Initially there are a bunch of layers there. The ones doing the bullying initially,
>
> we handle it in our house with the teachers individually, and we're the frontline.
>
> If it's a big enough infraction, then we actually write the student up, and then the
>
> counselors and the administration will get involved, and the next steps, if it's bad
>
> enough and [including] multiple times [offenses], the police officers will get
>
> involved.

Ms. Tundra noted that a "formal bullying process" is in place at school with "formal

bullying paperwork" that comprises the report. She also noted that the offender receives

a letter requiring his or her signature and that this letter is "their first formal and only

formal warning and that there are other consequences that could possibly occur if this

were found to occur or happen again." Ms. Tundra listed these consequences as in-

school-suspension, out-of-school suspension, involvement with a police liaison officer, and eventually a pre-expulsion hearing.

Case 2: Following reporting procedures according to state policies. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed in responding to bullying to mediate conflict, but they also reported that they refer students to counselors and administrators for further investigation when the incident is severe. Ms. Fairer reported, "What I've seen at our school is that our vice principal goes into great care and detail in getting to the root of the problem and of what actually happened." She added that the person who has done the bullying is "usually reprimanded and if it's severe enough when it caused intentional harm they are suspended." She believed the staff makes every effort to help the victim feel safe and secure. Ms. Kinder also believed that 'our school is involved." She noted that the vice principal and counselors are involved and often students are called in as possible witnesses to verity the bullying action. Ms. Divine believed that students who bully are called in to the office, meet with the counselors or vice principal, and are often suspended, depending upon the severity of the incident. She also noted that in lesser incidents, adults will step in to mediate. Ms. Divine added that she had no knowledge of what mediation is like because these sessions are confidential. Mr. Patent believed that the classroom teacher handles most bullying incidents, and these incidents are referred to the counselor or the behavioral health counselor if the severity of the situation warrants it. Mr. Patent added that in cases of "extreme bullying or physical altercation, or screaming kids outside the classroom or something, then sometimes you may go ahead and refer it to the admin but you usually try to go through the first channels first." Mr. Regal

reported that "if there's a bully or someone bullied, I like to keep as much power as I can, so I'm going to stop it and I'm going to do what I have to do." If the intervention fails or the behaviors continue, Mr. Regal noted that he would "involve the administration or perhaps the counselors or the behavioral health specialist and try to hopefully educate the kid on what they're doing." Mr. Golden also noted that the victim often needs counseling and the bully is given consequences for the bullying action. In relation to responding to and reporting an actual bullying conflict, Mr. Golden added, "If I know about it, I prefer to get directly involved and find out what is the root cause and as fast as possible squash it, make sure it doesn't happen again." Mr. Golden believed that some teachers who feel less comfortable about directly responding to a bullying conflict often refer incidents to counselors or administrators immediately.

Case 1: Believing suspensions are mostly ineffective. Four Snowfall Middle School teachers questioned the effectiveness of suspensions as a punishment for bullying. Ms. Frost did not think that in-school-suspension (ISS) and out-of-school suspensions (OSS) "aren't all that effective as a form a punishment for any action because too many kids look at it as a day off." However, Ms. Celsius believed that "the consequence needs to fit the crime" and "suspending students may work for some." Mr. Yukon noted that in cases of severe bullying, he would support administrative decisions regarding suspensions for bullying behavior. Ms. Snow also believed in strong consequences for bullying behavior, but she noted that removal of a student from school will not help that student maintain his or her schoolwork while suspended. Mr. Kelvin questioned if suspension was the "right thing to do anytime unless it is a safety issue or a pre-expulsion

issue." He believed that out-of-school suspensions are a reward rather than a punishment, although he acknowledged a need to set examples of strong consequences for other students to see.

Case 2: Believing suspensions are mostly ineffective. Five Sunshine Intermediate School teachers were supportive of suspending students for bullying, depending on the incident. Ms. Kinder agreed with suspending a student for bullying, although she believed that more needs to be done to help the student who has bullied others. Ms. Divine added, "I think suspension from school for students who have bullied others is appropriate." She added that the length of the suspension should be determined by the intensity of the bullying, because it takes the offending student "out of the setting, giving them time to cool off and ideally time to reflect on their actions and their future behavior." Ms. Divine believed suspension can be a deterrent because families "will take further action to reinforce what the school is trying to do". She noted that the suspended student who misses out on school misses out on socializing with friends and misses classes, which could have a negative impact on their grades. However, Ms. Divine also believed that other students could be deterred from choosing to bully others when they know that suspension is a consequence for bullying. Ms. Divine noted that in special circumstances suspending a student might not be the best option. Mr. Patent agreed, "I think that suspension for bullying is the right course of action." He agreed with Ms. Divine because "the parents (of suspended students) would then see fit to teach their children why bullying is wrong and should not be done." Mr. Regal was not sure about the best approach for the student who bullies others. He stated:

Every case of bullying is different, but I believe that for the majority of the

student population, suspension is an acceptable approach for students who have

bullied other students. Ideally, suspension sends the message of "no tolerance" to

the students. I also believe that once a student is suspended, it forces the parents

or guardians to address the problem as well.

Mr. Regal conceded that there will always be exceptions to suspensions as the

appropriate consequence, depending on the individual and the situation, especially if the

one who is bullying is a repeat offender. Mr. Golden believed that the effectiveness of

suspension as a consequence depends on the individual student. He also noted that for

some students, suspension is "a way to get out of school" without consequences from

parents, and "for others, it is almost the end of the world." Mr. Golden also believed that

suspending those students who are repeat offenders is not effective, and he suggested in-

school-suspension might be more effective than sending students home. Ms. Fairer

thought suspension was unacceptable for "almost any reason." The sixth teacher, Ms.

Fairer, did not fully disagree with the consequence of suspension but added, "I feel

suspension from school for almost any reason is not acceptable." She believed that

students who are suspended from school "go home and do whatever they want to do

while on suspension." She added that once students are home on suspension there are no

consequences and the determination becomes an opportunity for time off from school.

Case 1: Believing in alternatives to suspension. Six Snowfall Middle School

teachers offered suggestions for follow-up or alternative programs for students facing

suspension for bullying behaviors. Ms. Frost believed in "restitution more than

suspension" and that students "need to work to make-up for what they have done." She suggested that students who have offended others by bullying should give face-to-face and written apologies to their victims. Ms. Celsius suggested getting parents involved and finding ways to build empathy with offending students by having the "bully walk in the shoes of the victims and feel what harm they are doing to their victims." Mr. Yukon suggested counseling for both victims and bullies. Ms. Snow suggested interventions for bullies such as requiring classes in anger management, social skills, and self-control. She added, "These kids need to be retaught how to treat others and [these] classes should be required as part of the consequence for bullying others." Mr. Kelvin noted that in-school suspension focused on learning appropriate behaviors, as well as academics, would be a better solution than out-of school suspension. Ms. Tundra believed that the school staff could help parents to access resources, including the police liaison officer, counselor, or social worker who could help their children.

Case 2: Believing in alternatives to suspension. All Sunshine Intermediate School teachers offered alternatives to suspension, including mentoring, community service, and bullying awareness classes. Ms. Fairer asked several rhetorical questions when considering alternatives to bullying suspensions:

> What do we do to serious offenders on our school campus? How do we keep our student population safe? How can we provide parenting where there is no parenting available? How do we figure out a successful way in which the offending student can learn from what they have done? What are good, teachable consequences?

Ms. Fairer offered alternative ideas such as in-school suspension and Saturday school where students could do community service. She wondered if there were programs "to sensitize a bullying student, something similar to a workshop that could be administered at school over a two to three day period for a serious offender." Ms. Kinder believed that "students need to learn how to deal with conflicts in non-violent ways. I feel those students who are bullying other students should be required to attend mandatory classes about the seriousness of bullying." Ms. Kinder suggested the use of intervention strategies as well as mentoring programs and counseling for offending students and for those students who have been victimized. Ms. Kinder believed there "needs to be an option that prevents repeat offenders from coming back to school/classes who cannot or will not demonstrate an effort to change." She suggested that offending students should attend educational and behavioral classes with their parents, perform community service at school, or even write a reflection paper, perhaps with a video, for the students in the school to see. Mr. Patent had a similar suggestion regarding "a mandatory reflection paper completed before the child returns to school. This paper could be designed in conjunction with the behavior counselor." He also suggested that the parent take part in the written paper and be required to sign it. Mr. Regal offered an alternative approach that would include a mentoring program for repeat offenders and a skills program "centered on educating the student and building their self-concept and empathy." Mr. Golden added that suspension does not guarantee that the behaviors will stop and suggested that follow-up counseling would help students in changing their bullying behaviors.

Table 8 is a case comparison of the categories that I constructed for Category 5:

District and State Anti-Bullying Policies and Procedures.

Table 8

Case Comparisons of Sub-Categories Related to Category 5: District or State Bullying Policies

_____

Case 1	*Case 2*
District or State Bullying Policies	*District or State Bullying Policies*
Teachers:	Teachers:
-have a significant role in implementing anti-bullying policies	-consistently follow bullying policies and procedures
-are aware of discipline/safety policies, but policy	-are familiar with Chpt 19 policies but not bullying policy
-follow reporting procedures:first to team, then to counselors and administrators	-follow reporting procedures, but prefer responding to conflict by initially mediating with students

-believe suspensions are necessary
  -but mostly ineffective
  -seen by students as day off reward
  -may act as deterrent to other students
  -loss of academic time
	-believe suspensions are necessary and acceptable
	  - mostly ineffective for repeat offender
	  -impact depends on individual and parent support
	  -other students may be deterred
	  -loss of social life and academic time

- believe in alternatives to suspension
  -counseling for victims and offenders
  -classes in anger management
  -restitution/written apologies
	-believe in alternatives to suspension
	  -in-school-suspension/Saturday school classes
	  -mandatory bullying awareness classes
	  -mandatory reflection paper
	  -mentoring program

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In summary, teachers at both schools could not clearly articulate state and district

anti-bullying policies, but they knew procedures to follow when responding to and

reporting incidents of bullying. Snowfall Middle School teachers reported that they

followed a reporting process from the individual teacher to a team of teachers and finally

to counselors and administrators. They referred to themselves as being on the frontline of

responding to bullying. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers preferred to handle

bullying incidents in their classrooms, but they followed procedures for reporting

bullying in severe cases. Teachers at both schools accepted the necessity of suspending

students for bullying, but they also believed suspension was ineffective for some students

and should be used instead of or in association with other forms of alternative

consequences. Teachers at Sunshine Intermediate School believed that suspension works

best when parents accept the consequence and follow-up at home to support changing

their children's behavior. Snowfall Middle School teachers proposed counseling for

victims and bullies, as well as anger management classes and written apologies to the

victim(s). Sunshine Intermediate School teachers proposed in-school-suspensions or

Saturday school classes, bullying awareness classes, reflective writing, and a mentoring

program for bullying offenders.

Category 6: Conceptual Framework: Teacher Intent and Involvement

Category 6 is about the conceptual framework for this study, which is based on a

framework of responses to bullying that Marshall et al. (2009) developed. Marshall et al.

interviewed 30 teachers in Grades 4 through 8 at two schools as part of a larger studying

of bullying in public schools in a large metropolitan area in the United States. Marshall

et al. categorized teacher responses to bullying in relation a two-dimensional conceptual

model of teacher intent and teacher involvement. The conceptual model divides

responses of teachers as either (a) constructive or punitive and (b) direct or indirect. The

two-tiered response model yielded four sub-categories to intent and involvement: (a)

constructive-direct, (b) constructive indirect, (c) punitive direct, and (d) punitive indirect.

Teacher responses from each case are described according to these four sub-categories.

Case 1: Constructive-Direct: Responding with positive interventions. These constructive-direct responses include (a) pulling the student aside and talking to them, (b) calling out inappropriate behavior, (c) protecting the victim, (d) making the bully apologize, and (e) relating adolescent bullying to a personal experience. All Snowfall Middle School teachers gave examples of the constructive-direct approach. Ms. Frost noted the first step for teachers in her house would be to assess the conflict by trying to understand how the students are feeling often checking in with the victim and taking the offender aside to talk about the behavior. Ms. Celsius noted she takes students aside and talks to offenders about how they affect others with their behavior. Ms. Celsius added that she gives the bully pointers as to how he/she could be a positive role model and how they could contribute to society. Mr. Yukon noted that the school has referral forms, but he hardly ever uses them because he uses a variety of strategies to help students stop their behaviors. Mr. Yukon added, "You have to deal with a bully, but my hearts with the victim." Ms. Snow noted that her first approach is to hold a conference with both students, although she believed that a counselor might be able to obtain more information from students in a confidential setting. Ms. Snow also recalled that she was a victim of bullying, and therefore, she attempts to make her first response a teaching moment. Mr. Kelvin noted that his first approach is to have a one-on-one conference with the two students in conflict. Ms. Tundra reported that she immediately steps in and talks to students before making a determination for referral to a counselor or to call the parents.

Case 2: Constructive-Direct: Responding with positive interventions. All Sunshine Intermediate School teachers gave examples of the constructive-direct

approach. Ms. Fairer reported that she takes the student aside to talk in private if she believes that the student is unfair to a peer. Ms. Kinder takes the offender aside and asks the student if his or her behavior is right or feels good and asks that student to walk in the victim's shoes. She approaches the victim with care and concern. Ms. Divine reported that her most effective intervention is to talk directly to the student in order to find out what happened and if they need some assistance. Mr. Patent reported that in the classroom he takes students aside and talk to them if the bullying is on a small scale. Mr. Regal noted that she stops the bullying behavior directly and then asks students to reflect on their behavior so that they can understand their actions and the possible outcomes. Mr. Regal referred to teachable moments that help students feel the impact of bullying and its related social exclusion. Mr. Golden reported that if he sees students engaged in bullying behavior, he talks to them.

Case 1: Constructive-Indirect: Referring to support staff. Constructive-Indirect responses include (a) referring student(s) to a counselor and (b) seeking assistance from other adults. All Snowfall Middle School teachers noted that they would send students to the counselor, but usually after approaching the incident, asking questions, and talking with the students to determine the nature and depth of the problem. When the conflict sounds more serious than she can resolve, Ms. Frost reported that she makes a referral to a counselor. After conducting one-on-one discussions with the bully and the victim, Ms. Celsius reported that she talk about the incident with a counselor to help resolve the issue. Mr. Yukon added, "I'll let them know that there is a behavior form, and this is an issue that is going to be discussed at another level". After

conferencing with both students, Ms. Frost generally contacts the parents. Ms. Snow

added, "It's nice to have the counselor pull them in or you talk to them later individually

to find out what really happened." Mr. Kelvin shared that there are times he will decide

to send conflicts to the office because "it is to be dealt with a little more or more

counseling needs to get involved." He also noted the difficulties in discerning the causes

of relational bullying because having knowledge of the students and their situation is

critical to resolving the conflict. Mr. Kelvin noted that he tries to "use the counselors in

these situations because they have history with kids and relationships and can help you

avoid pitfalls." Ms. Tundra noted her experience as an assistant principal in working

with counselors has given her a wide variety of intervention strategies to resolve these

incidents.

     Case 2: Constructive-Indirect: Referring to support staff. Five Sunshine

Intermediate School teachers reported that they refer bullying conflicts to grade level

counselors, usually after they had been able to determine the bullying issues by talking

with students involved in the conflict. Ms. Fairer noted that she refers the offender if she

believes the individual is not responding to her requests to stop. Ms. Divine noted that

she offers her own type of counseling by taking students aside and talking with them, but

she also tries to get another adult or counselor involved who might be better able to help

the student or situation.   Although Mr. Patent noted that he handles small conflicts "on

the spot," he refers incidents to counselors or administrators, depending on the severity of

the conflict. Mr. Regal reported that he contacts grade level counselors for assistance in

resolving serious bullying issues. If he has to respond immediately to an incident, he notifies another adult for assistance or sends a student for help.

Case 1: Punitive-Direct: Responding with punitive interventions. Two out of six Snowfall Middle School teachers used the punitive direct approach. Punitive-direct responses include (a) removing the bully from the classroom, (b) administering punishment, (c) physically getting in the middle of students, and (d) shouting at the students to stop. Two Snowfall Middle School teachers reported that they would respond to a bullying incident with a direct and punitive approach that might include physical interjection.   None of the teachers reported their responses as shouting, administering punishment, or removing the bully from the classroom. Mr. Patent and Mr. Regal reported that they will step in and physically restrain bullying or fighting.

Case 2: Punitive-Direct: Responding with punitive interventions. No Sunshine Intermediate School teachers reported using the punitive-direct approach. None of the teachers reported that they respond to bullying incidents by physically interjecting themselves into the incident, shouting, administering punishment, or removing a bully from the classroom.

Case 1: Punitive-Indirect: Referring bullying incidents to administrators. Punitive-Indirect responses include (a) calling the bully's parents, (b) sending the bully to an administrator. Three Snowfall Middle School teachers noted that the punitive-indirect approach is sometimes necessary if earlier interventions are not successful in resolving the conflict. Ms. Celsius noted that if efforts with the counselor to come to a resolution fail, she refers the incident to the principal for further consequences.   Ms. Snow reported

that severe bullying situations may require processing with a counselor or investigation by an administrator. She added, "We have our in-house calls to the counselor and then to the office with the vice principals or the principal." Mr. Yukon noted while indicating his personal disappointment in the behavior he informs offending students that certain procedures will be followed and referrals to administrators will be made. Ms. Snow reported that some incidents fit the three-part definition and will be reported immediately to the counselor and administrator because of the negative impact on the victim. Ms. Snow also noted that if the conflict becomes more severe, parents will be called to reassure them that school staff members are dealing with the conflict.

Case 2: Punitive-Indirect: Referring bullying incidents to administrators.

Three Sunshine Intermediate School teachers reported severe bullying behaviors to administrators and counselors**.** None of the teachers reported that they called the parents of students who are offending others with bullying behaviors. Ms. Divine refers students to administrators if she hears about bullying from other students. In cases of physical bullying Mr. Patent immediately stops the behavior and refers the incident to administrators or counselors. Mr. Regal noted that if he feels uncomfortable with handling difficult bullying conflicts, he contacts a counselor or administrator.

Table 9 is a case comparison of the categories that I constructed in relation to Category 6: Teacher Intent and Involvement.

Table 9

Case Comparisons of Sub-Categories Related to Category 6: Teacher Intent and Involvement

(table continues)

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Case 1	Case 2

Teacher Intent and Involvement   *Teacher Intent and Involvement*

Constructive-Direct: positive interventions   *Constructive-Direct: positive interventions*

-assessing conflict by talking with offender and victim   -take offending student aside in private to talk
-taking student(s) aside to talk about situation   -talking directly to students to find out what
                                                              they need
-one-on-one conferencing with students   -asking offender to reflect on behavior
-finding a teachable moment   -finding teachable moment to understand
                                                              impact of bullying
-building feeling of empathy about how victim feel   -asking offender to "walk in shoes" of victim

Constructive-Indirect: refer to support staff   *Constructive-Indirect: refer to support staff*

-after determining the nature of the conflict   -after talking with students and understanding
-after conferencing with counselor   -when offender is non-compliant
-when counselor has more knowledge of student   -when issue is too serious for teacher to handle

Punitive-Direct: punitive interventions   *Punitive-Direct: punitive interventions*

-two of six teachers reported physical interjection   -no teachers reported punitive-direct responses

Punitive-Indirect: refer to administrators   *Punitive-Indirect: refer to administrators*

-sometimes necessary if early interventions fail   -when bullying behaviors are severe
-severity may require punitive-indirect response   -when teacher feels uncomfortable in handling
                                                              bullying
-can be used as a threat to student offender   -no teachers reported calling parents
- when 3-part definition of bullying is fulfilled

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In summary, all teachers at both schools described their direct responses as immediately stopping the conflict by taking students aside or talking to them in private to determine what happened. Teachers reported that they listen to students, try to understand what is happening, and find teachable moments to help the offender understand the impact of his or her behavior on others. Teachers at both schools also reported they resort to constructive-indirect responses when they have determined the nature and severity of the bullying issue to be larger than they can handle. Snowfall

Middle School teachers believed counselors often have more expertise and knowledge of the students and the incident, and therefore, they should be consulted. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers noted that they call counselors when their interventions are not working or the student offender is non-compliant. The majority of teachers at both schools did not resort to punitive measures for offenders. Teachers at both schools implemented the punitive-indirect method when the bullying was too severe for them to handle or when their interventions failed to resolve the incident.

<p style="text-align:center;">**Single Case Analysis: Document Review**</p>

In relation to the documents, I conducted a content analysis of the district and state bullying policies and related procedures for each case. This analysis included an examination of district and/or state policies and procedures regarding purpose, content, and use in relation to student bullying conflicts. This content analysis also included a summary of the similarities and differences between these documents for each case.

Case 1: T Chart of Behavior

Snowfall Middle School teachers used the *T-Chart of Behavior*, which is a two-column list separating teacher-managed behaviors (minor) from office-managed behaviors (major) to help them understand the differences between behaviors that teachers are responsible for managing and behaviors that administrators are responsible for managing. Teacher-managed behaviors in relation to bullying and harassment include (a) minor physicality, including minor aggression toward peers and any inappropriate display of physical affection, (b) minor bullying/harassment, including disrespect of peers, and (c) unsafe behavior in halls/common/class areas such as running and throwing.

Office-managed behaviors in relation to bullying and harassment include (a) major

physicality such as any aggressive act resulting in physical harm to another student or

staff, repeated inappropriate or gratuitous displays or physical affection, (b)

bullying/harassment/sexual harassment (i.e. verbal, physical, emotional or

psychological). The *T-Chart of Behavior* is a local school document created by

administrators and support staff to clarify school procedures in responding to student

offenses, including bullying and harassment.

Case 1: Behavior Tracking Form

Snowfall Middle School teachers use a behavior tracking form, which is a single

page document that includes minor or major behavioral problems listed in the *T-Chart of*

Behavior. The behavior tracking form is a local school document created by

administrators and support staff derived from expectations defined in *Positive*

Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a state-wide policy program. All

offending behaviors are categorized within the four positive expectations of the PBIS

Program: (a) be respectful, (b) be responsible, (c) be safe and (d) be prepared. Minor and

major kinds of physicality are listed under the *Be Safe* category while peer conflict and

bullying/harassment are listed under the *Be Responsible* category. The form includes the

offending student's name, grade, house, date, time and referring staff member. Space is

designated for describing the location of the incident in several areas of the school: (a)

classroom: (b) hallway (specific), (c) bathroom, (d) multi-purpose area, (e) outside, (f)

house area, (g) cafeteria, (g) gym, (h) media center, (h) locker room, and (i) other.

Parents are also informed that the purpose of this document is to inform them of their

child's behavior and to urge them to support actions taken by the school and to assist with the corrective action to help their child learn positive behaviors.

Case 1: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Brochure

At Snowflake Middle School, the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program offers an opportunity for the staff and teachers to provide behavior management interventions. PBIS is a behavioral intervention model designed to address, reduce, and prevent offending behaviors by focusing on positive pro-social behavior among adolescents. The brochure describes three components of the PBIS Program that staff and teachers are asked to follow: (a) teach appropriate behavior in all settings, (b) provide interventions when behavior expectations are not met, and (c) recognize students for practicing positive behavior. The four core values of the PBIS Program include (a) be respectful, (b) be responsible, (c) be safe, and (d) be prepared. Examples of positive behaviors are listed within each core value for students to understand and model during the school day. The brochure also includes an explanation of the school-wide expectation for PBIS:

> PBIS is a team based school-wide design for behavior management which includes all students and all staff in all settings. It is a program that will change and adapt as we go along to better meet the needs of our student population by using the results of surveys completed by students, parents, and staff as well as the analysis of discipline data.

The brochure also noted that the PBIS program is a 3-5 year process and includes all students and all staff members in all settings within the school community. There is an

explanation of PBIS and its commitment to administering PBIS programs in school

districts throughout the state on the state department of education website.

Case 1: State Discipline Policy

Snowfall Middle School staff followed the discipline policies and procedures that

the State Department of Education set forth by the Midwestern state in which it is

located. The State Department of Education publishes a document indicating the rights

and responsibilities related to school discipline, codes, and consequences for behaviors

on its website. The document includes discipline policies and procedures presented in a

question/answer format that includes rules for suspension and expulsion. The document

also includes policies and procedures in three areas: (a) suspension, (b) removal from

classroom, and (c) expulsion. The document also includes a statement that interpretation

and application of statutes and of laws can differ among parties involved and that the

state superintendent's constitutional and statutory powers are limited when served with

appeals regarding student discipline cases. In addition, the document includes a

statement that local schools control specific procedures within the guidelines of state

statutes providing for removal of the offending student from the classroom, suspension,

and expulsion. The document also includes an explanation that while the state may

provide options to a disputing party, any negotiation of a dispute must be done through

the local school organization. Teachers at Snowfall Middle School are allowed to use

reasonable force to prevent or stop a physical act that threatens injury to any person.

According to state law, corporal punishment is prohibited, although teachers may use

reasonable and necessary force for the protection of self and others.

Case 1: State Policy on Bullying

In relation to anti-bullying policy and Snowflake Middle School, the state legislature approved a policy on bullying that serves as a model policy for local school districts to adopt. By March 1, 2010, all school districts were required to develop a policy defining and prohibiting bullying, and adoption was required by August 15, 2010. The policy must be posted in the public domain and include procedures for mandatory, confidential reporting and investigation of reports by persons specified for the task. Parents must be notified when reports are made regarding their child's alleged behavior. A list of disciplinary consequences must be provided for those students engaged in bullying and retaliating against those students who reported the bullying. The school board must provide copies of the policy upon request and ensure that all students and parents receive a copy annually.

Case 1: District Documents

The Snowfall Middle School website provided a list of weblinks to district documents related to state board of education policies and procedures about student discipline. The documents found on this website included (a) student behavior and discipline , (b) code of classroom conduct, (c) student suspension, (d) harassment policy, (e) pupil harassment complaint, and (f) school bullying prohibited. Each document includes the following: (a) statement of principles, (b) standards of expectations, (c) prohibitions, (d) definitions, (e) rules, and (f) specific procedures for school personnel to follow when implementing the policy.

Case 2: Comprehensive Student Support System (CSSS)

At Sunshine Intermediate School, this state systemic support program offers proactive and positive support and interventions for students with learning and behavioral needs. Teachers identify students who are at risk for making academic progress or appropriate behavioral choices. The referral for attention process begins when teachers return a completed questionnaire regarding behaviors and existing interventions to the grade level counselor. The grade level counselor initiates a parent conference with teachers to discuss resources and interventions that staff members offer to assist the student and his or her family.

Case 2: Class D School Discipline Grade Level Referral List

In relation to Sunshine Intermediate School, the D Board is grade-level and classroom-centered so that prior to making an administrative referral, teachers can cite students with Class D minor infractions. Class D offenses include violating school rules, such as tardiness, possession or use of contraband items other than weapons, drugs, and alcohol, and minor disruptive behaviors. Once a student is listed on the Class D grade level referral list, he or she cannot participate in any extra-curricular school activities for 20 school days. When the 20 days are reached, and if there are no other Class D referrals, the student is reinstated for participation. On the third referral to Class D without reinstatement, the student is placed on a contract and is referred to school administrators for all subsequent disciplinary offenses.

Case 2: Conduct Referral Form

The conduct referral form is designed so that Sunshine Intermediate School teachers report allegations of student disciplinary offenses upon others, as defined in Chapter 19 of the state statutes. The referral form requires the teacher to indicate the name of the alleged offender(s) and the date, time, and place of the incident, including a brief description of the offense. The administrator then writes a description of administrative action including phone numbers and times of calls to parents . Copies of the referral form are sent to the individual who made the referral, the parents, the counselor, and office personnel.

Case 2: Chapter 19 State Student Misconduct Policy

Sunshine Intermediate School teachers are required to follow the guidelines and procedures of Chapter 19 of the revised state statutes regarding student misconduct, discipline, school searches and seizures, reporting offenses, police interviews and arrests, and restitution for vandalism. Teachers, support staff, and administrators refer to the procedures and guidelines of Chapter 19 when responding to issues of discipline including bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment. Chapter 19 defines these offenses, including bullying and cyberbullying, and provides the following guidelines regarding disciplinary action: (a) correction and conference with student; (b) detention, (c) crisis removal, (d) individualized instruction related to student's problem behaviors, (e) in-school suspension, (f) interim alternate education setting, (g) loss of privileges, (h) parent conferences, (i) time in office, (j) suspension of one to ten school days, (k) suspension of eleven or more school days, (l) Saturday school, (m) disciplinary transfer, (n) referral to

alternative education programs, (o) dismissal, or (p) restitution. According to Chapter 19, bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment are Class B offenses. Chapter 19 procedures mandate that all teachers and staff report all Class A and Class B offenses to an administrator. Teachers and staff follow the guidelines for reporting Class A and B offenses by referring students to counselors and administrators, either through face-to face notice, local area network email, or through written administrative referrals. All referrals are collected on the state data server.

Case 2: Safe School Act of 2011

On July 1, 2011, Safe Schools Act went into effect at Sunshine Intermediate School and other schools across the state. The Safe Schools Act mandated that the School Board of Education establish requirements for monitoring and reporting of cyberbullying and bullying in public schools. The purpose of the Safe Schools Act is to bring consistency across all schools in the state by addressing bullying incidents and expecting all staff, teachers, administrators, parents, and students to treat one another with respect with no tolerance for bullying and harassment. Expectations for all schools include (a) enforcing of bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment, (b) responding immediately to bullying, (c) integrating of bullying prevention into curriculum, (d) implementing of bullying prevention at each grade level, (e) holding annual school-wide assemblies on bullying policies and procedures, (f) providing prompt investigation, and (g) ensuring the safety of those reporting from retaliation. The State Department of Education website includes the following description of how bullying incidents are addressed: (a) providing teacher training and professional development, (b) improving

ways to gather and analyze data, and (c) involving students, parents, and community in proactive and positive school activities. The website also includes a statement that all school administrators are trained in research-based strategies regarding the development of positive school climates for academic, social, and emotional learning. In addition, the website includes a statement that all state schools must provide (a) positive behavioral interventions and supports, (b) research-based anti-bullying programs, and (c) annual bullying awareness training for staff, students, parents, and the community.

At the first staff meeting prior to the opening of every school year, school administrators at Sunshine Intermediate School inform teachers of the state memo that corporal or physical punishment is prohibited as disciplinary punishment. All teachers receive a copy of the memo in an opening year packet. The memo is read aloud by administrators and clarification discussion may take place. Teachers are informed that a teacher or adult staff member may use reasonable force to restrain a student when the health, safety and welfare of the teacher, the offender, or any other person in the area is at risk.

Table 10 is a case comparison of the sub-categories for each case in relation to school and district or state anti-bullying policies and procedures.

Table 10

Case Comparison of Sub-Categories Related to District or State Anti-Bullying Policies and Procedures

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Case 1	*Case 2*
District, State Anti-Bullying Policies/ Procedures	*District, State Anti-Bullying Policies/Procedures*

(table continues)

Case 1   *Case 2*

-T Chart of Behavior   -Comprehensive Student Support System
-Behavior Tracking Form   -Class D grade level referral list
-Positive Behavioral Interventions/Supports (brochure -Conduct Referral Form
-State Discipline Procedures Policy   -Chapter 19 State Student Misconduct
                                                      Policy
-State Policy on Bullying   -Safe School Act of 2011
-Student Behavior and Discipline
-Code of Classroom Conduct
-Student Suspension
-Harassment Policy
-Pupil Harassment Complaint
-School Bullying Prohibited
_____

In summary, teachers at both schools followed state mandated bullying prevention policies that were adapted at the local school level. Site-based management of these state policies at both schools involved continual monitoring and maintenance by the local school board. At Snowfall Middle School, educators created a *T-Chart of Behavior* that separates classroom and team disciplinary actions from office and administrative actions. Classroom teachers at both schools are expected to handle minor or infrequent violations of defiance/disrespect of teacher, class disruption, and minor bullying/harassment. Similarly, Sunshine Intermediate School educators have developed a disciplinary document for teachers that separates classroom disciplinary expectations from administrative actions. The Sunshine Intermediate School document includes a list of Class A, B, C, and D offenses with descriptions of offenses and procedures for teachers and administrators to follow, which is found in the State Department of Education Chapter 19 Student Misconduct booklet. On the first day of the school year, administrators at Sunshine Intermediate School distribute a reference document to all teachers, which describes student offenses and procedures including prohibited actions such as corporal and physical punishment and strip searches.

Cross Case Analysis: Emergent Themes

The cross case analysis for this study involves a presentation of the themes and discrepant data that emerged across all data sources for both cases. The themes emerged from the categories and sub-categories that I constructed in relation to each data source for each case. No discrepant data, however, emerged from this data analysis to challenge key findings about the impact of anti-bullying programs and policies on teacher intent and involvement.

Twenty two themes emerged from the six categories and related sub-categories that I constructed as a result of analysis of the interview and reflective journal data and the content analysis of documents related to district and/or state anti-bullying policies and procedures. The six major categories included (a) teacher beliefs about bullying, (b) teacher responses to bullying, (c) schoolwide antibullying programs, (d) professional development, (e) district and state antibullying policies, and (f) conceptual framework: teacher intent and involvement. In addition, themes also emerged from the content analysis that I conducted of documents related to anti-bullying policies and procedures for each case. These themes inform the findings for this study, which are presented in the results section in relation to the central and related research questions.

Category 1: Teacher Beliefs about Bullying

Theme 1: Teachers defined bullying as unwanted and unwelcome behavior that is persistent, attempts to gain control over another individual, and causes social emotional and physical harm.

Theme 2: Teachers believed bullying happens all the time and anywhere, is inevitable, requires teacher awareness to reduce or prevent it, and has long lasting effects on the victim.

Category 2: Teacher Responses to Bullying

Theme 1: Teachers reported that their first interventions involve responding immediately to stop the incident from continuing and taking students aside to gain a better understanding of the conflict.

Theme 2: Teachers reported that after determining the nature and severity of the bullying incident, they refer the conflict to counselors or administrators for mediation or further investigation.

Theme 3: Teachers believed direct bullying is easy to recognize, and therefore, they respond immediately to stop the behavior, talk with the students involved, and if needed, call for another adult to assist them or refer the incident to a counselor or administrator.

Theme 4: Teachers believed in finding teachable moments to help offenders discover why they acted in such a way, understand the impact of their bullying behavior, feel empathy for the victim, and learn from their choices.

Theme 5: Teachers believed bullying that is persistent, controlling, and committed with intent to harm requires their immediate response, which often leads to administrative action toward the offender and counselor support for the victim.

Theme 6: Teachers believed their skills in responding to bullying include the ability to respond immediately, listen without emotion, discern what is actually

happening, maintain an open attitude, and rely on trusting relationships with students to resolve the conflict or find a counselor or administrator to help.

Theme 7: Teachers expected support from other teachers in responding to bullying, communicating with each other regarding bullying incidents among students, and receiving support from counselors and administrators when they report incidents of bullying.

Theme 8: Teachers believed their best personal interventions are responding as soon as possible to stop bullying behavior and determining the cause of the conflict by talking with students in private and away from other students.

Theme 9: Teachers believed successfully responding to bullying depends on teacher confidence, familiarity with the students involved, and making time to stop the behavior, redirect it, or resolve it.

Category 3: Schoolwide Antibullying Programs

Theme 1: Teachers believed that schoolwide bullying awareness and positive behavior rewards programs and activities act as catalysts for developing a school culture of safe behavior.

Theme 2: Teachers believed that other staff members will respond to bullying incidents immediately, but responses may vary according to teacher's perception of what is happening, their beliefs in their capacity to be effective, and their willingness to take time to intervene.

Category 4: Professional Development

Theme 1: Teachers believed they had not received professional development in identifying and responding to bullying incidents among students.

Category 5: District or State Anti-bullying Policies and Procedures

Theme 1: Teachers believed that they are on the frontline as early responders to bullying behavior and are therefore responsible for following state and district procedures to document and report bullying conflicts and issues to counselors and administrators for mediation or further investigation.

Theme 2: Teachers were aware of district or state discipline policies and procedures that included bullying prevention, but they could not articulate the content of specific anti-bullying policies.

Theme 3: Teachers believed that their referrals to counselors and administrators often results in suspension of offenders and counselor support for victims.

Theme 4: School documents clearly described state and district policies and procedures for student discipline, which includes bullying prevention.

Category 6: Conceptual Framework: Teacher Intent and Involvement

Theme 1: Teachers initiated constructive-direct responses by immediately acting to stop the bullying incident and taking students aside to talk with them and understand the problem.

Theme 2: Teachers initiated constructive-indirect responses by referring students to counselors when they need assistance in mediating and resolving the bullying incident.

Theme 3: Teachers did not initiate direct-punitive responses when responding to bullying incidents because they believed their role was to immediately stop a bullying incident and take action towards remediation of the conflict by talking to the students in order to understand what happened. Teachers were aware that the state and district policies did not allo any forms of physical punishment, including corporal punishment.

Theme 4: Teachers initiated indirect-punitive responses by referring serious bullying incidents to administrators. Teachers believed these referralswere reserved for severe bullying incidents that needed more investigation and mediation, including victim support from counselors and sometimes punitive consequences for the offender. Teachers believed the role of administrators included a thorough investigation and determination of possible administrative punitive consequences.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

To improve the trustworthiness of this study, I used strategies that Merriam (2009) recommended for qualitative research. I have described how I implemented these specific strategies in relation to the constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Merriam (2009) defined credibility or internal validity as "to how the research findings match reality" (p. 213). To improve the credibility of this study, I used the strategy of triangulation by comparing and contrasting the analysis of initial and follow-up interview data, reflective journal data, and documents pertaining to anti-bullying policies and procedures. I also used the strategy of member checks by asking participants

to review the tentative findings of this study for their plausibility. I sent an email to all participants requesting that they review the findings for all research questions for plausibility and credibility. Two teachers at Snowfall Middle School and two teachers at Sunshine Intermediate School responded. All teachers found the findings to be plausible. One teacher expressed concern about the growing presence of cyberbullying, which this study did not address but may be a topic for future research.

Transferability

Merriam (2009) defined transferability as to the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations" (p. 223). I addressed the issue of transferability or generalizability by using rich and thick description of the settings, participants, and findings for this study. In addition, I used direct quotes throughout the data analysis to ensure that the findings reflected the responses of each participant. In relation to typicality of the sample, I chose two cases of anti-bullying programs and policies at two middle schools located in disparate regions of the United States whose schools serve communities of the same size. Their state anti-bullying laws and policies are typical of those found in middle schools across the United States because public school districts are required to implement their state policies about student bullying.

Dependability

Merriam (2009) defined dependability or reliability as "the extent to which research findings can be replicated" (p. 220). I used several strategies to improve the dependability of this study. I used the strategy of an audit trail by maintaining a researcher's journal in which I recorded data collection procedures, the codification

process, data analysis procedures, and research decisions that I made during the completion of this study. I also used the strategy of triangulation by comparing and contrasting data from the initial and follow-up interviews, the reflective journals, and documents describing policies and procedures related to bullying prevention.

Confirmability

In relation to the issue of confirmability or objectivity, Merriam (2009) noted that researchers need to explain their biases, ideas, and assumptions during the investigative process so that the reader can better understand how certain interpretations had been reached. To improve the confirmability or objectivity of this study, I used the strategy of reflexivity by maintaining a researcher's journal in which I recorded my thoughts relating to my personal bias, fears, dispositions, and assumptions about teacher responses to student bullying during the process of collecting, organizing, analyzing, and interpreting data.

<div align="center">Results</div>

The results or findings for this study are presented first in relation to the four related research questions and then to the central research question, which includes a synthesis of findings related to teacher intent and involvement in student bullying incidents. Each research question includes a brief explanation of the key finding followed by a discussion of the similarities and differences between the findings from the two cases.

Related Research Question 1

How do middle school teachers define student bullying?

Two key findings emerged from the data analysis for the first related research question. The first key finding is that teachers at both schools agreed about a definition of bullying as persistent, controlling, and causing physical, emotional, and social harm. The second key finding is teachers at both schools agreed that bullying can happen anywhere and anytime, is inevitable, requires teacher awareness to reduce or prevent it, and has long lasting effects upon the victim.

Teacher agreement about this definition of student bullying, however, should also be considered in relation to how structural differences in buildings on each school campus impacted where teachers believed bullying occurs. Snowfall Middle School is contained in one building, and Sunshine Intermediate School is situated on an open campus where students attend classes in several permanent and portable buildings situated throughout the campus. Therefore, Snowfall Middle School teachers reported student bullying incidents in team pods and in the hallway of their grade level pod. They also described their awareness of bullying in terms of social hierarchies or pecking orders among social cliques that often happens in the cafeteria and when teachers are not visible or are pre-occupied and unaware of bullying incidents. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers believed bullying happens in and around the classroom, and they believed that direct and indirect bullying happens in restrooms, hallways, and stairwells, as well as in the cafeteria and the playground. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers also believed that bullying either starts in the classroom and ends on campus away from adult supervision or begins on campus and is surreptitiously continued in classrooms. Teachers from both schools defined bullying as persistent, harmful, and controlling

behavior that happens when they are unaware, not looking, or visibly missing from an area where students congregate.

Related Research Question 2

How do middle school teachers describe their responses to incidents of student bullying?

Nine themes emerged from the data analysis for this related research question, but the key finding is that teachers from both schools believed that they respond immediately to bullying incidents, find out what is happening, and act to resolve the situation at that moment or after class.

In comparing the responses of teachers at both schools to incidents of student bullying, several similarities and some differences emerged. Teachers at both schools reported that once they were able to determine the nature of the conflict, they would refer students involved in a bullying incident to a counselor for follow-up and in severe cases to an administrator for further investigation. Teachers from both schools also emphasized the importance of talking to bullying offenders about their choices to hurt or harm others, often asking offending students to "put themselves in the victim's shoes." Teachers in both cases also believed that counselors and administrators were effective in their follow up with victims to ensure their safety at school. However, differences in teacher requests for counselor support were found in each school's approach to involving counselors in teacher dialogue regarding a bullying situation. In addition to involving their own grade level counselor, Snowfall Middle School teachers reported the option of asking counselors from another grade level to attend their team meeting in order to

support their interventions with offenders and victims associated with their team.

Teachers noted that all counselors encourage teachers from any grade level to ask for

input and assistance in bullying or student conflict issues. In contrast, Sunshine

Intermediate School teachers reported that they generally refer students to counselors

assigned to the grade level of the students involved, which may often be the counselor at

the teacher's grade level. Only one teacher at Sunshine Intermediate School mentioned

asking a counselor at another grade level for assistance. This difference in counselor

assistance across grade levels may be significant when determining the effectiveness of

responses by support staff.   This difference in requests for counselor assistance may also

be an indication of how a team of teachers , such as the team at Snowfall Middle School,

may be more effective in approaching a bullying issue, in contrast to approaches by

individual teachers.

Related Research Question 3

How do middle school teachers perceive their effectiveness in responding to and

reducing incidents of student bullying?

The key finding is that teachers from both schools believed that their effectiveness

in responding to bullying incidents is enhanced by three conditions: (a) developing a

familiarity with students, (b) maintaining one's self-control, and (c) building a

relationship of trust with students.

In relation to familiarity with students, teachers at both schools noted that being

familiar with the students who are involved in a bullying situation gives them confidence

in responding to a bullying incident more effectively.   Teachers believed that when

teachers are familiar with students involved in a bullying incident, they feel more confident and efficacious in responding students. Teachers also believed that when students are familiar with the teacher who is responding to the bullying, a show of defiance by the students is less likely and a willingness to explain the issue is more likely.

Teachers at both schools also noted the importance of maintaining their emotional control when witnessing a bullying incident. Teachers believed that controlling their reactions, such as yelling or getting upset at the behavior of students involved in a bullying conflict, helps them to listen to students calmly and without judgment. They believed this emotional control leads to a better understanding of the situation and to a determination of its severity in order to take the next steps for either immediate resolution or referral.

Teachers at both sites also believed building relationships of trust with students helps them to respond more effectively to bullying incidents. Snowfall Middle School teachers believed they were effective in their responses because of their knowledge of and close relationships with students on their team and because of the immediate feedback and support they received from their grade level team. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers also reported that their effectiveness in responding to bullying was contingent on positive and trusting relationships with students in their classes. They also noted that the individual grade level teachers provided support that often enhanced their effectiveness in responding to bullying incidents. In contrast to teachers from Snowfall Middle School, Sunshine Intermediate School teachers did not have a grade level teaming

structure that offered a venue for building positive teacher-student relationships and team-teacher support.

Related Research Question 4

What do district and school documents reveal about efforts to reduce student bullying?

The key finding is that state and district policies and procedures at both schools required teachers to respond to bullying incidents by immediately addressing the behavior, determining the severity of the behavior, and referring the bullying incident to counselors and administrators.

Educators at both school districts have adopted state policies and procedures regarding student bullying. Policies and procedures at both schools require teachers to stop the bullying behavior immediately or to find an adult staff member who may provide assistance. Teachers are also expected to refer severe incidents beyond their classroom control to a counselor or administrator for further mediation or investigation. Policies at both schools included discipline procedures to follow, and teachers at both schools were required to use paper referral systems to track student discipline referrals, including bullying incidents. Snowfall Middle School teachers noted that teams follow specific protocols when addressing disciplinary and bullying problems among students on their teams. These teacher teams have developed these protocols, which are guided by a whole school positive behavior interventions and supports program. Referral procedures at Sunshine Intermediate School are similar to those procedures at Snowfall Middle School and require immediate responses to bullying and subsequent referrals to counselors and

administrators. In contrast to Snowfall Middle School, Sunshine Intermediate School

teachers do not have team protocols to fall back on when responding to bullying

conflicts. Instead, they often use their individual judgment in determining how to

respond to and mediate bullying incidents. Teachers often seek support from individual

grade level teachers through email and hallway conversation or by calling or emailing

counselors at their grade level.

Central Research Question

How are teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying

impacted by state, district, and school anti-bullying programs and policies?

In relation to teacher intent, the key finding is that teachers' responses to bullying

is initially determined by state and district policies and school procedures requiring

teachers to stop bullying incidents as they occur. Marshall et al. (2009) defined teacher

intent as the purpose of the response, which they defined as either constructive or

punitive. State and district legislation require public school teachers to follow

legislatively prescribed policies and to create programs and procedures to address

bullying. In both cases, state legislatures expected local school boards to promote and

monitor school anti-bullying programs and procedures. State and district policies and

school procedures at both schools included the expectation that teachers and other staff

respond to bullying immediately and report incidents to administrators. Procedures at

both schools enabled teachers to determine their own level of intent and involvement,

depending on their determination of the severity of the bullying incidents. Snowfall

Middle School teachers reported that they believe they respond immediately to incidents

of bullying with the intent to stop and listen to students in order to understand the conflict and determine the level of their involvement. They meet with other teachers of the team to determine the next steps in handling the bullying situation. Teachers at Sunshine Intermediate School often confer with other teachers at their grade level and confer with counselors as well. Teachers at both schools reported that they understand their role as first responders to bullying incidents because district policies define bullying as prohibited behavior. Even though teachers reported a clear understanding of the procedures they need to follow when confronted with student bullying incidents, they were not able to describe the specific district or state anti-bullying policies that related to these procedures. However, this finding appeared to have little impact on their constructive intent to immediately stop a bullying incident. Teachers in both schools gave examples of their personal intent to provide direct and constructive support to both the victim and bully. They believed in listening, understanding, and finding teachable moments to help offenders understand the impact of their actions and to develop empathy for their victims.

In relation to teacher involvement, the key finding is that teachers at both schools reported direct involvement in bullying incidents as constructive, supportive, and non-punishing. Marshall et al. (2009) defined teacher involvement as "the role of the teacher in implementing the strategy and included direct and indirect responses" and explained that constructive responses were characterized as "supportive, educative, and non-punishing" (p. 143). Marshall et al. found teachers referred severe and persistent bullying incidents directly to administrators, especially when the issue is beyond immediate

resolution and where further investigation is necessary. Teachers at both schools

reported that their first step is to intervene and talk to students involved in bullying

incidents. This response placed their involvement within the constructive-direct category

of the conceptual model that Marshall et al. (2009) developed because constructive direct

responses include pulling students aside and talking to them and calling out inappropriate

behavior. In relation to constructive-indirect intent and involvement, teachers from both

schools believed their first option when responding to excessive or severe bullying is to

refer students to counselors for help and mediation because there may be a lack of time to

thoroughly resolve the conflict, and teachers believed that counselors are better prepared

to handle intensive sessions of mediation and resolution. Teacher responses at both

schools did not fall within the punitive-direct category which includes removal of the

offender from the classroom as a punitive consequence initiated by the teacher. Teachers

at both schools did not report using teacher-initiated forms of punishment for bullying.

In relation to punitive responses to bullying, state and district policies from both cases

clearly disallow physical punishment, including corporal punishment, but allow for

physical restraint of offending students whose physical behavior may present a danger to

themselves or those around them. Several teachers from both schools reported that they

sometimes need to physically intervene in a bullying incident, but none reported shouting

at students or confronting offenders with self-initiated punitive consequences. In relation

to punitive-indirect responses, teachers agreed that teacher intent and involvement only

occurs when bullying is severe and requires immediate attention by an administrator.

Teachers believed investigations of severe bullying incidents are the responsibility of

administrators, who have the time, expertise, and authority to determine consequences that include suspension or a possible police report.

Table 11 is a summary of the key findings for the related research questions and the central research question, which were developed from 22 emerging themes in six categories determined in the data analysis. This process led to seven key findings that substantiate the central research question and the four related research questions for this study.

Table 11

 A Summary of Key Findings for Both Cases

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RRQ 1: Definition of Bullying

-Teachers at both schools agreed that the definition of bullying includes behavior that is persistent, controlling, and can cause physical, emotional, and social harm.

-Teachers at both schools believed that bullying can happen anywhere and anytime, is inevitable, requires teacher awareness to reduce or prevent it, and has long lasting effects upon the victim.

RRQ 2: Responses to Bullying

-Teachers at both schools believed that they immediately respond to bullying incidents, find out what is happening, and act to resolve the situation at that moment or after class.

RRQ 3: Perceived Effectiveness of Responses

-Teachers at both schools believed that their effectiveness in responding to bullying incidents is enhanced by three conditions: (a) developing a familiarity with students, (b) maintaining one's self-control, and (c) building a relationship of trust with students.

RRQ 4: Policies and Procedures

-Policies and procedures at both schools require teachers to respond to bullying incidents by immediately addressing the behavior, determining the severity of the behavior, and referring the bullying incident to counselors and administrators.

Central RQ: Impact of Programs and Policies on Teacher Intent and Involvement

-In relation to teacher intent, the key finding is that teacher intent at both schools is constructive, not

(table continues)

A Summary of Key Findings for Both Cases

Central RQ: Impact of Programs and Policies on Teacher Intent and Involvement

punitive, and is initially determined by teachers who are expected, according to state and district policies and school procedures, to stop bullying incidents as they occur and to report these incidents to counselors and administrators.

-In relation to teacher involvement, the key finding is that teachers at both schools follow state and district policies and school procedures by reporting their direct involvement in bullying incidents as constructive, supportive, and non-punishing.

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Table 11 indicates that seven key findings emerged in relation to four related research questions and a central research question. Concerning definitions of bullying, teachers from both cases agreed that bullying is persistent, controlling, and harmful, and bullying can happen anywhere and anytime, is inevitable, requires teacher awareness to reduce or prevent it, and has long lasting effects upon the victim. Regarding teacher responses to bullying, teachers from both cases reported that they immediately respond to bullying and make an effort to talk with those students involved in the incident in order to understand and resolve the situation. In relation to perceived teacher effectiveness in responding to bullying, teachers from both schools agreed that their efficacy in responding to and resolving issues of bullying depended on their familiarity with the students involved, their ability to control their emotions when responding, and their ability to build positive teacher-student relationships. Concerning state and district bullying policies and procedures, they clearly call for teachers to address bullying by stopping the behavior, assessing the severity of the conflict, and determining the appropriate next step, which is either an immediate mediation or a referral to counselors

or administrators. The central research question asked how state, district, and local school programs, policies, and procedures drive teacher intent and involvement when responding to bullying. The findings were similar for each school case. Teachers from both school cases reported similar responses of intent and involvement to bullying as required by school procedures that are driven by state and district antibullying policies. In relation to teacher intent, the key finding is that teacher intent at both schools is constructive, not punitive, and is initially determined by teachers who are expected, according to state and district policies and school procedures, to stop bullying incidents as they occur and to report these incidents to counselors and administrators. In relation to teacher involvement, the key finding is that teachers at both schools follow state and district policies and school procedures by reporting their direct involvement in bullying incidents as constructive, supportive, and non-punishing.

Summary

Chapter 4 was concerned with the results of this case study in terms of how teachers respond to bullying at two middle schools serving small communities in disparate regions in the United States. I collected interview and reflective journal responses from six teacher participants at each school who provided instruction for Grade 7 and 8 students in a variety of subjects. I also collected policy and procedure documents at each school that were found within the public domain. I conducted a single case analysis by constructing codes and categories for each source of evidence for each case. In addition, I presented summary tables of case comparisons for six major categories related to the interview and journal responses and a content analysis of the documents.

For the cross case analysis, I found 22 emerging themes from six categories. I reduced these 22 emerging themes to seven key findings that answered the related research questions and the central research question. I also described specific strategies that I used to improve the trustworthiness of this multiple case study. In Chapter 5, I will include a discussion, conclusions, and recommendations related to these findings.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school programs and policies designed to reduce that behavior. To accomplish this purpose, I used a multiple case study design. The single unit of analysis or case was teacher intent and teacher involvement in relation to antibullying programs and policies at a middle school in the United States. Two cases were presented. One research site was a middle school located in the Pacific region of the United States, and the other research site was a middle school located in the Midwest region of the United States. The results of this multiple case study have been supported by a detailed description of the settings of the two schools, a content analysis of state and district antibullying policies and procedures, and an analysis of teacher beliefs about their intent and involvement in incidents of student bullying.

I conducted this study to advance knowledge about how district and state policies and school procedures impact teacher intent and teacher involvement in relation to student bullying incidents. I also conducted this study to understand how educators need to support teacher intent and involvement in resolving student bullying incidents. Finally, I conducted this study to provide research to support the reduction, prevention, and elimination of bullying incidents among adolescents in public school settings.

Seven key findings correlated to the central research question and four related research questions. In relation to the first related research question about defining bullying, teachers at both schools agreed that bullying is persistent, controlling, and can

cause physical, emotional, and social harm and that bullying can happen anywhere and anytime, is inevitable, requires teacher awareness to reduce or prevent it, and has long lasting effects upon the victim. Concerning teachers' responses to student bullying, the key finding was that teachers from both schools believed that they immediately respond to bullying incidents, find out what is happening, and act to resolve the situation at that moment or after class. In relation to their perceived effectiveness about their responses to student bullying, teachers at both schools identified three conditions that promote teacher effectiveness in responding to bullying: (a) developing a familiarity with students, (b) maintaining one's self-control, and (c) building a relationship of trust with students.Regarding state and school district policies and procedures, documents at both schools revealed that teachers are required to respond to bullying incidents by immediately addressing the behavior, determining the severity of the behavior, and referring the bullying incident to counselors and administrators.

The central research question explored the impact of state and district policies and school procedures on teacher intent and involvement. In relation to teacher intent, the key finding was that teacher intent is constructive, not punitive, and is initially determined by teachers who are expected, according to state and district policies and school procedures, to stop bullying incidents as they occur and to report these incidents to counselors and administrators. In relation to teacher involvement, the key finding was that teachers at both schools follow direct and local school policies and procedures by reporting their direct involvement in bullying incidents as constructive, supportive, and non-punishing.

Chapter 5 includes discussion, conclusions, and recommendations related to the

findings of this study. In the interpretation of the findings section, I present the findings

for each of the research questions in relation to the conceptual framework and research

cited in the literature review. I discuss the limitations of this study in relation to this

research design, particularly concerning data collection and data analysis.

Recommendations include possibilities for expanding the research of this study. In

addition, I include implications for social change related to efforts to reduce, prevent, and

eliminate adolescent bullying in public schools and the benefits of this positive social

change to society.

Interpretation of Findings

The findings for this study were interpreted in relation to the conceptual

framework and the literature review for this study. The findings for the related research

questions were interpreted first, followed by an interpretation of the findings for the

central research question, which are directly related to Marshall et al.'s (2009) conceptual

framework about teacher intent and teacher involvement in student bullying incidents.

Related Research Question 1

The first key finding is that teachers from both schools agreed that bullying can be

defined as persistent, controlling, and can cause physical, emotional, and social harm.

This finding is supported in the research literature. Cheng, Chen, Ho, and Chen (2011)

investigated differences in student and teacher definitions of bullying and found that

educators reported consensus in relation to their definitions of bullying in terms of intent

and repetition, as well as an imbalance of power. Cheng et al. also found that "through

aggressive actions, bullies meant to manipulate the relationships of power control. The

concept of 'taking control' was critical in bullying cases" (p. 232). This research

supports Marshall et al.'s (2009) research about teacher intent and involvement because

teachers included the element of intentionality in their definition of bullying as well as

the notion of repetition or persistence as part of their general definition of bullying. In

another supporting study, Lee (2006) explored public school teachers' attitudes and

approaches to bullying and found teachers could not reach consensus about a definition

for bullying. Lee concluded that definitions of bullying may also be subject to

adjustment because of sociocultural trends requiring schools and communities to reflect

on how bullying is defined in their school environment. This sociocultural factor was

evident at Snowfall Middle School where the student population was mostly white and

socio-economically diverse. Snowfall Middle School teachers reported that a

hierarchical social structure, based on perceived socio-economic status, existed among

students and that student cliques often practiced social exclusion and indirect bullying.

Sunshine Intermediate School teachers, however, did not report problems with student

social hierarchies or diversity as factors in bullying behaviors.

In other supportive research, Mishna et al. (2006) explored factors that determine

the individual teacher's perceptions and responses to bullying experience and found that

teachers also described a power differential and control by intimidation, fear, and harm

that occurs between the bully and the victim. Mishna et al. also found that almost all

participants defined bullying as intentional in relation verbal and physical threats,

physical and emotional harm, rumor spreading, and social exclusion. In contrast to this

study's finding that bullying is persistent, Mishna et al. found that most teachers did not include persistence in their definition of bullying even though they recognized the power differential between the bully and victim and an intent to harm. Mishna et al. also noted that teachers were often confused when attempting to identify bullying incidents and appropriate interventions because they were not cognizant of the elements of indirect bullying and the seriousness of the harm that relational or social exclusion causes. Mishna et al. (2006) found teacher participants considered indirect bullying as a less serious form of bullying. This belief led Mishna et al. to note that teacher participants did not fully "grasp the potentially damaging effects of the full range of bullying behaviors." In a study of the attitudes of 409 teachers of bullying in Turkish elementary schools, Duy (2013) reported results similar to Mishna et al. (2006) when he found teachers believed relational or indirect bullying was less serious than physical and verbal bullying. Duy found that teachers reported feeling more empathy for victims of verbal and physical bullying than victims harmed by relational bullying and social exclusion. However, in contrast to the findings of Mishna et al. and Duy, the findings of this study indicated that teachers at both schools believed that indirect bullying, which is often manifested in rumors and social exclusion, was more prevalent than physical bullying, was difficult to discern, and had long lasting effects on the victim.

In a related study comparing the differences in teacher and student definitions of bullying, Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencourt, and Lemme (2006) administered surveys to teachers and students in 51 schools throughout the United Kingdom. Naylor et al. presented six types of bullying behaviors: (a) physically abuse, (b) verbally abuse, (c)

socially exclusion, (d) power imbalance, (e) repetitive bullying behavior, and (f) intention to hurt or harm. Naylor et al found that 75% of the teachers referenced physical bullying in their definitions with only 59% referencing verbal abuse. Only 12.9% of the teachers referenced social exclusion in their definitions of bullying while over 70% included the notion of an imbalance of power. Only 17.8% of teachers noted the aspect of repetition or persistence and only 25% of the teachers offered the idea of intent to harm. Their findings are not congruent with the findings in this study because nearly all teachers defined bullying as behavior that is persistent, controlling, and can cause physical, emotional, and social harm. Participants in this study acknowledged physical and verbal bullying, but believed that indirect bullying, including social exclusion and rumor spreading, was more prevalent but harder to distinguish.

In relation to the second key finding about when and where student bullying occurs, most teachers believed bullying occurs when teachers are unaware, not looking, pre-occupied with instruction, or are not in the physical area where the incident occurred. Teachers also noted the difficulty of discerning indirect bullying or whether or not it is playful teasing between friends. Atlas and Pepler's (1998) earlier research supports this finding that even though bullying is a pervasive problem, teachers often exhibit a general lack of awareness of the phenomenon. Atlas and Pepler observed that bullying behaviors often occur when the teacher is not paying attention, his or her back is turned, or he or she is on the other side of the classroom or in a commons area. Atlas and Pepler found that teachers intercede when aware of an incident, but are largely unaware of indirect or covert bullying behaviors. Atlas and Pepler also found that teachers are either uncertain

of how to respond, do not perceive the issue as a bullying behavior, or do not observe the episode.

Related Research Question 2

The key finding is that teachers at both schools reported responding immediately to bullying incidents, finding out what is actually happening and then acting to resolve the situation at that moment or informing a counselor. This finding is in contrast to Sairanen and Pfeffer's (2011) research, who found that teachers who had not undergone anti-bullying training are more likely to ignore a bullying incident than those teachers who have been trained. Sairanen and Pfeffer suggested that untrained teachers might "not be fully aware of the effects of bullying or might be unsure about how to solve the problem" (p. 339). In contrast, all teachers at both schools in this study had not received any formal anti-bullying training, yet all reported that they would respond immediately, talk with students, and mitigate the incident either with mediation or counselor referral. This finding corresponds to Mishna et al.'s (2005) discovery that teachers have difficulty in identifying bullying incidents, especially relational bullying, and discerning what has happened. Mishna et al. noted that teachers have difficulty defining and identifying indirect bullying or defining bullying if they have witnessed only a part of the bullying incident. For this study, teachers in both cases realized the seriousness of bullying incidents and immediately responded to stop the behavior and determine what had occurred. However, Ellis and Shute (2007) conducted a study on teacher perceptions about the seriousness of bullying incidents and found that teachers considered physical bullying as highly serious behavior and verbal bullying as less serious behavior. Ellis

and Shute also found that teachers believed social bullying was the least serious of the three. Therefore, the research of Ellis and Shute does not support the findings of this study that teachers act immediately to stop any type of student bullying.

Related Research Question 3

The key finding is that teachers from both schools believed that their effectiveness in responding to bullying incidents is enhanced by three conditions: (a) building a relationship of trust with students (b) a familiarity with students, and (c)an ability to maintain self-control.

The research literature supports the finding about the importance of building relationships of trust with students in order to effectively respond to student bullying. Cheng, Chen, Ho, and Chen (2011) explored student bullying in Taiwan and recommended that teachers should foster supportive and trusting relationships with students. Teachers in this study believed that building teacher-student relationships of trust improves their effectiveness in responding to bullying incidents. In relation to building positive relationships with students, Lam et al. conducted an analysis of school bullying and its social context in three Hong Kong secondary schools and suggested that three teacher strategies are particularly effective in addressing school bullying: (a) demonstrating a genuine interest in students (b) fostering a sense that students are important, and (c) caring for all students without condition or bias. Their finding is congruent with the finding that building positive relationships with students enables teachers to effectively respond to bullying situations.

In related research, Pšunder (2010) conducted a study of 248 Slovenian students in Grades 6 and 8 in relation to the identification of teasing among students as an indispensable step towards reducing verbal aggression in schools. Pšunder found that students who were teased reported hurt feelings, shame, or embarrassment which directly impacted their willingness to report bullying behaviors. Even though the majority of students had experienced teasing weekly, fewer than 10 of the 238 participants were willing to report the behavior to a teacher. Pšunder concluded that bullying behaviors can be prevented by school programs that foster cooperation between teachers and students in a school culture that promotes student experiences of responsibility and democratic justice.

In terms of building positive relationships with students, teachers in this study tried to find teaching moments to talk with offending students in an effort to understand the impact of their actions as well as encourage victims to trust teachers and report bullying. Teachers in both cases acknowledged that students are often reluctant to report bullying and believed that building relationships of student trust and teacher credibility would help students to inform teachers of their bullying problem. Crothers and Kolbert (2004) also found that teachers believe in the importance of using strategies that encourage students to talk about bullying. They found that students often do not trust the teacher's ability to resolve a bullying incident, and therefore, they fear that the bullying incident will escalate as a result. Crothers and Kolbert also found that teachers believed the most effective anti-bullying strategies are to teach students how to stand up to those

peers who are bullying them and to build teacher awareness about more effective responses so that students will report bullying incidents to an adult or teacher.

In other supporting research, Mishna et al. (2005) explored teacher understanding of bullying and recommended support for the development of positive relationships between teachers and their students who must deal with the complexities of bullying within the sociocultural school environment. Teachers in this study also stressed the importance of building positive relationships with students in order to build credibility and trust when responding to issues of bullying.

In relation to familiarity with students, teachers in this study believed their effectiveness in successfully responding to bullying depended on the confidence and efficacy that they gained when they were familiar with the students involved in bullying incidents. Teachers in this study believed student familiarity was built through their efforts to create positive teacher-student relationships of trust and understanding. This finding corresponds with the findings of Maunder, Harrop, and Tattersall (2010) that the quality of teacher relationships with students and their parents contribute to the success of teacher responses to bullying incidents. Maunder et al. also found that teachers understood the need to develop good teacher-student relationships so that students feel genuinely supported by teachers when bullying incidents occur. Maunder et al. also suggested that familiarity fostered through credible teacher-student relationships enables teachers to use their prior knowledge of students to discern subtle changes in their behavior. In a related study that examined teachers' likelihood of intervening in bullying, Duong and Bradshaw (2013) surveyed nearly 2000 K-12 teachers in Maryland schools

and found that perceived efficacy was highly associated with the teachers' decisions to respond to incidents of bullying. Duong and Bradshaw suggested "bullying interventions should focus on developing teacher confidence in their ability to handle bullying situations" by educating teachers in effective strategies to respond to and diffuse bullying (p. 427). In this study, teachers believed that their familiarity with students involved in bullying would enhance their confidence in responding to bullying incidents.

Concerning the ability to maintain self-control, no recent research studies were found that addressed teacher self-control when responding to bullying. In this study, however, several teachers expressed concern that their personal experiences with bullying might cloud their ability to maintain a calm demeanor when responding to a bullying incident. Therefore, this issue of teacher self-control might be a topic for further research.

Related Research Question 4

The key finding is that policies and procedures at both schools required teachers to respond to bullying incidents by immediately addressing the behavior, determining the severity of the behavior, and referring the bullying incident to counselors and administrators. Interview and reflective journal data from this study as well as some current research also supports this finding that state and district policies and procedures impacted teacher intent and involvement in responding to student bullying incidents. In a study of 136 junior high school teachers and their responses to bullying in Finnish schools, Sairanen and Pfeffer found the majority of teachers were aware of their school's antibullying policy. However, they also found that over 16% of participants had no

knowledge of this policy or if one was in effect. Sairanen and Pfeffer believed that this suggested that school administrators had failed to communicate these policies to all teachers. This finding corresponds to the reports of teachers in both cases of this study who were aware of antibullying policies and had been given information regarding state and district policies, but could not articulate them. Sairanen and Pfeffer suggested that antibullying policies are can be more effectively carried out when teachers are aware of them.

Document analysis for this study also revealed that educators at both schools did not have a whole school antibullying program in place. Educators at Snowfall Middle School had initiated a whole school book reading activity that focused on cyber bullying among adolescent students at a middle school. However, no data was available in terms of the reduction or prevention of bullying as a result of this whole school book reading activity. In addition, no evidence of a formal whole school antibullying program was found at Sunshine Intermediate School, although the Incident-Free Banner Program was meant to foster a safe whole school culture and offered measurable results of fewer suspensions. However, evidence was found of systemic implementation of policies and procedures that state legislatures developed and school boards maintained. The purpose of these policies and procedures was to help teachers effectively respond to student bullying incidents. In supporting research, Smith, Schneider, Smith, and Ananiadou (2004) reviewed schoolwide antibullying programs and found that a systemic focus, which is inclusive of all school members, especially bullying offenders and those victimized by bullying, is the most effective approach to reducing student bullying.

Smith et al. concluded that the purpose of these school-wide anti-bullying programs is to increase awareness of bullying issues, which, in turn, often results in an increase in student reporting about bullying.

For this study, state legislatures and departments of education in both cases developed antibullying policies, procedures, and behavioral consequences related to responding to and reporting bullying. Both schools had policies and procedures in place for teachers to use in responding to bullying incidents with some freedom provided to mediate and resolve the issues immediately. This finding corresponds to the findings of Edmondson and Zeman (2011) that 74% of states wrote specific bully-related policies into their public school laws and that 81% of states included behavioral expectations and consequences. Edmonson and Zeman recommended that public school laws should "include codes of conduct, disciplinary guidelines, and environmental controls, along with integrating citizenship, caring, role modeling, and educational components" (p. 38). Edmondson and Zeman suggested that educators might find added success in building a positive school culture and climate by reflecting on their existing policies and introducing independence, mastery, generosity, and belonging to their vision and mission for a safe school. In other supporting research, Limber and Small (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of state legislation that described state laws regarding bullying and found a broad range of definitions for bullying in state statutes in the United States. They described some laws as calling for school antibullying policy development with specific punitive consequences for perpetrators and support for those victimized. They found other laws mandating school boards to add antibullying programs to their local antibullying policies.

Teachers from both schools in this study defined bullying as persistent, controlling, and causing physical, emotional, and social harm, which aligns with the Olweus (2006) definition of bullying that involves repetition, harm, and a power differential. Limber and Small also suggested that educators at the state level use definitions of bullying that are closely aligned with the Olweus definition. They concluded that state legislators should endorse bullying prevention programs supported by research and avoid using inflexible policies of exclusion for offenders. Educators at both schools in this study followed antibullying laws and policies that granted them flexibility in responding to and resolving student bullying incidents.

In a study about the effectiveness of school antibullying programs and practices, Sherer and Nickerson (2010) described three barriers to the improvement of bullying reduction strategies, including curricular and other school priorities, a lack of time, and insufficient training for adults. According to Sherer and Nickerson (2010), psychologists reported that the most effective interventions include the implementation of whole school positive behavior support plans and structured activities and strategies for immediate responses to bullying incidents. The three least effective strategies reported by school psychologists involve procedures that separate bullies and victims when settling a conflict, determinations based upon zero tolerance policies, and rigid antibullying policies. They found many of the responses by psychologists matched the findings in recent studies of the effectiveness of positive behavior supports and timely response to bullying incidents. Teachers at Snowfall Middle School were also engaged in a Positive Behavior Supports and Intervention Program that rewards positive behavior. Teachers at

Sunshine Intermediate School participated in the Renaissance Program, which recognizes academic achievement as well as those students who make positive choices for academic success. In relation to teacher intent and involvement, teachers from both schools reported that they listen to both offenders and victims about the bullying incidents. No teachers in this study reported using punitive responses to student bullying incidents.

Central Research Question

The first key finding in relation to the central research question is that teacher intent is constructive, not punitive, and is initially determined by teachers who are expected, according to state and district policies and school procedures, to stop bullying incidents as they occur and to report these incidents to counselors and administrators. In relation to teacher involvement, the key finding is that teachers at both schools follow school district policies by reporting their direct involvement in bullying incidents as constructive, supportive, and non-punishing. Marshall et al. presented the following four response modalities within the model: (a) punitive-direct, (b) punitive-indirect, (c) constructive-direct and (d) constructive-indirect. These modalities enabled Marshall et al. to further clarify teacher perceptions of their roles and purposes in responding to bullying.

In relation to teacher intent, Marshall et al. (2009) categorized teacher responses to student bullying incidents as either constructive or punitive. For this study, all teachers at both schools reported their initial intent in responding to bullying incidents as constructive, supportive, and non-punishing. No teachers reported an intent to impose punitive consequences when initially responding to incidents of bullying.

In relation to teacher involvement, teachers initiated constructive and direct responses by immediately acting to stop the bullying incident and taking students aside to talk with them and understand the problem. Teachers at both schools reported their involvement in incidents of bullying as constructive, mediative, supportive, and non-punishing. Teachers from both schools also reported that they responded to bullying incidents by immediately intervening, taking students aside to listen, talk, and find out what was happening. During this initial engagement teachers reported often calling attention to the offender's impact upon the victim with the purpose of helping the offender empathize with how the victim might be feeling. Teachers reported that their initial mediation would include an apology by the offender to the victim and an appropriate referral to counselors or administrators for counseling or further mediation. These responses placed teacher intent and involvement in the constructive-direct category of the Marshall et al. (2009) model. In relation to constructive-indirect intent and involvement, teachers from both schools believed their first option when responding to excessive or severe bullying is to refer students to counselors for help and mediation. In relation to the punitive-direct category, none of the teachers described their responses in relation to removing the offender from the classroom/campus setting and initiating punitive consequences. Teachers agreed that punitive-indirect intent and involvement only occurs when bullying is severe and requires immediate attention from an administrator. Teachers reported that they referred serious cases of bullying to administrators, and they believed that administrators are responsible for determining punitive consequences for bullying after their investigation. Teachers in both cases

reported using constructive approaches in responding to bullying, which included

immediately stopping the incident and talking to students, resolving conflicts, finding

teachable moments, and then referring students to counselors to help further mediate or

counsel offenders and victims. This finding about teacher intent corresponds to the

findings of Marshall et al. (2009) that teachers who used constructive responses avoid

using punitive action and instead respond with educative and supportive interventions.

Marshall et al. also found that teachers who respond in a constructive manner either

personally mediated the problem with students involved in the bullying incident or refer

the students to a counselor for mediation. Marshall et al. also found that teacher

involvement includes direct responses that teachers gave in a positive and caring manner

and indirect responses in which teachers referred students for counseling.

These findings also indicated that state and district policies and school procedures

positively impacted teacher intent and involvement in student bullying incidents.   In this

study, teachers systematically followed policy procedures by responding to bullying

incidents at three levels. At the first level of response, teachers at both schools reported

following school procedures by responding immediately to stop the bullying and find out

what is happening. At this initial response level, the teacher would determine the severity

of the bullying and either mediate it or refer it to counselors. Teachers are also required

to inform parents at the first level of response. The second level of response would

involves referring the bullying incident to a counselor for mediation and conflict

resolution. The third level of response is reserved for severe cases of bullying that need

further inquiry and investigation from administrators.   In this study all teachers believed

that administrators are responsible for the highest level of response action that includes

investigation and determination of consequences that result in suspensions and police

reports. These three levels of systematic teacher responses at both schools correspond to

Teske's (2011) case study of a systems approach to improving outcomes for offending

adolescents. Teske described the juvenile court's response plan, known as the school

reduction referral protocol, in relation to three response levels. The first level of response

is the school's response to a first-time offender, which is a warning to the parents. The

second level of response is to place students in conflict resolution programs. The third

level of response is to refer students to juvenile court. Teske found that when this

protocol was followed, court referrals decreased by 67%. Teske concluded that the

systems approach has a direct impact on the effectiveness of those individuals who

respond to the needs of the individual offender while lessening the negative impact on the

student's learning. For this study, teachers from both schools believed that safe school

programs and anti- bullying procedures that require an immediate response to bullying

with support from counselors had reduced and prevented bullying.

In this study, teachers also believed that state and district policies and school

procedures related to suspensions and expulsions were not always effective in resolving

student bullying incidents. Although teachers believed that suspensions may be a

necessary consequence, they also believed they do little more than give students a day off

from school. Teachers at both schools believed suspensions may be initially effective in

deterring first time behaviors, but they believed suspensions have little impact on

deterring bullying behavior by repeat or chronic offenders. Daniel and Bondy's (2008)

research on the effectiveness of suspensions supports these findings. Daniel and Bondy

explored how educators interpreted the Canadian Safe Schools Act of 2001 within the

context of zero tolerance policies for student behavior, including student bullying. They

categorized their findings into four themes: (a) clear guidelines, (b) deterrence, (c) lack of

resources, and (d) alternative disciplinary action. The first theme about clear guidelines

concerned the impact of the Safe Schools Act (2001) school culture. Participants favored

this legislation because faculty received clear and consistent guidelines that clarified

consequences for inappropriate and unacceptable student behaviors. However, in relation

to the theme of deterrence, Daniel and Bondy found that the Safe School Act did not

deter students from participating in aggressive or violent acts. Participants also believed

many special education students are not always capable of understanding the

consequences of their behaviors. Concerning lack of resources, participants believed

that more resources were needed to provide support services for offending students.

Instead of suspending or expelling students, participants recommended alternative

classrooms and counseling support from behavioral health specialists. In relation to

fairness and equity for offending students, participants agreed that suspensions and

expulsions are not a deterrent to repeat behavior. However, teachers still retained the

notion that exclusionary consequences act as a deterrent in preventing similar behaviors

by other students. Daniel and Bondy recommended that restorative justice practices

enable the offender to make amends to the victim in both the school and the community.

Thus, this study supports Daniel and Bondy's assertion that suspensions are not a

deterrent to bullying by repeat offenders, and that educators should employ alternative

forms of consequences, such as conflict and management, restitution, and restorative

justice conferences, to improve student behavior.

In other supporting research, Skiba et al. (2006) examined state zero-tolerance

legislation in all states of the United States and found that "ultimately, an examination of

the evidence shows that zero tolerance policies as implemented have failed to achieve the

goals of an effective system of school discipline" (p. 15). Skiba et al. suggested that

educators consider employing different options while retaining zero tolerance policies for

violent incidents that threaten the safety of the school, including whole school

antibullying programs, counseling sessions with victims and offenders, alternative

processes to bring offenders and victims together for mediation and reconciliation, and

suspension for severe cases.

In other research about the impact of antibullying policies on the reduction of

bullying, Smith, Kupferberg, Mora-Merchan, Samara, Bosley, and Osborn (2012)

examined antibullying policies in 2014 English primary and secondary schools and found

mixed results in policy improvements over the six-year period from 2002 to 2008. Smith

et al. noted that "the overall picture of low and non-significant correlations does indicate

that a school policy in itself is unlikely to impact much on the levels of bullying" (p. 68).

However, Smith et al. did concede that an antibullying policy offers a framework that

teachers and parents can use to measure student involvement in bullying. They noted a

concern that many of the policies are directed at behaviors of individual students and are

not whole school oriented or inclusive of non-teaching staff responsibilities. Their

research supports the finding in this study that even though teachers are aware of state and district antibullying policies, they also believe that bullying is unacceptable.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study were related to the research design. First, this multiple case study is somewhat limited in theoretical replication because it includes only two cases. Yin (2014) defined theoretical replication for case study research as "the selection of two (or more) cases in a multiple case study because the cases are predicted to have contrasting findings, but for anticipatable reasons" (p. 241). I chose the two schools for this study because I anticipated that they would provide contrasting findings. I believed significant differences existed in the diversity of the student populations from both schools and that this diversity might impact how teachers responded to bullying incidents at each school. Snowfall Middle School included a predominantly white middle class student population while Sunshine Intermediate School included a predominantly Asian-Pacific Islander student population. Teachers at both schools believed in the middle school philosophy of focusing on the social, emotional and physical well-being of the whole child, and teachers at Snowfall Middle School were able to strengthen that concept through grade level teams and teaming. Unlike the random placement of buildings at Sunshine Intermediate School, the single physical structure at Snowfall Middle School is dedicated to grade level teaming where teachers are able to work within the grade level team concept. With four or more cases, I would have been able to explore the impact of student diversity and the middle school philosophy on teacher responses to student bullying at culturally diverse sites.

The second limitation concerns the data that I collected for this study. I collected data from one initial and one follow-up interview and five journal reflections for each participant. Multiple interviews conducted over the course of a year and reflective journals maintained for a longer period of time might also have provided richer data. In addition, multiple observations conducted over the course of the year about how teachers respond to bullying incidents at each site might have strengthened this study.

The third limitation is related to the sample. The sample for this study included six teachers from each case, including three teachers at Grade 7 and three teachers at Grade 8. The inclusion of teachers from Grade 6 might have presented a more comprehensive picture of student bullying at the middle school level. In addition, other educators, such as counselors and principals or vice principals, might have added richness to the data, because the findings would not be limited solely to the perspectives of classroom teachers. The inclusion of parents and students could also add another dimension to these findings.

Recommendations

Recommendations for future research are grounded in the strengths and limitations of this study as well as in the literature review. The first recommendation is about professional development is based on the finding that teachers need training in bullying awareness and appropriate response interventions. None of the teachers from both schools could recall any professional development that they had received in relation to student bullying in its various forms, including bullying awareness and appropriate bullying response strategies and interventions. Researchers should explore the impact of

professional development on teachers in relation to how teachers understand, recognize, and respond to adolescent student bullying.   Research on effective professional development may also provide teachers with learning opportunities that deepen their understanding about the various forms of bullying prevalent among young adolescents. More research is also needed about the skills teachers need to recognize bullying incidents and to intervene with immediacy and confidence. Effective professional development research is also needed about how to conduct initial mediation sessions when teachers respond to adolescent bullying incidents. Researchers should explore teacher training related to how teachers build relationships of trust with their students. In this study, teachers at both sites believed that building strong and positive relationships with students was an important factor in responding effectively to bullying incidents.

The second recommendation is that researchers conduct additional research about the implementation of legislated antibullying policies and programs at the local school level. In this study, state mandated antibullying legislation required local school boards to monitor procedures for antibullying policies at the school level. Educators at both schools in this study had not adopted a formal antibullying program, even though clear state and district policies and procedures were established. One of the key findings of this study is that teachers in both cases could not articulate state and district bullying prevention policies, although they understood and followed related procedures. It is critical that those adults on the frontline of responding to bullying incidents understand both policies and procedures because they determine the next steps in the response process.

The third recommendation is that researchers conduct qualitative studies in which teachers, counselors, and administrators are interviewed regarding their beliefs about bullying and their intent and involvement in responding to bullying incidents. This research should focus on how bullying policies and procedures drive the intent and involvement of teachers, support staff, and administrators when faced with bullying issues among students. In addition, researchers should conduct additional studies on teachers' responses to bullying at the primary and high school levels, where research is limited. Bullying incidents are also found at college and university level, which could be another avenue of research.

The fourth recommendation is a call for researchers to study the impact of middle school philosophy and building design on teacher-student relationships related to student bullying. Researchers should explore how teams of teachers address bullying in the classroom and common team areas, respond to incidents of bullying, and support their students who engage in and are victimized by bullying. Educators at Snowfall Middle School adhered to the middle school philosophy of multi-disciplinary teams in houses or pods at each grade level. The school building was designed and built for organizing the school in grade level teams of core-curricular teachers, each with their own group of students. Educators at Sunshine Intermediate School also adhered to the tenets of the middle school philosophy, but there was no structure or system of grade level teaming as evidenced at Snowfall Middle School. The Sunshine Intermediate School campus is not specifically designed for the middle school concept of multi-disciplinary, core curricular teaming. At both sites, teachers reported the need to build positive relationships with

students. Snowfall Middle School teachers spoke about students from a team perspective. Teachers noted that being together each day helps them to build positive relationships with students. Sunshine Intermediate School teachers, instead, spoke about students from their singular perspectives as classroom teachers rather than as members of a team. Further research is needed to determine how the middle school teaming concept impacts incidents of student bullying from the perceptions of students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members.

Implications for Social Change

This study will contribute to positive social change in several ways. The first contribution is to the improvement of state, district, and school practices concerning how to convey information to teachers about policies and procedures related to student bullying incidents. The findings of this study indicated that teachers are not able to articulate state and district bullying policies, but they do understand procedures when responding to bullying incidents. District and school administrators need to provide teachers with a strong understanding of both policies and procedures so that they can respond to student bullying incidents with immediacy and efficacy. Ensuring teacher understanding of state and district policies relating to local school bullying responses procedures will assist teachers in making appropriate determinations to either address the bullying incident immediately or make appropriate referrals for follow-up counseling and mediation or administrative investigation.

The second contribution that this study will make to positive social change is in relation to professional development dedicated to improving teacher recognition of

bullying in its various forms. The findings of this study indicated that teachers believed

physical bullying is easily recognized while indirect bullying is difficult to identify

without a student's willingness to share his or her experience. Teachers believed the

willingness of students to share their bullying problems is inherent in a relational trust

developed between the teacher and students. Professional development and in-service

training dedicated to increase teacher awareness and understanding of adolescent bullying

and bullying behaviors at the middle school level will satisfy the need for improving

teacher recognition and effective responses to various forms of bullying. In a larger

sense, training teachers for greater awareness and effectiveness in responding to bullying

will support the middle school philosophy of serving the social, emotional and physical

needs of the whole child.

The third contribution of this study to positive social change is to provide support

for school-wide bullying awareness programs. These programs should include the

implementation of programs for positive behavior interventions and support. Midthassel

and Ertesvåg (2008) found that time afforded to a school-wide bullying awareness

program is often a major factor in the reduction of bullying. Olweus (2006) found that

teacher fidelity to school-wide bullying awareness programs is often a critical factor in

program success. Rigby (2010) found teacher and student interaction is a key component

in the successful implementation of a schoolwide approach to reduce bullying and create

a safe school climate. School administrators can help teachers respond to bullying issues

in constructive ways through a schoolwide antibullying program that gives teachers the

time to foster positive teacher-student interactions during bullying awareness sessions, which also promotes a safe learning climate.

Middle school teachers can be extremely influential in the academic and emotional growth and moral development of the adolescent child. The teachers in this study understood their role in helping the middle school adolescent make good choices and learn from their mistakes. Many teachers related their own personal experiences with bullying as a reason for their passion to help students overcome the short and long term effects of bullying upon the adolescent psyche. Teachers in this study believed that building relationships of trust and familiarity with students enabled them to approach bullying incidents with a sense of self-efficacy and confidence based on their prior knowledge of students. Anti-bullying programs that support a betterunderstanding of bullying, including its behaviors, causes, and negative impact, offer substantial positive social change for educators and the adolescents they serve. The larger benefit for society lies in understanding the impact of bullying on adolescent psyches now and in their adult years that follow and that the most effectiveresponses to student bullying now will reduce the trauma and tragedies that befall victims of bullying today and later in life.

Conclusion

Communities in the United States expect their schools to be safe havens of learning where children can achieve academic success without suffering the harm of bullying behavior. State legislatures and school systems have approached the challenge of creating and sustaining safe schools with policies and procedures meant to ensure the reduction and prevention of bullying. Even though policies and procedures offer a solid

foundation for supporting safe schools and a positive learning climate, school administrators and classroom teachers are ultimately responsible for responding to various forms of bullying that occur daily. Teachers are truly on the front line of responding to bullying behaviors among young adolescents. Teachers know and understand the negative impact of bullying on young people. They know the procedures to follow when faced with an incident of bullying. They immediately respond to bullying conflicts and follow procedures to understand and bring the conflict to a resolution or refer it to a support staff member who may be better qualified.

The role of the classroom teacher is to inspire learning in the classroom, but their challenge is to maintain a safe classroom environment free from distractions to that learning can occur. The challenge of lawmakers and educational leaders in school districts is to provide support, beyond policies and procedures, for teachers who must be able to recognize and respond to all forms of bullying. Professional development about student bullying in all its forms will bring teachers to a better understanding of bullying, how it starts, and why it persists. When teachers are prepared to respond to student bullying, then educators, parents, and communities will realize significant steps in the reduction, prevention, and elimination of bullying.

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Appendix A: Letters of District and School Cooperation

James M Petrakis
2191 S. Kihei Rd #3416
Kihei, HI 96753

Dear James Petrakis,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study titled *Teacher Intent and Involvement in Incidents of Student Bullying: A Multiple Case Study* at Snowfall Middle School (pseudonym). As part of this study, I authorize you to conduct individual interviews with purposefully selected middle school teachers at Snowfall Middle School, to access school discipline data from the public domain, and to collect journal entries from these teachers. I understand that participation by all individuals will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include providing assistance in selecting teachers for participation in this study and providing an office conference room at the school site in order to conduct the interviews. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,

Mary Bowen-Eggebraaten, Superintendent
District Superintendent
Hudson Middle School, District #2611
1300 Carmichael Road, Hudson, WI 54016
Phone: 715-377-3820

James M Petrakis
2191 S. Kihei Rd #3416
Kihei, HI 96753

Dear James Petrakis,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study titled *Teacher Intent and Involvement in Incidents of Student Bullying: A Multiple Case Study* at Snowfall Middle School (pseudonym). As part of this study, I authorize you to conduct individual interviews with purposefully selected teachers at this school, to access group school discipline data from the public domain, and to collect reflective journal entries from these teachers. I understand that participation by all individuals will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include providing assistance in selecting teachers from this school for participation in the study and providing an office conference room to ensure privacy during the interviews. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,

Daniel W Koch
Principal
Hudson Middle School, District #2611
1300 Carmichael Road, Hudson, WI 54016
Phone: 715-377-3820

James M Petrakis
2191 S. Kihei Rd #3416
Kihei, HI 96753

Dear James Petrakis,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study titled *Teacher Intent and Involvement in Incidents of Student Bullying: A Multiple Case Study* at Lahaina Intermediate School. As part of this study, I authorize you to conduct individual interviews with purposefully selected 7th and 8th grade teachers who teach at this school, to access school discipline data from the public domain, and to collect online journal entries from these teachers. I understand that participation by all individuals will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

I understand that our organization's responsibilities include providing assistance in selecting teachers from this school for participation in this study. I understand that all interviews with teacher participants will be conducted at a public site away from the school, during non-school hours, and that the Hawaii State Department of Education Lotus Note email server will not be accessed for research communication. The school shall reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,

Marsha S. Nakamura
Principal
Lahaina Intermediate School
871 Lahainaluna Rd
Lahaina, HI 96761
Phone: 808-662-3965

Appendix B: Letter of Informed Consent [Hawaii]

Dear Participant:

You are invited to take part in a research study that will investigate how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies. The title of this study is *Teacher Intent and Involvement in Incidents of Student Bullying: A Multiple Case Study*. You were chosen for the study because you are a teacher who provides instruction to middle school students who may be involved in bullying behaviors in the classroom or on the school campus. Please read this form and ask any questions you have before agreeing to be part of the study.

This study is being conducted by James Petrakis, who is a doctoral student at Walden University and a vice principal at Lahaina Intermediate School in Lahaina, Hawaii.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to describe how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in an individual initial interview and a follow-up interview that will be conducted at a public location away from the school during non-school hours. The initial interview will last 30 to 45 minutes, and the follow-up interview will last 30 minutes. Both interviews will be audio recorded. Examples of interview questions are provided below.
- Maintain an online reflective journal for one week that includes five questions. Examples of journal questions are provided below.
- Review the tentative findings of this study for their plausibility. This review will take approximately 30 minutes.

Examples of Interview and Reflective Journal Questions

Journal Question for Day One: Describe your experiences in responding to students who are subjected to indirect or relational bullying such as rumor spreading and social exclusion in class.

Journal Question for Day Two: Describe your experiences in responding to physical or verbal student bullying that you have observed in your classroom or in the hallways.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Your participation in this study is voluntary. This means that everyone will respect your decision about whether or not you want to participate in this study. No one at the school will treat you differently if you decide not to participate in this study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. If you feel stressed during the study, you may stop at any time. You may skip any interview questions that you feel are uncomfortable.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
The benefit for participating in this study is that you may develop a deeper understanding of how teacher intent and involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies. The risks for participating in this study are minimal. For example, some of the interview questions may be challenging to answer.

Compensation:
There will be no compensation awarded for participation in this study.

Confidentiality:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside of this research study. The researcher will also not include your name or anything else that could identify you in any reports of this study.

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher's name is James Petrakis. You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 808 276-3515 or email me at James.petrakis@waldenu.edu. If you would like to speak to someone in the Research Center at Walden University regarding your rights and responsibilities, you may contact Dr. Endicott, the Research Participant Advocate, at 800-925-3368, extension 3121210.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I have received answers to any questions I have at this time. I am 18 years of age or older, and I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Name of Participant

Participant's Signature

Appendix C: Letter of Informed Consent (Wisconsin)

Dear Participant:

You are invited to take part in a research study that will investigate how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies. The title of this study is *Teacher Intent and Involvement in Incidents of Student Bullying: A Multiple Case Study*. You were chosen for the study because you are a teacher who provides instruction to middle school students who may be involved in bullying behaviors in the classroom or on the school campus. Please read this form and ask any questions you have before agreeing to be part of the study.

This study is being conducted by James Petrakis, who is a doctoral student at Walden University and a vice principal at Lahaina Intermediate School in Lahaina, Hawaii.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to describe how teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in an individual initial interview and a follow-up interview that will be conducted during school hours in a private school office provided by the principal. The initial interview will last 30 to 45 minutes, and the follow-up interview will last 30 minutes and be conducted as a phone conference from my home in Hawaii. Both interviews will be audio recorded. Examples of interview questions are provided below.
- Maintain an online reflective journal for one week that includes five questions. Examples of journal questions are provided below.
- Review the tentative findings of this study for their plausibility. This review will take approximately 30 minutes.

Examples of Interview and Reflective Journal Questions
Journal Question for Day One: Describe your experiences in responding to students who are subjected to indirect or relational bullying such as rumor spreading and social exclusion in class.

Journal Question for Day Two: Describe your experiences in responding to physical or verbal student bullying that you have observed in your classroom or in hallways.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Your participation in this study is voluntary. This means that everyone will respect your decision about whether or not you want to participate in this study. No one at the school will treat you differently if you decide not to participate in this study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. If you feel stressed during the study, you may stop at any time. You may skip any interview questions that you feel are uncomfortable.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
The benefit for participating in this study is that you may develop a deeper understanding of how teacher intent and involvement in incidents of student bullying are impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies.   The risks for participating in this study are minimal. For example, some of the interview questions may be challenging to answer.

Compensation:
There will be no compensation awarded for participation in this study.

Confidentiality:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside of this research study. The researcher will also not include your name or anything else that could identify you in any reports of this study.

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher's name is James Petrakis. You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 808 276-3515 or email me at James.petrakis@waldenu.edu.   If you would like to speak to someone in the Research Center at Walden University regarding your rights and responsibilities, you may contact Dr. Endicott, the Research Participant Advocate, at 800-925-3368, extension 3121210.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I have received answers to any questions I have at this time. I am 18 years of age or older, and I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Name of Participant

Participant's Signature

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Initial Interview Questions

1. How do you define student bullying?

2. What do you believe about student bullying?

3. When responding to a student bullying incident, what kinds of interventions have you made?

4. How do you expect staff members to support you when you have responded to incidents of bullying?

5. What do you believe is your role in carrying out school district anti-bullying policies and procedures?

6. Please explain how you think the anti-bullying program (if there is one) supports your responses to incidents of bullying?

7. Describe any professional development or program support that you have received from the school or school district in bullying awareness and intervention strategies.

8. What skills do you believe you need to effectively intervene with a bully or a victim in a bullying incident*?*

9. What school district policies exist about student bullying? Do you believe they are effective? Why or why not?

Follow-up Interview Questions

1. Describe your perceptions about when and where student bullying happens in your classroom or on this school campus.

2. How do you believe other teachers react when they see a student bullied?

3. What happens at this school to a student who is found bullying or is victimized by bullying behaviors?

4. Describe one intervention or strategy that works best for you when responding to a bullying situation.

Appendix E: Reflective Journal Questions

Day One: Describe your experiences in responding to students who are subjected to indirect or relational bullying such as rumor spreading and social exclusion in class.

Day Two: Describe your experiences in responding to physical or verbal student bullying that you have observed in your classroom or in the hallways.

Day Three: A widely accepted definition of bullying among researchers includes three criteria: a pervasiveness or repetition of bullying upon the victim, a power differential between the bully and the victim, and intent to harm the victim physically or emotionally. Have you been involved in or responded to a bullying situation that fulfills the definition of repetition, power imbalance, and intent to harm? Please describe. If not, how might you respond?

Day Four: How do you feel about suspending students from school who have bullied others? Should approaches other than (or in addition to) suspension be used to help offenders reduce their bullying behaviors? If so, please describe them.

Day Five: When you approach a bullying situation, what factors such as time, student familiarity, and personal sense of effectiveness (self-efficacy) determine your level of involvement and intent to resolve the situation?

Appendix F: Alignment of Interview and Journal Questions with Research Questions

Central Research Question:

How are teacher intent and teacher involvement in incidents of student bullying impacted by district and school anti-bullying programs and policies?

> *When responding to a bullying incident, episode, or situation what kinds of interventions have you made?*
>
> *What are your expectations when a bullying incident is revealed and handled by you?*
>
> *How do you expect staff members to support you when you have responded to incidents of bullying?*
>
> *How do you interpret your role in carrying out school district bullying policies and procedures?*
>
> *Please explain how you think the anti-bullying program (if there is one) supports your responses to incidents of bullying?*
>
> *What school district policies exist about student bullying? Do you believe they are effective? Why or why not?*
>
> *Describe any professional development or program support that you have received from the school or school district in bullying awareness and intervention strategies?*
>
> *What happens to a student who is found bullying another student?*
>
> *What usually happens to the other students involved in bullying?*

Related Research Question 1:

How do middle school teachers define student bullying?

How do you define bullying?

What are your perceptions of the phenomenon of adolescent bullying?

Day Three: A widely accepted definition of bullying among researchers includes three criteria: a pervasiveness or repetition of bullying upon the victim, a power differential between the bully and the victim, and intent to harm the victim physically or emotionally. Have you been involved in or responded to a bullying situation that fulfills the definition of repetition, power imbalance, and intent to harm? Please describe. If not, how might you respond?

Related Research Question 2:

How do middle school teachers describe their responses to incidents of student bullying?

Day One: Describe your experiences in responding to students who are subjected to indirect or relational bullying such as spreading rumors and social exclusion in class.

Day Two: Describe your experiences in responding to physical or verbal student bullying that you have observed in your classroom or in the hallways.

Day Three: A widely accepted definition of bullying among researchers includes three criteria: a pervasiveness or repetition of bullying upon the victim, a power differential between the bully and the victim, and intent to harm the victim physically or emotionally. Have you seen evidence of bullying that fit the

definition of repetition, power imbalance, and intent to harm? How did you respond?

Once you have identified a bullying situation, how do you decide to intervene? What skills would you need to intervene with a bully and victim in a bullying incident?

Describe one bullying intervention or strategy that works best for you when responding to a bullying situation.

How do you expect staff members to support you when you have responded to incidents of bullying?

Related Research Question 3:

How do middle school teachers perceive their effectiveness in responding to and reducing incidents of student bullying?

Describe your perceptions of when and where bullying happens in your classroom or on this school campus.

When you approach a bullying situation what factors (time, student familiarity, personal sense of self-efficacy) determine your level of involvement and intent to resolve the situation?

What are your expectations when a bullying incident is revealed and handled by you?

How do you interpret your role in carrying out school district bullying policies and procedures?

How do other teachers react when they see a student victimized, bullied, or picked on?

Describe any professional development or program support that you have received from the school or school district in bullying awareness and intervention strategies?

What skills do you believe you need to intervene with a bully or a victim in a bullying incident?

Day Five: When you approach a bullying situation, what factors, such as time, student familiarity, a personal sense of effectiveness (self-efficacy), determine your level of involvement and intent to resolve the situation?

Related Research Question 4

What do state, district, and school documents and archival records reveal about efforts to reduce student bullying?

Day Four: How do you feel about suspending students from school who have bullied others? Should approaches other than (or in addition to) suspension be used to help offenders reduce their bullying behaviors? If so, please describe them.

Appendix G: Permission to Use Figure 1 and Table 1

Subject : Re: A request to use a table and figure of your conceptual model

Date : Mon, Jan 21, 2013 04:33 PM CST

From : Megan Foster <mmfoster02@gmail.com>

To : James Petrakis <james.petrakis@waldenu.edu>

Hi James,

Yes, you are more than welcome to use my figures. The attachments look good to me! I am glad they are useful for someone else researching this topic.

Good luck finishing up your studies!

Best,
Megan
On Mon, Jan 21, 2013 at 2:50 AM, James Petrakis <james.petrakis@waldenu.edu> wrote:
Hi Megan,
Perhaps you may recall that I had written to you explaining that I would like to do follow-up research to your study "Teachers' Responses to Bullying: Self Reports from the Front Line".
You graciously provided your interview questions and recently sent me a copy of your dissertation... well done, by the way.

Here's my request: May I provide copies of your figures 1 and 2 on pages 143 and 144 in my Chapter 2: Literature Review? I've enclosed an attachment indicating how they would look since I had to recreate them on my word doc.

The citation for each would be provided underneath each figure with your permissions noted.

Thank you,

Jay Petrakis

James M Petrakis
PHD Candidate \Walden University
2191 S Kihei Rd #3416
Kihei, HI