

A PROGRAM EVALUATION OF A LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT'S
BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

This research study provides a complete program evaluation on a school district in Texas to determine the overall success of their bullying prevention program. The research focuses on qualitative and quantitative data that included principal interviews, district and campus discipline data and results from a quality survey used by the district over several years. This case study also focuses on preventive measures and disciplinary consequences used by the district and campuses in order to reduce the number of bullying incidents and provide a safer school environment for students and staff. Based on the program evaluation, the district showed success in several areas of the program, especially around reduction in incidents of bullying behavior that result in disciplinary consequences. The district studied also exhibited positive safety results as assessed through a quality survey used across most campuses and levels. Implications for leadership, bullying intervention strategies, and future studies are discussed in closing.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my amazing and beautiful wife, Rhonda Bailey; my two amazing kids, Tristyn Bailey and Tyce Bailey; and to the rest of my family and friends who have provided support and encouragement throughout this entire process. I am grateful and blessed to have such amazing people in my life.

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All work conducted for the dissertation was completed by the student independently.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Joining a national conversation, schools have directed additional attention to the problem of school bullying. Considering the number of students either committing suicide or resorting to extreme forms of self-harm as a response to bullying, the epidemic leaves an indelible mark on society. Research defines bullying as any aggressive behavior intentionally directed at another individual with intent to cause harm; bullying activity typically occurs over a period of time (Hall, 2017). One person or a group of people can bully a single victim, and bullies use bullying as an attempt to display power over someone else. Bullying takes place in many different forms and in many locations. Bullying typically appears through verbal, physical, or cyber methods in places with a lack of adult supervision. Bullying usually happens over a period of time and preys on a power imbalance between the bully and the bullied (Cunningham, L. Cunningham, Ratcliffe & Vaillancourt, 2010).

Problem Statement

Many school districts have developed a plan of action as a first step towards effectively battling the bullying problem on their campuses. In order to tackle the bullying problem in public education, school districts require two important puzzle pieces, preventative measures and disciplinary consequences. Many campuses and school districts have looked to the use of preventative programs in hopes to educate,

prevent, and deter bullying behaviors. These programs require training, money, and proper implementation in order to be successful. According to a study by McCallion and Feder (2013) a meta-analysis of 44 studies and evaluations indicated that if done appropriately and with fidelity, bullying prevention programs can decrease bullying incidents by as much as 23%. Although several schools have employed a variety of methods to prevent bullying incidents from taking place in the school setting, many of these programs lack the quality and training for teachers who stand as the first line of defense when tackling bullying issues (Smith, 2011). In addition, teachers have few resources at their disposal when dealing with bullying issues and may not feel comfortable in their role due to a lack of quality training. This lack of both training and resources can greatly retard anti-bullying efforts as the way in which teachers empathize with students and go about addressing students' needs has proven to be a significant factor in whether students will reveal important and personal information with them (Roth, Maymon, and Bibi, 2010). If a student does not feel a teacher has their best interest at heart, the student will be less likely to trust them with their problems, regardless of the student's or teacher's role in a bullying situation. In order to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of implementing and sustaining a preventative bullying program, schools need to address several evaluation questions:

Does the bullying program influence the number of incidents of bullying behavior in a positive way?

Does the bullying program help to provide a safer and more positive environment on campus for students and staff?

Does the bullying program improve the knowledge base of students, parents, and staff on what is considered bullying behavior and what is not?

Does the bullying program improve character development of students?

Does the bullying program improve communication between teachers, students, and parents?

Does the bullying program improve positive interaction throughout the school community overall?

Purpose of Study

Through new state legislation, local school board directives and policies, and training for professional staff, school districts seek ways to effectively discipline students involved in the act of bullying and determine methods for implementing preventive strategies that could reduce the number of incidents that take place during the school year. This study evaluates a school district that has adopted and implemented a well-known bullying intervention plan/strategy and examine the effectiveness of the method.

Significance

Research on the topic of bullying covers topics including preventative programs for schools, students, parents, and teachers. The literature also captures perspectives on the bullying problem from the viewpoint of students, parents, and administration (Cloud, 2010). In addition, bullying research includes information about laws that have been put in place to prevent bullying behavior, the different types of bullying that take place in

schools, and discipline procedures and correlation between gender, sexual preference, economics, and ethnicity or culture (Zubrzycki, 2011).

The goals and objectives of the district's bullying prevention program and policies selected for this study include increasing the level of awareness among students and staff of what policies define as acceptable behaviors and how to go about addressing behaviors defined as intolerable. In addition, the district in this study looked to reduce the number of incidents of bullying behavior and to provide better awareness of what constitutes bullying and how to address incidents of bullying through the proper channels. The school district uses the programs and policies as a way to reach students and provide relevant tools and strategies to promote positive behaviors and positive character development.

Though the campus community directs significant resources towards bullying prevention in the district selected, campus officials and community members do not have clear data that the program has met its stated goals and objectives. Few involved in district leadership have an accurate understanding of the time and cost for implementation of the bullying prevention/character building program at the district and campus level. In addition, many campuses and community members (such as board members, parents, and taxpayers) want to make sure that the investment produces positive results with regard to the overall success and achievement of students and the systematic reduction of bullying and harassment incidents on campus. This study adds to the literature concerning bullying and school safety by showing whether the implemented research based methods of the school district and campuses had a positive

impact on bullying prevention. This study separates itself from other studies by offering data on a large district that has used an evaluation tool over several years to gather feedback from parents, students, and staff.

Program Evaluation Framework

A local district evaluated its bullying program, by utilizing a Piecewise Growth Model (Heck & Takahashi, 2006) to determine the overall effectiveness of the bullying program prior to implementation and after implementation. In many cases, it takes time for new policies or programs to make an impact on an organization; therefore, program evaluations benefit from an ability to look at several years of data prior to and after implementation. The research district had collected multiple years of data, and this data store allowed me to better determine how the district institutionalized the program and policies under scrutiny (Smith, 1973). In addition to using the Piecewise Growth Model, I also used a logic model to provide a visual representation of the overall relationships between inputs (investments), outputs (what we do and who we reach), and the outcomes (short to long-term goals) of the evaluated program. Logic models are a resource for program evaluations to help measure overall success of programs (Tremblay, Brousselle, Richard, & Beaudet, 2013). The particular logic model found in Figure 1 focuses on the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of the program being evaluated as a way to determine the overall interaction between all three. The logic model below links the qualitative coding back to the model in order to determine overall effectiveness of the bullying program (Holliday, 2014)

Program: Bullying Program Logic Model

Inputs (Invest)	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	Activities (what we do)	Participation (reach)	Short	Medium	Long
Staff (teachers & admin) Students (all populations) Time (training and implementation) Money (trainings, speakers, staff development, resources, food, prizes, parent nights) Materials (paper, books, frames, banners) Technology (software, access) Training (staff development, trainings, seminars, guest speakers)	Workshops, trainings, seminars, guest speakers Develop curriculum & activities Support Access Data & Implementation Communication for parents, students & staff Create and maintain values and culture of the campus/district Improve overall safety and student character development Parent/Community Nights Create a working Mission Statement & Expectations Promote success	Students Parents Teachers Administration Staff Community Business Partners	Knowledge & Awareness Instruction on a daily basis Positive Attitude about the program Mentor Program Character Education during the school day Staff Efficacy when dealing with bullying and character development Effective programs in place to address needs Stronger communication with parents and community	Change in atmosphere and culture Discipline Reduction in bullying behavior Increase in overall student performance Trainer of Trainers Cost effective strategies and implementation Overall Safety	Model for other schools to follow Overall environment as a campus Activities/Programs/ Tasks that reach beyond the school and district Student Achievement & Character Development outside of school Community Impact

Assumptions:
 Program will be successful if implemented correctly with proper training and investment of funds. Staff, students, parents & community members will be positive and eager to learn and improve.

External Factors:
 Time, school structure, funding, current policies and procedures, community involvement, parent involvement, availability of resources

Figure 1. Bullying Logic Model.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Bullying remains a major topic of concern in public education. Concern over bullying behavior has increased in the wake of several suicidal deaths of school-aged children and heightened violence in schools related to negative peer interaction (Hall, 2017). Many school districts across the nation have desperately tried to put policies in place to reduce the number of bullying-related incidents occurring on their campuses. This chapter provides context for studying bullying and its effects on students and the school environment as a whole. In addition, this chapter reviews current preventative and disciplinary policies used across schools and the ineffectiveness/effectiveness of current bullying reform.

Background

A review of bullying literature requires an understanding of the parties involved and the roles that each individual plays. Those who bully typically select a specific victim and intend to cause harm to that individual (Lodge & Frydenberg, 2005). The bullied usually feels like a target and fears further incidents. The bully subsequently feeds off of the power associated with implied dominance. Bystanders, or third parties, also hold a role in bullying activities. The bystander witnesses the negative actions taking place and, according to Lodge and Frydenberg (2005), has no real allegiance to either the bully or bullied. The bystander, unfortunately, contributes to the negative

impact of bullying because they usually fail to step in or make any attempt to help the victim.

Researchers consider bullying as one of the most daunting health concerns among school-aged children due to the mental and psychological impact it has on the victim (Brown, Low, Smith, & Haggerty, 2011). Victims of bullying try several different methods to minimize the extent of received abuse but seldomly report bullying behavior to an adult for fear of further retaliation (Tenenbaum, Varjas, Meyers, & Parris, 2011). These students typically suffer from having low self-esteem, consider themselves the cause of the bullying behavior, and can fall into periods of deep depression. In addition, these students, the victims of bullying, operate at a higher risk for anxiety, suicide, conduct problems in and out of school, and several other types of psychological issues (Hall, 2017). The vast amount of resources bullies have at their disposal, along with ineffective supervision and victims' fear of retaliation, makes developing anti-bullying policies and prevention measures extremely difficult. Parents and school administration may also find bullying hard to identify since most research indicates that many factors and possible scenarios can constitute bullying behavior (Morgan, 2012). In some cases, faculty, staff, and a bully's peers may consider the bully popular and even a good example (Morgan, 2012). The ability for bullies to manipulate others and stay in good social standing can make it difficult to determine who is telling the truth when it comes to accusations of bullying behavior (Morgan, 2012).

In addition to the difficulty of recognizing and minimizing traditional bullying behavior, cyberbullying, bullying through technology and social media platforms, occurs

during unsupervised time online in a space that is difficult to manage and monitor. According to Espelage and Hong (2016), technology has changed how people interact with one another, allowing large amounts of time to interact with others without supervision which, through a new vehicle of communication, can lead to bullying behavior. Espelage and Hong (2016) advise that schools and their surrounding communities can prevent cyberbullying by making sure students, parents, and adults have access to information about the harms of cyberbullying and ways to avoid being the target of bullying behavior online. Schools and anti-bullying organizations often provide this information through websites. These websites generally target adults and parents in order to provide a toolkit for parents on how to support their child. By providing this level of support, schools provide an outlet to encourage more stakeholders in the conversation about bullying and the future of prevention programs (Espelage & Hong, 2016).

Schools should have a better working definition of bullying but should also have a clearer understanding of what groups of students bullies regularly target. According to a report by the American Educational Research Association in 2013, the top three groups that bullies targeted included students with disabilities, African American students, and students who identify themselves as LGTBQ. According to the findings from the AREA article, students with disabilities were twice as likely to be the targets of bullying behavior as students who did not have a disability. In addition, bullying activity corresponded in direct proportion to the severity of the disability. African American students, according to the report, were underrepresented in the statistics because of a

failure to self-report. However, African American students, overall, were more likely to receive physical bullying than their non-African American peers. In addition, the article acknowledges that almost 42% of recorded physical assaults happen outside of school grounds and buildings. For LGBTQ students, the article's authors suggested that in addition to being at a higher risk for victimhood, these students were also at a greater risk of depression and suicide. Possible prevention measures targeted towards these groups of students included ongoing teacher training, support groups or clubs for students to join, and the inclusion of role models as part of the school curriculum.

Preventative Measures

Many districts take preventative measures, strategies and policies intended to try to minimize the number of bullying incidents that take place in the school setting (Smith, 2011). Preventative measures include school wide or districtwide programs that focus on awareness, programs that target family engagement and awareness, character education to target positive behaviors and school climate, and teacher/staff training. Districts implement preventative programs to improve school culture, bring about bullying awareness, and support character education in addition to traditional academics. Schools can also curb bullying activities by involving parents. Parents have significant influence on their children. If parents can learn the definition of bullying and what signs to look for in their children, they can take quicker action to either avoid or curtail negative or dangerous activity (Sawyer, Mishner, Pepler, & Wiener, 2011). Sawyer et al. (2011) explain that unfortunately parents do not typically know the signs of bullying and the

policies in place. This ignorance makes them less effective as an advocate for their child.

When addressing bullying prevention and engaging parents, the role of the school counselor can play a huge piece in the overall success of campus wide initiatives. According to Kolbert, Schultz, and Crothers (2014), the school counselor can provide resources and engaging opportunities for parents since parenting styles play a significant role in the chances of a student exhibiting bullying tendencies or being the victim of bullying behavior. Consultation with parents of both bully and victim along with opportunities for parents to participate in school-based programs can provide an outreach and support base for parents to better meet the needs of their child. Kolbert, Schultz, and Crothers (2014) explained that the role of the school counselor plays a huge part in bullying prevention by educating parents on what bullying behavior looks like and what signs parents should look for to determine if their child is engaging in or is the victim of bullying behavior. In addition, providing resources, strategies, and supports for parents to help their children navigate bullying incidents can help parents better advocate for their child and a bully-free school environment.

As a second strategy to preventing bullying, schools can focus on the effective training of teachers, administrators, and students on how to handle bullying situations. According to Yerger and Gehert (2011), not providing appropriate training in the beginning of an intervention or preventative bullying program poses a negative effect when enforcing policies and discipline on the backend. In 2005, only 17 states actually had policies in place specifically addressing bullying. Currently, the United States has

policies in place to address bullying behavior in public education in all states. Finally, Yerger et al. (2011) emphasize the importance of implementing anti-bullying procedures and trainings in the early years for children to help foster expectations and set standards. Research shows that students are less inclined to gain a proper foundation on anti-bullying when they are exposed to tenets of community and respect later in their educational experience.

Schools focused on reducing bullying must also promote a strong bullying policy and a safe school environment. Students who participated in a survey conducted in 2005 revealed that students felt safe at their respective campuses when detailed expectations and guidelines were put in place with regard to bullying and harassment on their campuses (Shah, 2011). Thompson (2015), stated, “Educators long have recognized what research increasingly confirms: Students succeed in an environment where they feel safe, supported, and connected to each other and the adults in the building” (p.46). In addition, when the policies go even further to identify sexual orientation and race, students tend to have an even more increased feeling of security on campus. Policies set expectations for all students and erase confusion about what constitutes bullying activity. Many states have even put laws in place requiring administrators and teachers to document and report any type of harassment or bullying they witness or learn about (Limber & Small, 2003). Districts must get teachers to have a genuine interest in the lives and safety of their students in order to implement a successful and sustainable bullying prevention program (Good, McIntosh, & Gietz, 2011).

Research around the importance of staff/student relationships also sheds light on ways bullying prevention takes place in the classroom. According to Astor, Benbenishty, and Estrada (2009), the quality of the relationship between students and staff helps determine whether a school will be on the low or high end of disciplinary and violent incidents. In addition, the campus principal sets the climate and culture for the building by through visibility and interaction with students and staff. Staff can then emulate these forms of positive interaction. This positive behavior, according to Astor et al. (2009) includes smiling, humor, and other types of positive reinforcement. Schools that did not reflect this type of positive interaction typically scored on the high end for violent and disruptive behavior. Astor et al. (2018) indicates that schools with high incidents of violence and disruption had principals that lacked purposeful engagement with staff and students. In addition, these “problem” schools accepted yelling, ignoring, and other negative behaviors as a norm which infiltrated the overall culture and climate of the building.

Schools use preventative measures as an important part of anti-bullying campaigns. All aspects of the community, campus, and school district must work together to send the message that campus communities will not tolerate bullying and that students and staff should treat everyone with dignity and respect. Policies must emphasize communication and proper training in order to properly address areas of concern and provide immediate and effective results.

Effectiveness of Bullying Prevention

Many school districts across the nation have tried to put policies and methods in place to reduce the number of bullying-related incidents occurring on their campuses (Yerger & Gehert, 2011). According to findings by the National Center for Educational Statistics ([NCES] 2016), nearly one out of every five students experienced some type of bullying behavior in the 2014-2015 school year. The study looked at students aged 12-18 which encompasses grades 6-12 for most public institution across the United States. In addition, the research also indicated that of the bullied students, nearly one out of three experienced bullying at least once, and sometimes twice, a month (NCES 2016).

Researchers claim that preventative measures for bullying in schools do not always effectively prevent bullying because schools address bullying from the wrong perspective (Walton, 2011). Bullying programs need to address the importance of accepting every individual and their multiple identities. Walton (2011) explains that schools should focus on “safety and diversity,” as opposed to the traditional themes that have not effectively reduced bullying in the educational setting. Moon, Hwang, and McClucky (2011) also addressed this issue by discussing the difficulty in not only defining bullying but also considering the factors and underlying issues that cause the behavior in the first place.

Secondly, bullying prevention programs often fail to effectively prevent bullying because technology has made it easy for someone to go on the computer or cell phone and engage in the act of bullying before anyone can do anything to stop it (Cloud, 2010). Bullying can happen so fast and with such frequency, schools find it hard to physically

keep up. Cloud (2010) argues that, in many cases, older prevention programs that were developed several years ago do not address the areas of technology when dealing with bullying incidents and, therefore, do not provide accurate solution methods to remedy the bullying problem. Unfortunately, these older programs, deemed to be the most effective programs available, fail to attend to 21st century bullying concerns. According to statistics provided by the Center for Disease and Control, students in high school experienced cyberbullying at a rate of 15.5% as opposed to 20.2% on campus. For junior high and middle school, 24% took place online and 45% took place on school property (Center for Disease Control, 2015). Finally, according to a study by Patchin and Hinduja (2016), the percentage of people subjected to cyberbullying has risen from 18% to 34% between the years of 2007 and 2016.

Thirdly, bullying prevention programs can lack effectiveness because research has found that bullies already have moral competence and understand the difference between right and wrong, which is the target of most programs. Many bullies, instead, actually lack the ability to have moral compassion for their actions (Gini, Pozzoli, & Hauser, 2011). Preventative programs targeting bullying must understand this important distinction because too often, programs focus on general knowledge and the difference between right and wrong. Instead, programs should simulate how the actual actions of bullying hurt the victims involved. Bullies need training to understand just how much their actions can hurt a victim and the degree to which the victim experiences that harm. This type of change in prevention programs follows the Rest's Model of Moral

Development (Rest, 1984) because it targets not only the cognitive aspect of the bullying but also the impact of the behavioral aspect as well (Gini, Pozzoli, & Hauser, 2011).

Rest's model (Rest, 1984) also has a component that most moral development theories do not have, a behavioral component. This behavioral component can help shed light on bullying behavior. In addition, the behavioral component helps explain why once a student goes through the thought process of a bullying situation and all of the possible choices available in a situation, they can choose to either commit or not commit a bullying offense.

This particular perspective helps show how school administration targets the social cognition of bullying behavior but does not do enough to address the behavioral components. The behavioral aspect, according to Rest's theory, is important because those seeking to halt bullying activity must also understand why a bully chooses to take the actions he/she does after evaluating the circumstances and possible outcomes of their decision.

Ttofi and Farrington (2011), through their meta-analysis of several studies on bullying prevention programs, found that, overall, bullying prevention programs based in research and implemented with fidelity successfully reduced bullying behavior. The work of Ttofi and Farrington (2011) included a firm admonition that in order for schools to provide quality bullying prevention programs, administration must choose a high quality, research-grounded program. These programs must also indicate a likelihood for success and contain an implementation plan that ensures that the program has the opportunity to produce positive results. Ttofi and Farrington (2011) suggested that

researchers and administrators should develop an accreditation system to ensure all bullying prevention programs meet the appropriate qualifications to ensure an optimal chance of success for school-wide implementation. Finally, Ttofi and Farrington (2011) indicated that in order for bullying prevention programs to reach their highest potential, schools must develop school-wide programs that include a focus on outside factors such as families and school community. This focus on parents and community also helps to target the individual student (bully or victim) in order to better address the individual needs of all students.

School leadership also plays a major role in the overall success of a bullying prevention program and school climate according to a study conducted by Bosworth, Garcia, Judkins, and Saliba (2018). According to the study, principals and school leadership play a significant role in the reduction of bullying incidents over time which, in turn, impacts the perception of students regarding school climate. Bosworth et al. (2018) go on to state that with leadership support behind SWPBS, norms and consistent implementation of rules become the focus of the campus that promotes a climate conducive to supporting different types of social situations. Finally, Bosworth et al. (2018) provide supports the idea that when a school sees a reduction in reported incidents of bullying, the school climate and culture becomes more positive over time. This change in school climate and culture requires support from school leadership to provide the resources, time, and the encouragement of programs and norms established for and by the campus that contribute to a positive, bully-free culture.

Preventative measures in the educational system, based on the research, fail to deal with bullying incidents for three main reasons: 1) they fail to appropriately define bullying, 2) they fail to effectively train and provide resources for teachers and administrators, and have support from leadership 3) prevention programs have failed to keep up with the use of technology. These three components comprise the necessary areas of reform needed to effectively reduce bullying behavior in the educational setting.

Disciplinary Consequences

Although preventative measures help districts take an important step towards addressing the issue of bullying in local schools, disciplinary consequences also play an important role. Disciplinary consequences, within the context of bullying, include specific actions taken by school officials when students fail to follow bullying/harassment policies and guidelines. Many states and school districts across the nation have put specific policies in place to address infractions with regard to bullying. Developing policies focus on making sure that the rights of all students are protected and that the actions of another individual, at no time, compromises a student's ability to obtain a quality education. Districts work to design flexible discipline and school policies in order to address each individual incident as its own separate entity (Edmondson & Zeman, 2011).

While reprehensible to many, policies and law do not define all bullying as unlawful acts (Stein, 2001). Name-calling and giving dirty looks do not fall under any type of specific law or infraction. Brown (2008) explores the danger of using the term "bullying" too liberally, claiming that its misuse or more global definition can cause

students, parents, and school administrators to lose sight of the actual offense committed. Disciplinarians and those in authority must specifically address students about the nature of their offense. For example, if a student makes racial remarks toward another student, disciplinary actions should reflect the specifics of the infraction and respond appropriately. Brown continues that in addition to being specific about particular bullying behavior, administration must provide timely and consistent discipline for negative actions. Additionally, all parties involved should work to find the source of the problem in order to effectively and permanently change the behavior and situation.

In most cases, bullying incidents take place on campus during the school day which makes developing disciplinary policies consistent and relevant. Difficulty arises when bullying activity takes place off campus or online in the form of cyber bullying. Administrators have long struggled with whether or not they can take disciplinary actions against students guilty of off-campus bullying since the bullying behavior existed outside of their locational jurisdiction. Federal courts, however, eventually clarified the issue when they determined that school administrators could get involved in off-campus issues if bullying constitutes a, “substantial disruption at school or interference with the rights of students to be secure” (Willard, 2008). This new guidance by federal courts opened the door for school administration to become more actively involved, especially in cases of cyber bullying.

Finally, schools must follow up on all disciplinary consequences for bullying behavior with some form of counseling and parent involvement. Dayton and Dupre (2009) mentioned that parents and school officials should not see bullying as normal

behavior and should recognize it as behavior that requires some form of intervention to help address the possible needs of the student. Schools should strongly consider counseling for disciplined students directed at improvement of negative behavior and a better understanding of peer relationships. Dayton and Dupre (2009) also discuss the importance of parental involvement of students engaged in bullying. Parents have a responsibility as a part of the disciplinary process for their students under the age of 18, and school districts can and should hold them accountable for the actions of their child. If parents fail to cooperate or participate in the intervention for their child, districts should consider parental inaction as child neglect and take disciplinary action against parents as well. The more people involved in the well-being of a particular student will lead to a better chance of achieving a positive student development outcome.

According to Gerlinger and Wo (2016), improving the overall school climate of a school campus is the key to reducing bullying behavior. A highly structured school environment where rules and guidelines are clearly communicated and enforced in a fair and timely manner can improve school climate and culture. Additionally, schools should have an appropriate support system in place that provides a quality structure for the building that focuses on students. Gerlinger and Wo (2016) mentioned that principals and school leaders should focus on how to encourage students to find meaning and acceptance of campus norms in order to better reflect the mission and vision of the school. Finally, Gerlinger and Wo (2016) expressed the importance of relationships especially between teachers and students in order to ensure minimal discipline issues and bullying behavior.

One way several campuses and school districts have tried to change their school culture and provide a more structured way to handle school discipline and behavior is through the adoption of School Wide Positive Behavior Support or SWPBS. According to Sugai and Horner (2006), SWPBS focuses on behavior practices that increase positive behavior and academic results. SWPBS is an intervention program that provides three tiers of support. The three levels of support, according to Sugai and Horner (2016), include primary, which focuses on behaviors at the whole school level; secondary, which focuses on certain groups of students that are at a higher need of at risk status, and tertiary, which focuses on individual students at the highest level of need. Through the program, schools are encouraged to have a shared set of goals and values that everyone can agree on and follow throughout the building or organization to promote positive behavior and overall academic success. Schools implement SWPBS through a four-step process (Sugai & Horner, 2016). These four steps include establishing measurable outcomes (both short term and long term), implementing research-based practices that have a proven record of success, making data-informed decisions to ensure program success, and, finally, developing system supports that ensure the stability and longevity of the program over time. Overall, SWPBS provides schools a structure for identifying and implementing research-based practices to address behavior at their school.

Astor et al. (2018) indicated that thoroughly considered procedures and supervision by leadership and staff help to establish fair and consistent guidelines to prevent disruptive behavior. In these kinds of schools, the administration places the focus on the individual student where positive interactions along with strong

relationships and consistent but fair enforcement of school rules and norms provide the foundation for improved student outcomes.

One type of disciplinary consequence that has shown promise in many schools is restorative practices. Lustick (2017) describes restorative practices as, “a philosophy and set of principles and practices that bring together stakeholders voluntarily in the aftermath of crime or wrongdoing to directly address harm, make amends, and restore, to the extent possible, the normative trust that was broken.” According to Lustick (2017) restorative practices have created an opportunity for schools to move away from zero-tolerance policies and provide opportunities for students to stay in the classroom while also taking ownership for their own decisions. The goal of restorative circles is to build relationships and take responsibility for one’s own actions as opposed to being isolated through expulsions. Lustick (2017) argues that there are three tiers to restorative practices that involve circles. Tier one circles are used in classrooms in order to build relationships and overall unity amongst a group of students and teacher. The students and teacher get in a circle and, through a structured process, share out their own personal feelings around a particular topic or event. Tier two and three circles focus on more severe issues that require individual intervention or peer support. The focus, according to Lustick (2017) moves from determining who was at fault, what happened, and what should the punishment be, to what harm took place, who needs to be addressed and provided support, and who is the best one to provide this support and take corrective action to restore the broken trust or relationship. In looking at how restorative practices impact bullying behavior, Hanhan (2013) through a study in the Turkish school system,

found that the use of restorative practices reduced the number of discipline referrals for bullying behavior. In addition, Hanhan (2013) indicated that not only did the discipline referrals decrease, but the number of incidents that repeated after a restorative circle intervention decreased as well. According to Hanhan (2013), 95.7% of the students indicated that the restorative circles implemented resulted in a constructive way to solve bullying related issues, and 100% indicated that the restorative circles resulted in a permanent solution for the issues at hand. With proper implementation and school leadership support, this model can help \ provide the needed support for the SWPBS framework for behavior and overall school climate and address the concern with school-wide discipline and student removal from the school setting.

Disciplinary consequences and laws aimed to effectively address bullying require the commitment of all parties involved. School districts and campuses need a consistent and fair approach that protects the safety and welfare of all students. School leadership can make a strong response to bullying behavior through effective reporting of negative behavior followed by appropriate discipline and student intervention.

Effectiveness of Disciplinary Measures and Policy

Several federal, state, and local policies and laws have been put in place to address bullying in education. Unfortunately, these policies and laws have proven largely ineffective in the overall reduction of bullying incidents within a campus setting. Inconsistent definitions and applications of policies from school district to school district and from state to state contribute to the ineffectiveness of the policies (Zubrzyzkl, 2011). A student, in theory, could move during the school year, and their behavior, or the

response to their behavior, from one campus may completely change from one campus to another. Zubrzycki (2011) argues that this lack of consistency makes bullying policies confusing and sends mixed messages to the students and parents.

The second reason why policies and laws in place do not effectively address the concerns of bullying behavior uncomfortably rests in the inability of schools to implement, enforce, and fund signature programs on a consistent basis. School districts do not have the ability to implement or enforce many of the new policies and rules that have been put in place (Walker, 2009). Zubrzycki (2011) also addresses this issue when he explains that several schools cannot fund the anti-bullying measures put in place which prevents the law from being enforced appropriately. Laws and policies, without proper implementation and enforcement, result in an overall failure to effectively address the issue of bullying.

Also, laws and policies have failed to minimize the epidemic of school-wide bullying due to zero-tolerance policies and other types of harsh discipline. Many schools have a no- or zero-tolerance policy for severe infractions that take place on their campuses. The discipline that accompanies this type of policy tends to ignore the behavior at its root but instead victimizes and removes the student from the regular education setting (Cassidy, 2005). In addition, the student usually responds to zero-tolerance discipline by becoming more frustrated and angry by the result of the incident, often leaving the student more prone to continue with the negative behavior. Good et al. (2010) addressed this particular issue when they explained that zero-tolerance policies typically increase bullying behavior because the bully often receives notoriety and fame

for their actions. Bullies begin to develop an image of being a tough guy or girl, and this reputation of being in trouble and labeled a “bully” builds their reputation. Zero-tolerance policies have statistically shown an increase in occurrences of aggression by perpetrators because the bully wants to retaliate for the discipline they first received. Rodkin (2011) argues that students who identify as a member of the popular group in school and engage in bullying behavior typically receive quite a bit of support for their actions which actually makes the situation much worse. The punishment, in this way, rewards bullies for their behavior and sends a message to other students that champions this kind of behavior.

Many schools struggle with inequity in how they issue school discipline across different populations of students. According to a meta-analysis study by Welsh and Little (2018), how schools issue discipline depends on several factors including the attitude and personality of the campus principal or administration, teacher classroom management, and the overall perspective and attitude toward students of the campus by faculty and staff. In fact, according to Welsh and Little (2018), campus culture and procedures plays a larger role on disciplinary disparities than the actual actions of the students in the building. Since most discipline events start in the classroom, Welsh and Little (2018) argue that how teachers handle these events and whether or not teachers directly refer these events to campus administration plays a major role in the disparity of how discipline looks not only within a building but also from school to school. Disciplinary inequity and academic achievement can contribute to suspensions such as OSS (out of school suspension) and ISS (in school suspension), but Welsh and Little

(2018) found that academically successful students with a higher GPA were less likely to be on receiving end of OSS or expulsions for the same disciplinary incidents as their less-academically successful peers.

In addition to disciplinary inequity for students in the school system, according to a study by Reyneke and Pretorius (2017), many students who received appropriate disciplinary expulsions experienced a lack of support. In most cases, students removed from the school setting while awaiting further placement or decision by the school system typically did not receive any type of counseling or support to address the core issues of the student's behavior. Reyneke and Pretorius (2017) indicated that this lack of support and intervention for the student's personal and academic needs leads to the possibility that schools only offer punitive actions like student exclusion to students with poor behavior. Reyneke and Pretorius (2017) compared the alternative school placement or suspension with prison, arguing that unlike school systems, prisons, at least, have programs for rehabilitation.

Thompson (2015) explained the dilemma for school leaders, "In the wake of recent school tragedies, nobody understands better than school leaders the challenges in creating a welcoming and supportive learning environment while maintaining order and safety" (p. 45). Thompson (2015) mentioned that although many schools have moved away from zero-tolerance policies in their schools, administrators still feel a heightened pressure to remove students from classrooms for behaviors that warrant concern. In addition, this removal from classrooms impacts overall learning and can lead to dropouts and social-emotional disorders for students which complicates the decision. Thompson

(2015) shares that in 2011, a study was done in Texas which found that administration suspended 60% of all students in the 7th – 12th grade cohort at least once during this period of time. In addition, the report explained that the suspensions were for offenses that were deemed to be discretionary and not mandatory which means that school officials made the decision to suspend locally. Peguero, Marchbanks, Varela, Eason, and Blake (2018), counter this kind of “sentencing” activity by advocating for a balance in discipline procedures. Harsh discipline protocols and zero-tolerance policies could contribute to the school to prison pipeline, but a failure to have structure and discipline could lead to a lack of academic achievement and overall safety for a campus. As a finding in their research, Peguero et al. (2018) argued, “It appears that schools with more strict school punishment practices can contribute to higher grade retention and juvenile justice referral rates, but it also appears that lenient school punishment practices also exacerbate these same outcomes as well as higher referral rates.” In all, suspensions and expulsions have a place in the overall discipline spectrum, but administrators should use them as a last resort and not as an initial response (Thompson, 2015).

School laws and policies have failed to address bullying behavior because of an internal inability to effectively monitor, support, and properly address negative behavior. Without proper planning, rushing to answers and conclusions does not solve the problem at hand. In addition, the need to ensure laws focus on the development of the whole child is a crucial step to ensure students get the help they need moving forward in their development

Summary

In conclusion, despite the efforts of several organizations, the effectiveness of bullying prevention and policies in public education remain highly questionable and inconsistent. The research shows that, although schools have developed several programs to target bullying behavior, the inability to appropriately fund these programs, train school personnel to implement and enforce the programs properly, and ensure that schools choose research-based, sound programs have rendered them ineffective and costly. In addition, because so many people have a hard time agreeing on a stable definition for bullying, schools have trouble detecting and confronting the problem. The research also shows that the rise of technology and the ability to say and post just about anything online at the touch of a finger makes the bullying epidemic a constant and daunting challenge to undertake by local school systems. Finally, inconsistent disciplinary actions that focus only on the behavior at hand tend to actually increase the occurrence of bullying and never truly solve the deeper underlying problems. Bullying in the educational setting has taken center stage, and it will require a great deal of effort and determination to find a way to keep students safe and in a bully-free environment. The key takeaways from the research indicate that a strong school culture and climate where faculty and administration enforce clear expectations and rules in a timely and fair manner can help mitigate bullying activity. In addition, school leadership's support of programs and visibility helps to ensure the proper implementation of bullying prevention programs and the programs' overall success. Finally, purposeful relationship building, proper intervention programs such as SWPBS, and a new perspective on discipline

procedures such as restorative discipline can pave the way for successful bullying prevention.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Program Evaluation

This research project uses a program evaluation to gauge the effectiveness of a bullying program in a local school district. I chose a program evaluation in order to provide local stakeholders with information about the current bullying program so that administrators could make data-based decisions regarding implementation and continuation of the program (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2011).

As mentioned previously, the program evaluation leans on several important evaluation questions that help understand the strengths and weaknesses of the district's bullying program. These evaluations questions include:

Does the bullying program influence the number of incidents of bullying behavior in a positive way?

Does the bullying program help to provide a safer and more positive environment on campus for students and staff?

Does the bullying program improve the knowledge base of students, parents, and staff on what is considered bullying behavior and what is not?

Does the bullying program improve character development of students?

Does the bullying program improve communication between teachers, students, and parents?

Does the bullying program improve positive interaction throughout the school community overall?

In order to answer the evaluation questions posed above, I utilized several methods discussed throughout this chapter.

Research Design

I utilized a mixed methods case study design for this particular program evaluation. I chose a case study design because I have the ability to study the school district as a whole while understanding the bullying program's effectiveness through interviews and document analysis. This kind of research requires a case study because the research pertains to a particular issue within a bounded system (Creswell, 2007). In addition, I looked at data that could be broken down over time, location, and event (Hays & Singh, 2012). I also used a purposive sampling of employees, parents, and students from a local school district with a history of both high and low incidents of bullying behavior. In this school, I focused on students in grades 5, 8, and 12. I used purposive sampling for this study because it allowed me to choose participants and locations that were relevant to the study in order to provide valuable information (Creswell, 2007). More specifically, I utilized convenience sampling, a sub-category of purposive sampling. This particular sampling method was appropriate as it was easy for me to gain access and obtain information from the school district and campuses being used for the study (Hays & Singh, 2012). Finally, I chose a mixed methods approach because of the quantitative and qualitative nature of the research for this study (Azorin & Cameron, 2010). Creswell and Plano Clark (2017) offer that a mixed methods approach allows for

the researcher to address the weaknesses that can come from using just a quantitative or qualitative method alone. For this study, I needed to obtain personal reflections from campus principals and their feedback, but I also needed to combine those perspectives with quantitative findings across a much larger group of individuals.

Procedure

I gathered information about campuses and the school district through miscellaneous documents and databases such as AEIS and TAPR reports, district and school profiles, accountability ratings, disciplinary statistics, character education lessons, and selected questions from the district's quality survey. The district gives the quality survey used to every 5th, 8th, and 12th grade student; teacher; and parent throughout every campus. The designers created a survey that would capture information regarding campus atmosphere, teaching environment, safety, and other campus descriptors. The district and campuses use the survey extensively to gauge school and district culture, safety, instructional capacity, and responsiveness to student, staff, and parent needs. The reliability indicators suggest that this instrument has been successful over time in reflecting how campuses and districts meet the needs of students, staff, and the community. The district and its campuses completed the survey on a yearly basis for the last 10 years, and I looked at questions related to bullying, student safety, and campus atmosphere for this study.

In addition, I also conducted interviews with campus principals at the elementary, intermediate, and high school levels. The interview process consisted of two interviews with campus principals at the elementary level, two interviews with campus

principals at the intermediate level, and two interviews with principals from the high school level. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes in length, and I structured the questions asked for consistency. Follow up questions and deviation from structured questions did not take place in order to protect consistency and reduce bias in the responses of campus principals participating in the study.

Data Sources

Located in Texas, the school district chosen for this study contains 4 high schools, 9 intermediate schools, and 28 elementary schools. The overall student population of the school district is roughly 50,000 students. Overall 14% of the student population is African American, 36% Hispanic, 38% White, 8% Asian, and 4% Other. Forty-two percent of the population is economically disadvantaged, 37% are considered at-risk, and 13% LEP. In the most recent school year only 1.3% of all students in the district received disciplinary placement.

Six campus principals participated in the study. Two were from the high school setting which serves students in grades 9-12. Two principals were from the intermediate setting which serves students in grades 6-8. In addition, two principals were from the elementary setting which serves students Pre-K-5. At the high school and intermediate levels, I included a campus with a low percentage of economically disadvantaged students and a campus with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students in order to also see the comparison between different types of campuses and student needs. Unfortunately, I could not do the same at the elementary level. Table 1 shows the

breakdown for the district and campuses. Finally, all of the campuses within the school district used were classified as MET Standard campuses this past school year.

Table 1

Demographic Breakdown

	Economically Disadvantaged	African American	White	Hispanic	Asian	Other
District Data	42%	14%	38%	36%	8%	4%
Individual Elementary Campus A	30%	8%	38%	40%	10%	4%
Individual Elementary Campus B	18%	11%	36%	32%	15%	6%
Individual Intermediate Campus A	40%	12%	41%	34%	8%	5%
Individual Intermediate Campus B (Title I Campus)	80%	23%	6%	56%	12%	3%
Individual High School Campus A	35%	13%	43%	29%	11%	4%
Individual High School Campus B (Title I Campus)	72%	26%	4%	58%	10%	2%

The overall student population of Campus A is roughly 3,900 students. Overall 13% of the student population is African American, 29% Hispanic, 43% White, 11% Asian, and 4% Other, and the campus serves a population of approximately 35% economically disadvantaged students. The campus principal who participated from Campus A is male and in his late 40s. The principal served in a leadership capacity as an assistant principal for four years and the principal of the campus for nine years.

The overall student population of High School Campus B is roughly 3,700 students. Overall 26% of the students on the campus are African American, 58% Hispanic, 4% White, 10% Asian, 2% Other, and overall the campus serves a population of approximately 72% economically disadvantaged students. The campus qualifies for Title I funding even though it is not currently labeled as a Title I campus. The principal for Campus B is female and in her late 50s. The principal has served in education for over 30 years and as a campus principal overall for nine years with four of those at her current high school.

The overall student population of High School Campus Intermediate A is roughly 1,300 students. Overall 12% of the students on campus are African American, 34% Hispanic, 41% White, 8% Asian, 5% Other, and overall the campus serves a population of approximately 40% economically disadvantaged students. The principal for Campus Intermediate A is female and in her late 30s. The principal was new to her position and had only served as a campus principal for one year. Overall the principal had five years of administration experience.

The overall student population of Campus Intermediate B is roughly 1,600 students. Overall 23% of student on the campus are African American, 56% Hispanic, 6% White, 12% Asian, 3% Other, and overall the campus serves a population of approximately 80% economically disadvantaged students. The campus, based on its population, is labeled a Title I campus. The principal for Campus Intermediate B is male and in his late 30s. The principal had been serving in the role for three years at Intermediate Campus B and has served in a school leadership capacity for the last seven years.

The overall student population of Elementary Campus A is roughly 800 students. Overall 8% of the student population are African American, 40% Hispanic, 38% White, 10% Asian, 4% Other, and overall the campus serves a population of approximately 30% economically disadvantaged students. Elementary Campus A's principal is female and in her late 40s. The principal has served in the role for two years at Elementary Campus A and in a leadership capacity for over 10 years.

The overall student population of Elementary Campus B is roughly 700 students. Overall 11% of the students on campus are African American, 32% Hispanic, 36% White, 15% Asian, 6% Other, and overall the campus serves a population of approximately 18% economically disadvantaged students. Elementary Campus B's principal is female and in her late 50s. The principal has served in her current role for over eight years and in a leadership capacity for the district for over 18 years.

Data Collection (Instrumentation)

I used several data collection methods for this particular program evaluation. One of these methods included a limited number of questions from an existing district survey of students, parents, and staff to gain a better idea of the overall opinions of the different populations. The district gives this survey at the end of each school year to all 5th, 8th, and 12th grade students along with parents, teachers, and campus administrators. The survey includes a Likert scale instrument (1-6) and breaks down information from the district and campus levels, covering many categories. I only used questions related to bullying, school safety, and school climate for this particular study.

I also used document analysis to look at information such as discipline records, campus and district improvement plans, AEIS and TAPR reports, standardized test results, and campus report cards to see if the overall program made an impact over time. In addition, I reviewed campus budgets and district discipline protocols to clarify the bigger picture surrounding how campuses and the district implemented bullying prevention.

Finally, I needed several other resources to perform a valid program evaluation of the bullying program for the district. These additional resources included bullying reports, survey results, character development lesson plans, and campus trainings in order to make sure that the campuses implemented the program correctly. The following section includes a more detailed synopsis of the types of data collection that took place and a timeline for each.

District and Campus Discipline Data

An important part of any bullying program relies on students' abilities to use the strategies and methods offered to avoid and prevent negative behavior. By looking at discipline data, I determined how many referrals had been associated with bullying and the severity of the actions themselves. In addition, I used discipline data for both campuses and the district to show whether the number of incidents of bullying behavior was increasing or decreasing over time and through the implementation of the bullying program.

Professional Development and Training

A bullying program implementation depends greatly on the preparation and training of staff and faculty. By looking at the types of training and professional development offered to not only staff but to parents and students as well, I was able to determine if the district had effectively implemented the program.

Campus Improvement and District Strategic Plans

The Campus Improvement Plans and District Strategic Plan provided information as to what type of programs and interventions were being put in place to address bullying behavior and the ways campuses planned to measure the effectiveness of their interventions.

Interviews

Interviews with campus principals at each of the three building levels provided insight on whether the program effectively produced the intended results. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes in length, and I structured the questions asked for

consistency. I stored all field notes, audio tapes and documentation in a secure location outside of the school building. I did not use follow-up questions in order to maintain consistency between interviewees and to ensure that I did not prompt answers or increase bias on my part. The questions used for each campus principal being interviewed included the following:

1. What is your title/position?
2. How long have you served in this position?
3. What is your background experience in education?
4. Do you feel bullying is an issue on your campus? Explain/Describe?
5. What programs do you have in place to address bullying behavior or character development?
6. What type of training do you or the district provide the staff with regards to character development and bullying prevention?
7. What processes do you have in place to address bullying behavior?
8. What are the levels of consequences for bullying on your campus?
9. Do you feel the district initiative for bullying prevention is reducing the number of incidents of bullying behavior? Why?
10. Do you feel the bullying program is helping to provide a safer campus for students and staff? Why?
11. Do you feel the bullying program is improving the knowledge base of students, staff and parents on what is bullying behavior and how to handle it?

12. Do you feel the bullying program is improving character development of students on your campus? Why?
13. Do you feel the bullying program is improving communication on your campus? Why?
14. How much money does the campus spend on bullying prevention and character development each year?
15. How much training does your staff receive each year on bullying prevention and character development?
16. To what degree is bullying and character development in you CIP? Why?
17. What more do you think the campus can do to improve bullying prevention?
18. What more can the district do to prevent bullying?
19. Do you or your parents attend district events regarding bullying and character development?
20. Anything else you would like to share?

Limitations

The limited use of the districtwide survey to only 5th, 8th, and 12th grade students did not allow for information about students at the lower grade levels within each building category. Younger students often experience more bullying behavior, and their absence in the data could skew overall results for each campus and the district as a whole. Secondly, the survey contained a limited number of questions related to bullying, school climate, and safety. This limited amount of information did not allow for more in-depth questioning or “digging” into student, staff, and parent opinions. Third, the fact

that I had professional relationships having worked with several of the principals interviewed within the district also played a role in the overall limitations of the study because principals may have been influenced by my presence and district knowledge. Finally, the small number of campus administrators interviewed out of the total number of campuses may not have truly represented the opinions and actions of all campuses throughout the district. This limitation applies in a unique way at the elementary level where the district maintains over 30 campuses with very different programs, populations of students, and principals with varying levels of leadership experience.

Data Analysis, Reliability, and Trustworthiness

I completed analysis of the quantitative data by examining descriptive analysis statistics, inferential statistics, and interval data. In addition, I used SSPS to conduct a basic two-tail Pearson correlation involving the selected survey items with respect to bullying prevention methods based on the discipline data provided by the school district. More specifically, I calculated the correlation by taking the average per survey item from the quality survey based on a Likert scale and correlated the discipline and individual items. I also calculated the overall safety (aggregate of all individual items within the safety and well-being dimension from the survey) and correlated the overall safety with the discipline data that were provided by the district. I correlated the data to determine if a relationship existed between the survey questions and the discipline data provided by the district over time.

Analysis of the qualitative data included transcribing audio tapes of the interviews and using an inductive coding process to develop common themes to see if

similarities among campuses revealed whether or not preventative bullying practices were proving to be successful (Boyatzis, 1998). Participants then reviewed transcribed interviews and developed themes to check for accuracy. This check also served as a form of member checking. Finally, a second researcher knowledgeable in this particular area of research reviewed the transcribed tapes, themes, and codes to assess the reliability and trustworthiness of the research process and conclusions.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The qualitative and quantitative research findings were obtained from campus principal interviews, analysis of district and campus documents, and an in-depth review of the districtwide survey provided on a yearly basis to students, parents, and staff with specific questions around bullying and school safety.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative findings obtained from the interviews with six campus principals across all three building levels revealed four main themes: building relationships and character education; incongruence in understanding the meaning and scope of bullying; professional development and resources for campus staff, parents, and community; and discipline response to bullying behavior.

Building Relationships and Character Education

Each of the six campus principals, when asked about the programs they had in place to address bullying behaviors in their buildings, cited current programs designed to build relationships with students and parents. Although every campus had a different method, program, or strategy to achieve the goal of building productive relationships, participants highlighted the common theme of a *need* for relationships. Additionally, participants shared that from their perspectives, bullying prevention hinged on character

education. The elementary principal of campus A explained, “If your campus is not working on relationships, then it is going to defeat everything.”

Programs focused on relationship building and character education across each of the six campuses intended to educate students, parents, and staff on behavior expectations, citizenship, and the need to respect and get to know each and every member of the campus in a personal way. Character education and relationship building programs at the elementary campuses included Nurtured Heart, Believe and Achieve, No Place for Hate, and Second Step. Each program focused on behavior expectations, building relationships, and positive interactions throughout the building. The principal for elementary campus B implemented four programs at one time: “We were one of the first campuses to implement No Place for Hate. We also have Nurtured Heart. Last year our counselor wrote a grant for Second Step. We have also had well-managed classrooms as well.”

The middle school focused on two programs, No Place for Hate and Capturing Kids’ Hearts, to build on relationships and behavior expectations. In addition, each of the two campuses dedicated time each week during an intervention period to teach character education and relationship-building strategies with students as part of the overall campus curriculum. The intermediate principal of campus A expressed the importance of character education stating,

Any character education is going to help, and so I do think it is good for kids. It is just like them learning math, science, and social studies. Learning character education and what to do in right or wrong situations is important. We cannot

assume students know how to handle certain situations or that they are being taught the right way at home. We must be sure to teach them what the expectations are first before we can hold them accountable for their actions.

The high school level only mentioned one school-led program, No Place for Hate. One of the high schools occasionally used their intervention period to address character education and bullying prevention while the other high school put the onus of education and prevention on their student leadership groups including student council. The principal of high school A explained,

We have No Place for Hate. We also have a student group called Kindness from the Heart that promotes positive remarks toward other students. They do this through social media. We do a little through our intervention period for character education as well. The key for us is to have our students lead because it is better received by their peers and puts less stress on the staff.

Overall, each campus at every level has different programs to address relationship building and character education in their buildings. Every campus has programs that build on what each campus currently had in place and to focus on improving and expanding their efforts moving forward. Interestingly, all the campuses studied recognized the importance of teaching students and growing them as productive citizens, yet most of the programs in place did not demonstrate this level of intentionality.

Incongruence in Understanding the Meaning and Scope of Bullying

A second theme that emerged from the interview process with campus principals considered the overall definition and understanding of the term “bullying.” As a district, the definition of bullying focuses on a disproportionate balance of power that takes place over time between a bully and a victim. In addition, the district utilizes a bullying reference chart that administrators, teachers, and parents have access to in order to help explain and determine what constitutes bullying behaviors and incidents. Finally, the district uses a bullying investigation form across all campuses to make sure that campus leaders fully investigate and document any possible incident of bullying behavior.

Despite these district efforts, campus principals across all levels mentioned a disconnect between parents’ perceptions of bullying behavior and the definition and resources provided by the district. The elementary principal of campus B expressed their frustration in one of the interviews:

Bullying is not an issue on our campus. We need to educate others on the definition of bullying. It is in the news and the term is used incorrectly. Picking on each other is typically what happens, but it does not fall into the category of bullying.

The intermediate principal of campus B shared these same concerns when they stated,

I think bullying is an issue at any campus to some degree or another. Often times, we have parents or staff members refer to bullying or any instance as bullying,

and most often we find it is horseplay and disruption and not true bullying. So it is present but not on a regular basis.

Even at the high school level, the two campus principals shared their overall impressions of bullying by dismissing bullying as a hot term and offering that what they find taking place on campus is not bullying but rather negative interactions between students that onlookers take out of context and call bullying. One high school principal mentioned that they do investigate every incident brought to their attention, but that many incidents typically end up not being bullying at all.

Overall, each campus reported low numbers of actual bullying incidents on their respective campuses despite the perceptions of staff, parents, and students due to a lack of understanding surround the definition of bullying. Based on the interview responses, secondary campuses (especially middle school) saw the biggest number of parent- and student-reported bullying issues compared to the elementary and high school setting. In addition, campuses focused on identifying the difference between bullying and non-bullying activities instead of focusing on corrective action and support for students who handled situations in an unacceptable manner. Campuses did not work to prevent further issues, but instead, just assigned and coded the correct discipline. As introduced in Chapter 2, prevention must address poor student choices and not just assign disciplinary consequences. Campuses must find a balance.

Professional Development and Resources for Campus Staff, Parents, and Community

A third theme I developed while analyzing principal responses was the relationship between bullying prevention and professional development and resources for campuses, parents, and staff. In conversations with the six different principals, participants shared a campus perspective that more money and resources were needed to help campuses do a better job of training and educating their staff, parents, the community, and students. In many cases, principals indicated that they had great programs but the district could not provide the funds needed to continue training staff. In other cases, principals explained that they had plenty of funding and resources when for bullying prevention; however, they did not feel that they had the ability to train staff in the way that that would support their campus bullying programs.

When asked about the amount of time dedicated for training and professional development, the elementary principal of campus A responded, “We do all the required pieces provided to us by the district. Training from our counselor on Second Step is only additional training for our staff.” In my research I found that the district only required training in the form of a PowerPoint viewed by campus staff, parents, and students at the beginning of the year. The presentation had three slides on bullying prevention and most of the presentation focused on the different tiers of disciplinary consequences based on behaviors. The elementary principal of campus B indicated the following when asked the same question,

Most training happens before school. The expectation at our campus is that it is in our Campus Improvement Plan so it is also ongoing and job embedded during our Professional Learning Community time. Academic and character growth go hand and hand. Honestly, we need a greater budget especially for campuses that do not have a big Parent Teacher Organization that can raise lots of money. We need to equalize playing field with budget. We need to expect success in both academics and character. Instructional support from the Counseling department and a database so campuses have more options and resources to lean on for help are really needed. Money and access to resources is also key.

At the intermediate level both campus principals indicated that campuses only spent a small portion of money and training on staff, parents, and students. The principal of intermediate campus B indicated that they do not spend enough time or money on needed trainings and programs due to budget and availability of time. Although they felt that the campus should make the bullying programs a bigger priority, the district could not find a way to make it work. The campus principal of intermediate A responded with the following when asked about money and time spent of professional development and training.

We do a lot of it at the beginning of the school year, obviously. However, as far as formal training on how to teach character development, I would not say that we put a lot of time in that. It is in my CIP, obviously, because it is a big issue in schools. Some of the safe school's realm in my CIP to make sure that we are ensuring we have a campus that kids want to come to. You know we did have

select staff members come during the summer to help create lessons. But I do think that if we did have that extra time where ever we would find it would be good to work with teachers on how to teach character development because I do see certain classes persevere when it comes to lessons and others just cover, and that is it, so training would be good. I do not know what that would look like, and I do not know when it would happen, but it would be a great idea.

High school principals gave a very different perspective when discussing professional development, training, and availability of money and resources. The campus principal of high school A indicated that the district has allowed campuses to reach their school populations in the best way they see fit. The principal also indicated that the campus spent around \$500 a year in this area but provided ongoing support from different resources for teachers and parents throughout the year. The high school principal of campus B also indicated that they spent very little on bullying training and professional development, but they felt comfortable with the level of support their teachers, parents, and community were receiving. The campus principal, when asked about resources and professional development, explained,

We have the mandatory training we have with faculty and staff in all areas such as ethics and sexual harassment. Administration goes through training and procedures to follow. In addition, we train teachers in bullying prevention and bullying responses. We are also promoting No Place for Hate and are proactive in prevention as well. I think anytime you are doing any type of education, it

helps because it helps make them aware of other student's feelings. We do not have many issues, but we try to keep things positive.

Overall each campus indicated that they need additional time and resources in order to help better train staff, parents, and students. Although the high school campus principals felt comfortable with the level of support provided, it was evident that the elementary and intermediate campuses needed additional financial assistance from the district level. Though need was acknowledged, several of the campuses spent thousands of dollars on t-shirts, faculty lunches, paper, and supplies and only spent \$500, in some cases, on character education and training for staff.

Discipline Response to Bullying Behavior

A fourth major theme that emerged from the interview process captured how a campus responded with discipline when presented with a bullying report or situation. Throughout all of the interviews, participants explained that the district had policies and procedures in place that the district expected every campus to follow when working with a bullying report. This process involved an in-depth investigation and the completion of a bullying report form to document the process. At the conclusion of the process, if the campus determined bullying occurred, then the campus followed the guidelines in the student handbook in order to determine the level of discipline based on the severity of the incident. Campus principals in all six interviews discussed this process, which indicated that the district appropriately communicated and followed the process. The principal of intermediate campus A illustrated this process when explaining,

All reports are taken seriously and are investigated through the bullying report form especially as it relates to race, ethnicity, sex and religion. We determine if it is or is not bullying and if it is a record goes into system.

During the interview process, principals of the three campus levels differed with regard to how campuses handled the actual discipline portion in contexts with their local handbook and guidelines. The district-wide handbook does allow for campus discretion at each level, and in some cases, campuses had a different way of administering discipline to students. At the elementary level, each campus made sure parents were involved in the process and made an effort towards peer remediation. The principal of elementary campus B indicated,

Teasing – conversation between two kids with administration, counselor, and teacher - level 1 Peer remediation – depending on age of child. Severe – parents involved and they understand we do not accept this on our campus at all. Social media is also an issue that makes its way onto campus. If it is outside of school but not making it to campus, then we work with parents but it is not disciplined on campus until it starts to impact campus.

At the intermediate level, the principal of campus B explained their approach to discipline;

Our first step is to make sure the kids know where to go. We emphasis from day one in our discipline meetings and announcements that if you feel you have been bullied or harassed to immediately go to an adult. It does not have to be an administrator; it can be whoever the student feels comfortable going to. At that

point the student is called in and we begin to investigate [and] talk to parents to get them involved. Depending on whether it is deemed bullying or harassment, we will address the student who did the harassment or bullying according to the student handbook. Depending on the level or severity, most often it would be along the lines of a level 2. If it is a one-time incident, then we look at it upon those lines. School discipline is up to OSS or alternative school placement.

The district allows sanctions including out-of-school suspension (OSS) and alternative school placement at the intermediate level while the elementary level campuses do not have access to these sanctions. In the same way, intermediate campuses do not focus on peer remediation and parent intervention to the same degree that the elementary campuses do.

Responses at the high school level mirrored the intermediate responses but did not include parental involvement or peer remediation as one of the interventions. For high school B the campus principal indicated that

Once a student or parent reports a bullying incident, the administration have steps and procedures to follow to investigate. In short, they follow the form. Discipline for the student can be anything from a conference with the student if minor all the way to expulsion if serious enough.

The other high school principal responded by stating,

We normally ensure that students know how to report it to the proper people. It is also important for our teachers to recognize how to report issues. Administration knowing how to investigate and give proper responses is also critical.

Remediation programs or discipline depends on level [and goes] from parent conference to disciplinary actions such as [in-school suspension] or [daily alternative education program] if it is severe. If it is involving more than one student, is it over time or targeted.

Overall, campuses disciplined students followed for bullying related incidents in ways that followed district procedures and protocols. Campuses, however, retained some campus-based decision-making ability with regard to appropriate disciplinary actions depending on the severity of the offense and other mitigating factors. Also, as the students got older and moved from elementary school to high school, the level of parental involvement in the remediation process diminished drastically. Campus also put less emphasis on remediation as opposed to only receiving a disciplinary consequence in higher grades.

Quantitative Findings

I obtained quantitative data from the quality survey conducted by the school district on a yearly basis that measures everything from school safety to overall school culture of the building. The district gave the quality survey to every 5th, 8th, and 12th grade student, teacher, and parent throughout every campus. The survey asks questions regarding campus atmosphere, teaching environment, and safety. The district has completed the survey on a yearly basis for the last 10 years, and I only used questions related to bullying, student safety, and campus atmosphere for this study.

I completed the analysis of the quantitative data by examining descriptive analysis statistics, inferential statistics, and interval data. In addition, I used SSPS to

conduct a basic two-tail Pearson correlation involving the selected survey items with respect to bullying prevention methods. As explained in Chapter 3, I calculated the correlation by taking the average per survey item from the quality survey based on a Likert scale and correlated these scores with the discipline and individual items. I also calculated the overall safety, an aggregate of all individual items within the safety and well-being dimension from the survey correlated with the discipline data that was provided by the district. A 6-point Likert scale was used to assess questions tailored to different groups based on the audience. Tables 2, 3 and 4 show the comparison data for discipline incidents related to bullying and harassment for the district from 2005 – 2016. These data also reflect the breakdown of discipline incidents by level (elementary, intermediate, high school) and show a comparison of the six campuses that participated in the study. The data tables only represent the actual discipline incidents reported and captured by campus and district administration compared to the overall enrollment per year. Bullying or discipline incidents not reported or captured in the data system are not reflected on the following tables.

Table 2

Number of Discipline Incidents

Number of Incidents	2005 -06	2006 -07	2007 -08	2008 -09	2009 -10	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16*
District Data	571	631	489	446	390	634	500	324	289	291	141
All District Elementary Campuses Data	130	120	150	130	75	140	94	60	44	29	17
Individual Elementary Campus A	8	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Individual Elementary Campus B	9	4	9	10	14	6	3	0	0	1	5
All District Intermediate Campuses Data	332	337	161	138	156	248	170	93	111	92	40
Individual Intermediate Campus A	16	27	7	2	2	6	4	2	3	14	1
Individual Intermediate Campus B (Title I Campus)	67	90	13	42	40	73	48	42	19	12	14
All District High School Campuses Data	99	144	154	136	101	184	170	128	100	156	75
Individual High School Campus A	16	48	29	25	23	11	16	12	5	14	11
Individual High School Campus B (Title I Campus)	55	58	86	69	49	121	88	86	74	114	51

Table 3

Overall Student Enrollment

Overall Student Enrollment	2005 -06	2006 -07	2007 -08	2008 -09	2009 -10	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16*
District Data	39,0 89	41,3 17	42,5 63	43,5 13	44,5 96	44,9 30	45,7 87	46,7 19	47,8 47	49,0 69	50,1 26
All District Elementary Campuses Data	17,6 17	18,9 24	19,1 73	20,0 46	20,6 95	21,0 12	21,2 91	21,6 21	22,2 23	22,7 93	23,4 44
Individual Elementary Campus A	607	689	736	699	690	689	694	567	563	587	640
Individual Elementary Campus B	675	690	768	797	852	747	720	721	711	751	736
All District Intermediate Campuses Data	9,10 7	9,42 4	9,67 4	10,0 73	10,2 35	12,2 40	10,4 78	10,9 00	11,0 81	11,2 74	11,3 87
Individual Intermediate Campus A	1,04 7	1,06 5	1,00 0	988	968	1,19 4	1,22 4	1,29 1	1,26 8	1,34 7	1,37 7
Individual Intermediate Campus B (Title I Campus)	1,17 4	1,23 4	1,26 7	1,28 3	1,32 9	1,41 8	1,41 2	1,43 7	1,45 5	1,42 2	1,50 4
All District High School Campuses Data	12,3 65	12,9 69	13,1 76	13,3 94	13,6 66	13,6 78	14,0 18	14,1 98	14,5 43	15,0 02	15,2 95
Individual High School Campus A	2,63 4	2,94 0	3,02 0	3,10 6	3,15 6	3,13 2	3,16 2	3,24 5	3,27 9	3,23 1	3,34 7
Individual High School Campus B (Title I Campus)	3,22 5	3,49 9	2,96 1	2,91 5	2,99 7	3,12 2	2,94 4	3,14 9	3,15 9	3,77 3	3,77 6

Table 4

Percent of Discipline Incidents Compared to Overall Student Enrollment

Percent of Discipline Incidents Compared to Overall Student Enrollment	2005 -06	2006 -07	2007 -08	2008 -09	2009 -10	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16*
District Data	1.46 %	1.53 %	1.15 %	1.02 %	0.87 %	1.41 %	1.09 %	0.69 %	0.60 %	0.59 %	0.28 %
All District Elementary Campuses Data	0.74 %	0.63 %	0.76 %	0.65 %	0.36 %	0.67 %	0.44 %	0.28 %	0.20 %	0.13 %	0.07 %
Individual Elementary Campus A	1.32 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.29 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
Individual Elementary Campus B	1.33 %	0.58 %	1.17 %	1.25 %	1.64 %	0.80 %	0.42 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.13 %	0.68 %
All District Intermediate Campuses Data	3.65 %	3.58 %	1.66 %	1.37 %	1.52 %	2.03 %	1.62 %	0.85 %	1.00 %	0.82 %	0.35 %
Individual Intermediate Campus A	1.53 %	2.54 %	0.70 %	0.20 %	0.21 %	0.50 %	0.33 %	0.15 %	0.24 %	1.03 %	0.07 %
Individual Intermediate Campus B (Title I Campus)	5.70 %	7.29 %	1.02 %	3.27 %	3.01 %	5.14 %	3.40 %	2.92 %	1.31 %	0.84 %	0.93 %
All District High School Campuses Data	0.80 %	1.11 %	1.17 %	1.02 %	0.74 %	1.35 %	1.21 %	0.90 %	0.69 %	1.04 %	0.49 %
Individual High School Campus A	0.61 %	1.63 %	0.96 %	0.80 %	0.73 %	0.35 %	0.51 %	0.37 %	0.15 %	0.43 %	0.33 %
Individual High School Campus B (Title I Campus)	1.71 %	1.66 %	2.90 %	2.34 %	1.63 %	3.88 %	2.99 %	2.73 %	2.34 %	3.02 %	1.35 %

As Tables 2, 3 and 4 show, the district as a whole, along with the three levels being broken down, experienced an overall increase in bullying behavior between 2005-2010. However, from 2010-2015, the focus period of the bullying prevention program, the district had a large decrease in the number of overall incidents in bullying and harassment behaviors. The district overall went from 634 disciplinary incidents in 2010-2011 involving harassment or bullying out of 44,930 students (1.41%) to 291 disciplinary incidents out of 49,069 students (.59%) in 2014-2015. Considering individual levels, elementary, intermediate, and high schools followed this decreasing trend with decreases from 140 (.67%) to 29 (.13%) for elementary, 248 (2.03%) to 92 (.82%) for intermediate, and 184 (1.35%) to 156 (1.04%) for high schools. Finally, each campus showed a pattern of decline similar to the overall groups with the exception of Elementary A and High School A whose incidents numbers were already at zero or sufficiently low to expect incident decline.

Parent Survey Results

In order to make a comparison of how the quality survey results compared to the overall discipline for the district, I constructed tables to show how parents, staff, and students scored on the quality survey and how these results compared to the discipline data provided in Tables 2, 3 and 4. Table 5 reflects the questions and average scale scores for each question for parents who participated in the survey compared with those campuses that participated in the study.

Table 5

Student Safety and Well-Being Data from Parent Survey

District Overall Mean for Dimension by Question	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Question # 1 (My child feels safe in school)	4.07	4.87	4.71	4.76	4.80	5.14	4.91	4.89	5.10	5.01
Question # 2 (If my child became ill or injured at school, he/she would get the care needed)	4.15	5.10	5.16	4.98	5.02	5.05	5.11	5.18	5.23	5.16
Question # 3 (Most of the students at my school are well-behaved)	3.57	4.38	4.28	4.19	4.30	4.66	4.42	4.35	4.49	4.52
Question # 4 (The school handles discipline problems quickly and fairly)	3.38	4.39	4.50	4.44	4.46	4.96	4.53	4.55	4.67	4.65
Question # 5 (Gangs and bullying are a problem at my child's school)	3.38	4.19	1.76	1.76	1.90	1.23	1.63	1.65	3.24	3.45
Question # 6 (My child's school is orderly and supports learning)	4.02	4.86	4.81	4.88	4.93	5.01	5.00	5.08	5.11	5.00
Question # 7 (My child's teachers really care about and respect the students)	3.84	4.73	4.59	4.65	4.60	4.67	4.86	4.94	4.95	4.85
Question # 8 (I feel my child is free from threats, bullying, and harassment at school)	3.59	4.31	4.36	4.45	4.86	4.78	4.52	4.51	4.72	4.53
Question # 9 (Teacher(s) provide extra help when my child needs it)	3.69	4.53	4.37	4.56	4.66	4.84	4.85	4.85	4.81	4.83

As seen in Table 5, data showed mixed results between growth and decline in the overall average Likert scores between 2010-2011 and 2014-2015 depending on the question asked. In particular, questions focused on bullying and students feeling safe (Questions 1,3,4, and 8) showed an overall decline throughout the implementation of the program.

Parent Survey Results and Correlation to Discipline Data

In order to gain a better understanding of how the survey results compare with the discipline data from Tables 2, 3 and 4, I included the correlation results by survey question in Table 6. I conducted a correlation to determine if a relationship existed between the survey questions and the discipline trend in the district. The correlations presented on Table 6 show the averages over time for the individual survey questions compared against the average discipline over time for the district based on Table 2, 3 and 4. In addition, Table 6 shows an overall correlation for the entire dimension of questions on the survey.

Table 6

Correlation Results Between Parent Survey and Discipline Incidents

Correlation results between district wide parent survey responses and overall school discipline incidents related to bullying and harassment	District	
	Pearson Coefficient	Significant Level
Total Dimension	-.015	.436
Question # 1 (My child feels safe in school)	-.005	.776
Question # 2 (If my child became ill or injured at school, he/she would get the care needed)	-.037	.053
Question # 3 (Most of the students at my school are well behaved)	.015	.437
Question # 4 (The school handles discipline problems quickly and fairly)	.018	.360
Question # 5 (Gangs and bullying are a problem at my child's school)	.044*	.021
Question # 6 (My child's school is orderly and supports learning)	-.041*	.035
Question # 7 (My child's teachers really care about and respect the students)	-.056**	.004
Question # 8 (I feel my child is free from threats, bullying, and harassment at school)	-.024	.216
Question # 9 (Teacher(s) provide extra help when my child needs it)	-.034	.081

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As showcased in Table 6, data for three questions (questions 5, 6, and 7) showed a strong correlation which indicates that the parent responses for three questions directly relate to the discipline trend of the district. Consequently, these three questions from the survey also showed an increase or stability in the average Likert score over time.

Staff Survey Results

Tables 7, 8, and 9 below reflect the questions and average scale scores for each question answered by staff that participated in the survey compared with those campuses that participated in the study at all three levels (elementary, intermediate, and high school).

Table 7

Safety and Well-Being Dimension Elementary Staff Survey

Elementary School Mean for Dimension By Question	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Question # 1 (Most of the students in our school are well behaved)										
District Data Overall	3.65	4.25	4.48	4.43	4.34	4.47	4.35	4.48	4.50	4.36
Elementary A	4.04	4.96	4.75	5.03	4.87	4.79	4.95	4.83	4.97	4.96
Elementary B	4.17	4.46	4.14	4.45	4.33	4.86	4.53	4.79	4.96	4.98
Question # 2 (Discipline problems at our school are handled quickly and fairly)										
District Data Overall	3.37	4.17	4.48	4.37	4.88	4.41	4.33	4.49	4.51	4.33
Elementary A	3.76	4.18	5.00	5.00	5.04	4.56	5.09	5.14	4.95	4.94
Elementary B	3.17	4.15	3.23	3.83	5.10	4.50	4.08	4.75	4.96	4.89
Question # 3 (Gangs and bullying are not a problem at our school)										
District Data Overall	3.05	4.05	4.27	4.28	4.85	4.23	4.26	4.46	4.58	4.51
Elementary A	3.41	4.75	4.57	4.31	4.85	4.26	4.73	5.03	5.13	5.26
Elementary B	4.13	4.76	4.32	4.76	4.84	5.00	4.83	4.93	4.85	5.05
Question # 4 (Our school environment is orderly and supports learning)										
District Data Overall	3.89	4.68	4.90	4.86	4.48	4.95	4.79	4.90	4.98	4.81
Elementary A	4.42	5.22	5.33	5.44	4.51	5.17	5.59	5.52	5.52	5.59
Elementary B	4.20	5.02	4.38	4.97	4.44	5.43	4.83	5.21	5.44	5.32
Question # 5 (Teachers give students extra help when they need it)										
District Data Overall	4.51	5.31	5.37	5.37	5.24	5.47	5.45	5.47	5.51	5.43
Elementary A	4.69	5.70	5.60	5.43	4.89	5.50	5.36	5.62	5.63	5.69
Elementary B	4.45	5.27	5.08	5.29	5.20	5.29	5.22	5.25	5.38	5.64

Table 8

Safety and Well-Being Dimension Intermediate Staff Survey

Intermediate School Mean for Dimension By Question	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Question # 1 (Most of the students in our school are well behaved)										
District Data Overall	3.65	4.25	4.48	4.43	4.34	4.47	4.35	4.48	4.50	4.36
Intermediate A	3.73	4.05	4.78	4.33	4.07	4.07	4.35	4.29	4.54	4.13
Intermediate B	2.94	3.14	3.65	4.02	4.12	4.49	3.38	4.38	3.68	3.61
Question # 2 (Discipline problems at our school are handled quickly and fairly)										
District Data Overall	3.37	4.17	4.48	4.37	4.88	4.41	4.33	4.49	4.51	4.33
Intermediate A	3.07	3.84	4.53	4.59	4.77	3.79	4.17	4.39	4.17	3.98
Intermediate B	3.10	3.71	3.88	4.35	4.35	4.57	3.74	4.58	4.08	3.29
Question # 3 (Gangs and bullying are not a problem at our school)										
District Data Overall	3.05	4.05	4.27	4.28	4.85	4.23	4.26	4.46	4.58	4.51
Intermediate A	2.27	3.11	4.10	4.00	4.67	3.57	4.04	4.14	4.00	4.00
Intermediate B	2.17	2.63	3.05	3.56	4.28	3.43	3.00	4.13	3.64	3.43
Question # 4 (Our school environment is orderly and supports learning)										
District Data Overall	3.89	4.68	4.90	4.86	4.48	4.95	4.79	4.90	4.98	4.81
Intermediate A	3.76	4.60	5.02	4.94	4.61	4.64	4.69	5.00	4.82	4.61
Intermediate B	3.46	3.95	4.11	4.65	3.69	5.02	3.97	4.97	4.55	4.06
Question # 5 (Teachers give students extra help when they need it)										
District Data Overall	4.51	5.31	5.37	5.37	5.24	5.47	5.45	5.47	5.51	5.43
Intermediate A	4.56	5.40	5.39	5.37	4.93	5.67	5.43	5.71	5.42	5.37
Intermediate B	4.64	5.12	5.29	5.39	4.19	5.56	5.53	5.62	5.57	5.40

Table 9

Safety and Well-Being Dimension High School Staff Survey

High School Mean for Dimension By Question	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Question # 1 (Most of the students in our school are well behaved)										
District Data Overall	3.65	4.25	4.48	4.43	4.34	4.47	4.35	4.48	4.50	4.36
High School A	4.11	4.68	4.69	4.78	4.69	4.68	4.35	4.95	4.79	5.07
High School B	2.84	2.96	3.26	3.38	3.67	3.78	3.29	3.35	3.79	3.47
Question # 2 (Discipline problems at our school are handled quickly and fairly)										
District Data Overall	3.37	4.17	4.48	4.37	4.88	4.41	4.33	4.49	4.51	4.33
High School A	3.60	4.59	4.61	4.73	4.92	4.64	4.30	4.91	4.88	5.14
High School B	2.58	2.67	3.23	3.29	4.17	3.95	3.46	3.29	3.67	3.49
Question # 3 (Gangs and bullying are not a problem at our school)										
District Data Overall	3.05	4.05	4.27	4.28	4.85	4.23	4.26	4.46	4.58	4.51
High School A	2.93	4.27	4.12	4.24	4.79	4.31	3.99	4.38	4.31	4.65
High School B	2.08	2.32	2.40	2.63	4.34	3.18	2.98	3.14	3.38	3.27
Question # 4 (Our school environment is orderly and supports learning)										
District Data Overall	3.89	4.68	4.90	4.86	4.48	4.95	4.79	4.90	4.98	4.81
High School A	4.12	4.94	4.89	5.06	4.65	4.95	4.40	5.02	5.18	5.38
High School B	2.88	3.20	3.55	3.60	3.75	4.42	3.75	3.58	4.09	3.92
Question # 5 (Teachers give students extra help when they need it)										
District Data Overall	4.51	5.31	5.37	5.37	5.24	5.47	5.45	5.47	5.51	5.43
High School A	4.55	5.44	5.33	5.26	5.25	5.26	5.40	5.37	5.24	5.37
High School B	4.62	5.20	5.09	4.98	5.24	5.25	5.14	5.25	5.18	5.18

As shown in the previous tables, data showed mixed results between growth and decline in the overall average Likert score between 2010-2011 and 2014-2015 depending on the question considered and the campus level of the staff responding.

Staff Survey Results and Correlation to Discipline Data

Tables 10, 11, and 12 below represent the faculty and staff across each level of the organization (elementary, intermediate, high school) who completed the quality survey across the district compared to the campuses that participated in the study. The tables below show each level (elementary, intermediate, high school) separately and the correlations as they relate to each question individually. Correlations which are significant at the .01 level have two stars, and those items that have one star have a correlation which is significant at the .05 level.

Table 10

Correlation Results Elementary Staff

	All Elementary Schools	Elementary A	Elementary B
Correlation results between elementary staff survey responses and overall school discipline incidents related to bullying and harassment	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient
Total Dimension	-.048**	-.027	-.189**
Question # 1 (Most of the students in our school are well behaved)	.043**	.031	-.200**
Question # 2 (Discipline problems at our school are handled quickly and fairly)	-.044**	.030	-.079
Question # 3 (Gangs and bullying are not a problem at our school)	-.076**	.057	-.268**
Question # 4 (Our school environment is orderly and supports learning)	-.068**	-.035	-.098
Question # 5 (Teachers give students extra help when they need it)	-.056**	-.179**	-.073

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 11

Correlation Results Intermediate Staff

	All Intermediate Schools	Intermediate A	Intermediate B
Correlation results between intermediate staff survey responses and overall school discipline incidents related to bullying and harassment	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient
Total Dimension	-.008	-.146**	.029
Question # 1 (Most of the students in our school are well behaved)	.045**	-.116**	.031
Question # 2 (Discipline problems at our school are handled quickly and fairly)	.003	-.142**	.072
Question # 3 (Gangs and bullying are not a problem at our school)	-.047**	-.047	-.007
Question # 4 (Our school environment is orderly and supports learning)	-.025	.013	-.056
Question # 5 (Teachers give students extra help when they need it)	-.021	-.227**	.034

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 12

Correlation Results High School Staff

	All High School Schools	High School A	High School B
Correlation results between high school staff survey responses and overall school discipline incidents related to bullying and harassment	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient
Total Dimension	-.008	.024	.101**
Question # 1 (Most of the students in our school are well behaved)	.051**	.144**	.144**
Question # 2 (Discipline problems at our school are handled quickly and fairly)	-.047**	-.060*	.011
Question # 3 (Gangs and bullying are not a problem at our school)	-.038**	-.090**	.077**
Question # 4 (Our school environment is orderly and supports learning)	.044**	.045	.030
Question # 5 (Teachers give students extra help when they need it)	-.021	.069*	.104**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In reviewing the data for instructional staff across the district, data showed that elementary staff had a strong correlation across campuses but had a weaker correlation for the two campuses that participated in the survey. For the intermediate level, I saw greater correlation across the district versus the two sample campuses with the exception of campus A which had stronger correlations across the board. Finally, at the high school level, data showed alignment across all high schools and the sample campuses with the exception of campus B which had a stronger correlation overall. Overall, the elementary again had the strongest correlation of the three levels.

Student Survey Results

Tables 13, 14, and 15 reflect the questions and average scale scores for each question for students that participated in the survey compared with those campuses that participated in the study at all three levels (elementary, intermediate, and high school). In particular, I presented each question and the average Likert scale response over the time period between 2005-2006 school year and 2014-2015 school year.

Table 13

Student Safety and Well-Being Dimension Elementary Students

Elementary School Mean for Dimension By Question	2005- 06	2006- 07	2007- 08	2008- 09	2009- 10	2010- 11	2011- 12	2012- 13	2013- 14	2014- 15
Question # 1 (I feel safe at school)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.87	4.92	4.89	4.84	4.94	4.97	4.94	4.97	4.98	4.93
Elementary A	3.79	5.30	4.83	4.54	4.65	5.07	4.95	5.30	5.73	5.11
Elementary B	3.59	5.02	5.05	4.84	4.86	5.00	4.84	4.88	4.64	4.90
Question # 2 (The school takes care of me if I get hurt or sick at school)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	4.18	5.13	5.19	5.17	5.13	5.14	5.21	5.16	5.14	5.13
Elementary A	4.09	5.42	4.99	4.88	5.04	5.19	5.21	5.22	5.66	5.24
Elementary B	4.17	5.19	5.18	5.18	5.00	4.86	5.12	5.10	5.08	5.18
Question # 3 (Most of the students in this school are well behaved)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	2.77	3.68	3.65	3.65	3.71	3.81	3.81	3.91	3.87	3.81
Elementary A	2.71	4.21	3.30	3.17	3.21	3.80	4.12	3.96	4.91	3.75
Elementary B	2.33	3.74	3.86	3.65	3.78	3.71	3.94	4.08	3.67	3.71
Question # 4 (Discipline problems are handled quickly and fairly)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.23	4.17	4.19	4.23	4.26	4.35	4.40	4.47	4.49	4.44
Elementary A	3.23	4.52	3.99	4.04	3.83	4.41	4.46	4.50	5.26	4.40
Elementary B	3.06	4.17	4.43	4.07	4.18	4.18	4.31	4.49	4.35	4.19
Question # 5 (Bullying and gangs are a problem at my school)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.30	3.36	3.40	3.36	3.36	3.33	3.24	3.38	4.57	4.46
Elementary A	2.99	4.05	2.86	2.77	3.15	3.34	3.48	3.74	5.54	4.98
Elementary B	3.32	3.72	3.64	3.56	3.35	3.41	3.70	3.92	4.40	4.49
Question # 6 (I can freely express my opinions or concerns to my teachers)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.44	4.10	4.23	4.24	4.25	4.35	4.48	4.53	4.52	4.45
Elementary A	3.88	4.31	4.03	4.08	3.92	4.39	4.22	4.62	5.23	4.49
Elementary B	3.15	4.15	4.32	4.34	4.14	4.26	4.39	4.68	4.61	4.35
Question # 7 (I can talk to my teachers, counselors, or other adults at school when I need to)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.96	4.64	4.72	4.78	4.77	4.89	4.93	4.99	4.99	4.87
Elementary A	4.00	4.79	4.55	4.61	4.63	4.94	4.83	5.29	5.58	5.03
Elementary B	3.73	4.72	4.91	4.73	4.92	4.74	4.93	4.70	4.87	4.53
Question # 8 (My teachers care about me and treat me with respect)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.98	5.07	5.07	5.06	5.10	5.13	5.18	5.23	5.23	5.21
Elementary A	4.29	5.60	4.99	4.99	4.80	5.16	4.97	5.34	5.60	5.29
Elementary B	3.89	5.11	5.18	5.02	4.81	4.99	5.23	5.32	5.25	4.99
Question # 9 (Students get along with each other pretty well at my school)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.04	4.05	4.05	3.95	3.94	4.08	4.10	4.27	4.32	4.27
Elementary A	3.08	4.54	3.90	3.79	3.56	4.08	4.29	4.40	5.04	4.54
Elementary B	2.65	4.11	4.21	4.03	4.01	4.22	4.28	4.30	4.03	4.24
Question # 10 (My teachers give me extra help when I need it)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.91	4.85	4.79	4.87	4.89	5.03	5.00	5.03	5.11	5.01
Elementary A	4.01	5.29	4.58	4.75	4.68	4.94	4.87	4.97	5.74	5.18
Elementary B	3.59	4.80	4.90	4.65	4.78	4.70	4.91	4.93	4.90	4.87
Question # 11 (I get help from counselors in selecting courses and programs)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.82	4.44	4.53	4.55	4.57	4.76	4.76	4.83	4.79	4.59
Elementary A	3.97	4.34	4.37	4.32	4.24	4.85	4.98	5.31	5.53	5.00
Elementary B	3.60	4.74	4.89	4.78	4.84	4.63	4.94	4.72	4.92	4.20
Question # 12 (I enjoy coming to school)										
All Elementary Schools Combined	3.18	4.08	3.97	4.03	4.06	4.43	4.28	4.35	4.37	4.34
Elementary A	3.20	4.52	3.81	3.73	3.69	4.43	4.29	4.48	4.97	4.35
Elementary B	3.03	4.42	4.11	3.97	3.78	4.73	3.92	4.54	4.23	4.15

Table 14

Student Safety and Well-Being Dimension Intermediate Students

Intermediate School Mean for Dimension By Question	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Question # 1 (I feel safe at school)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	3.17	3.88	3.95	3.90	4.08	4.12	4.10	3.95	3.87	3.90
Intermediate A	3.36	4.20	4.32	4.38	4.53	4.20	4.36	4.06	4.04	4.21
Intermediate B	2.92	3.75	3.56	3.63	3.92	4.14	4.08	3.95	3.82	3.98
Question # 2 (I get appropriate care if I get hurt or sick at school)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	3.40	4.07	4.12	4.02	4.14	4.26	4.21	4.12	3.97	3.92
Intermediate A	3.38	4.31	4.39	4.33	4.35	4.17	4.20	4.35	4.27	4.17
Intermediate B	3.35	3.97	3.71	3.80	3.92	4.19	3.96	3.85	3.72	3.98
Question # 3 (Most of the students in this school are well behaved)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	2.26	2.71	2.85	2.79	2.85	2.98	2.85	2.74	2.61	2.61
Intermediate A	2.48	3.03	3.14	3.09	3.17	2.83	2.78	2.94	2.81	2.86
Intermediate B	2.09	2.44	2.44	2.47	2.63	3.16	2.66	2.54	2.60	2.53
Question # 4 (Discipline problems are handled quickly and fairly)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	2.60	3.16	3.14	3.18	3.29	3.28	3.25	3.29	3.24	3.20
Intermediate A	2.54	3.24	3.43	3.47	3.66	3.36	3.44	3.73	3.87	3.38
Intermediate B	2.66	3.02	3.00	3.02	3.18	3.34	3.30	3.09	3.26	3.26
Question # 5 (Gangs and bullying are a problem at my school)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	2.53	2.78	2.84	2.92	2.03	2.94	3.03	3.14	4.05	4.06
Intermediate A	2.65	2.60	2.93	3.39	3.47	2.80	3.04	2.87	4.12	4.24
Intermediate B	2.40	2.74	2.73	2.74	2.51	2.91	2.71	3.00	4.25	4.07
Question # 6 (I can freely express my opinions or concerns to my teachers)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	2.79	3.31	3.30	3.28	3.38	3.39	3.42	3.35	3.22	3.24
Intermediate A	2.71	3.35	3.37	3.28	3.45	3.40	3.41	3.46	3.34	3.37
Intermediate B	2.82	3.34	3.27	3.23	3.39	3.42	3.46	3.47	3.43	3.51
Question # 7 (I can talk to my teachers, counselors, or other adults at school when I need to)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	3.26	3.87	3.94	3.92	4.02	3.97	4.02	3.96	3.87	3.78
Intermediate A	3.26	3.99	4.10	4.06	4.19	4.01	3.99	4.30	4.22	4.02
Intermediate B	3.39	3.34	3.77	4.07	3.92	4.00	4.07	3.84	3.77	3.84
Question # 8 (My teachers care about me and treat me with respect)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	3.28	3.92	3.92	3.91	4.07	4.02	4.09	3.98	3.9	3.91
Intermediate A	3.34	4.24	3.88	3.89	4.34	3.90	4.14	4.25	4.07	4.05
Intermediate B	3.42	4.04	3.77	4.08	4.16	4.33	4.26	4.14	4.11	4.12
Question # 9 (Students get along with each other pretty well at my school)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	2.73	3.28	3.46	3.40	3.42	3.51	3.52	3.34	3.31	3.30
Intermediate A	2.79	3.63	3.82	3.74	3.83	3.58	3.53	3.44	3.38	3.57
Intermediate B	2.76	3.13	3.16	3.24	3.27	3.73	3.39	3.29	3.40	3.30
Question # 10 (My teachers give me extra help when I need it)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	3.36	3.99	3.99	3.99	4.16	4.06	4.14	4.00	3.99	4.06
Intermediate A	3.33	4.00	3.88	4.04	4.27	3.93	4.05	3.98	3.91	4.03
Intermediate B	3.48	4.29	3.95	4.19	4.39	4.33	4.19	4.31	4.29	4.31
Question # 11 (I get help from counselors in selecting courses and programs)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	3.44	3.99	4.15	4.19	4.21	4.13	4.21	4.23	4.19	4.06
Intermediate A	3.39	4.17	4.46	4.28	4.14	4.05	4.02	4.59	4.36	4.39
Intermediate B	3.39	4.01	4.26	4.43	3.95	4.19	4.12	4.22	3.92	4.05
Question # 12 (I enjoy coming to school)										
All Intermediate Schools Combined	2.78	3.25	3.32	3.34	3.46	3.43	3.44	3.29	3.15	3.15
Intermediate A	2.59	3.43	3.17	3.24	3.56	3.39	3.47	3.45	3.15	3.22
Intermediate B	2.92	3.33	3.13	3.41	3.61	3.66	3.46	3.34	3.58	3.48

Table 15

Student Safety and Well-Being Dimension High School Students

High School Mean for Dimension By Question	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Question # 1 (I feel safe at school)										
All High Schools Combined	3.22	3.86	3.92	3.84	3.76	3.77	3.91	3.79	4.11	4.01
High School A	3.49	4.25	4.29	3.92	3.73	3.61	3.84	3.88	4.33	4.07
High School B	2.92	2.99	3.22	3.45	3.65	3.49	3.72	3.48	3.50	3.46
Question # 2 (I get appropriate care if I get hurt or sick at school)										
All High Schools Combined	3.29	3.87	3.98	3.92	3.99	4.11	4.05	3.96	3.98	3.79
High School A	3.46	4.01	4.19	3.97	4.03	4.21	3.86	3.88	4.15	3.80
High School B	3.05	3.46	3.78	3.89	3.99	3.91	3.84	3.69	3.44	3.30
Question # 3 (Most of the students in this school are well behaved)										
All High Schools Combined	2.79	2.93	3.01	2.96	3.12	3.36	3.14	2.94	3.02	2.93
High School A	3.10	3.46	3.54	3.31	3.48	3.69	3.23	3.02	3.27	3.10
High School B	2.41	2.25	2.33	2.46	2.78	2.86	2.93	2.32	2.60	2.49
Question # 4 (Discipline problems are handled quickly and fairly)										
All High Schools Combined	2.85	3.25	3.24	3.25	3.36	3.47	3.40	3.30	3.50	3.37
High School A	3.05	3.40	3.36	3.27	3.33	3.38	3.17	3.16	3.52	3.33
High School B	2.70	2.99	3.10	3.12	3.43	3.35	3.24	3.14	3.14	3.07
Question # 5 (Gangs and bullying are a problem at my school)										
All High Schools Combined	2.84	2.85	2.93	2.98	3.09	2.99	2.92	3.19	4.47	4.40
High School A	3.12	3.44	3.45	3.40	3.21	3.19	2.91	3.40	4.77	4.61
High School B	2.35	2.04	2.15	2.20	2.66	2.19	2.24	2.48	3.96	4.01
Question # 6 (I can freely express my opinions or concerns to my teachers)										
All High Schools Combined	3.02	3.52	3.59	3.45	3.57	3.63	3.61	3.42	3.51	3.32
High School A	3.18	3.65	3.75	3.51	3.59	3.65	3.45	3.35	3.54	3.27
High School B	3.01	3.41	3.60	3.43	3.75	3.61	3.60	3.38	3.35	3.38
Question # 7 (I can talk to my teachers, counselors, or other adults at school when I need to)										
All High Schools Combined	3.23	3.80	3.87	3.77	3.87	4.03	4.04	3.85	3.92	3.73
High School A	3.25	3.70	4.08	3.87	3.80	4.12	3.88	3.83	3.92	3.62
High School B	3.28	3.77	3.71	3.70	3.84	3.94	3.88	3.75	3.54	3.46
Question # 8 (My teachers care about me and treat me with respect)										
All High Schools Combined	3.24	3.80	3.96	3.79	3.91	3.99	3.94	3.85	3.89	3.72
High School A	3.31	3.85	4.09	3.86	3.88	4.00	3.85	3.85	3.88	3.74
High School B	3.25	3.63	3.91	3.79	4.12	3.97	3.97	3.95	3.70	3.70
Question # 9 (Students get along with each other pretty well at my school)										
All High Schools Combined	3.14	3.54	3.58	3.54	3.65	3.76	3.67	3.47	3.64	3.46
High School A	3.26	3.77	3.91	3.68	3.70	3.78	3.55	3.47	3.71	3.47
High School B	2.88	3.03	3.08	3.14	3.47	3.43	3.50	3.09	3.28	3.11
Question # 10 (My teachers give me extra help when I need it)										
All High Schools Combined	3.34	3.84	3.96	3.82	3.98	4.02	4.02	3.92	3.95	3.82
High School A	3.47	3.99	4.16	3.94	3.94	4.01	3.79	3.91	3.93	3.83
High School B	3.30	3.62	3.80	3.80	4.27	4.15	4.04	3.93	3.83	3.78
Question # 11 (I get help from counselors in selecting courses and programs)										
All High Schools Combined	3.44	4.04	4.04	4.16	4.23	4.30	4.42	4.20	4.16	4.01
High School A	3.32	3.75	3.91	3.93	4.01	4.34	4.09	4.01	4.20	3.90
High School B	3.65	4.41	4.13	4.29	4.28	4.28	4.37	4.24	3.79	3.80
Question # 12 (I enjoy coming to school)										
All High Schools Combined	2.74	3.21	3.26	3.1	3.36	3.33	3.51	3.07	2.97	2.96
High School A	2.81	3.22	3.21	2.87	3.28	3.12	3.27	2.92	2.66	2.8
High School B	2.83	3.41	3.47	3.4	3.53	3.43	3.53	3.16	3	2.98

In reviewing the overall scale average for each group recorded from 2005-2015, every question in every category across every group showed an increase in score.

Although there is fluctuation between the individual years, the data holistically show that the overall confidence and satisfaction with school safety, harassment, and bullying has increased over time.

Student Survey Results and Correlation to Discipline Data

In addition to the scale score average and overall discipline incidents totals, the data presented in Tables 16, 17, and 18 represent the overall correlation between the data from the survey and discipline as it relates to students for all three levels. The Pearson correlation for this study involved the selected survey items and dimensions (safety and well-being) with respect to the number of incidents of harassment/bullying. Correlations varied in significance and intensity by group. I did not include the 2005-2006 school year in the analysis because it used a 5-point Likert scale compared to the 6-point Likert interval scale used during other school years considered. Furthermore, I did not include the 2015-2016 school year because the district only had available discipline data through 12/10/15.

The group below are elementary students in grade 5, intermediate students in grade 8, and high school students in grade 12 who completed the quality survey across the district compared to the campuses that participated in the study. The tables below show each level (elementary, intermediate, high school) separately and the correlation as it is related to each question individually.

Table 16

Correlation Results Elementary Students

	All Elementary Schools	Elementary A	Elementary B
Correlation results between elementary student survey responses and overall school discipline incidents related to bullying and harassment	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient
Total Dimension	-.062**	-.148**	-.041
Question # 1 (I feel safe at school)	-.014*	-.120**	.028
Question # 2 (The school takes care of me if I get hurt or sick at school)	.008	-.090**	-.011
Question # 3 (Most of the students in this school are well behaved)	-.039**	-.141**	-.022
Question # 4 (Discipline problems are handled quickly and fairly)	-.056**	-.070*	-.035
Question # 5 (Bullying and gangs are a problem at my school)	-.021**	-.141**	-.035
Question # 6 (I can freely express my opinions or concerns to my teachers)	-.060**	-.058	-.073*
Question # 7 (I can talk to my teachers, counselors, or other adults at school when I need to)	-.045**	-.072*	.031
Question # 8 (My teachers care about me and treat me with respect)	-.042**	-.051	-.078*
Question # 9 (Students get along with each other pretty well at my school)	-.072**	-.105**	-.036
Question # 10 (My teachers give me extra help when I need it)	-.048**	-.061*	-.042
Question # 11 (I get help from counselors in selecting courses and programs)	-.029**	-.097**	.038
Question # 12 (I enjoy coming to school)	-.049**	-.102**	-.081**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 17

Correlation Results Intermediate Students

	All Intermediate Schools	Intermediate A	Intermediate B
Correlation results between intermediate student survey responses and overall school discipline incidents related to bullying and harassment	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient
Total Dimension	.008	-.033	.026
Question # 1 (I feel safe at school)	.012	-.027	.027
Question # 2 (I get appropriate care if I get hurt or sick at school)	.031**	-.007	.053**
Question # 3 (Most of the students in this school are well behaved)	.035**	.005	.049**
Question # 4 (Discipline problems are handled quickly and fairly)	-.007	-.084**	-.007
Question # 5 (Gangs and bullying are a problem at my school)	-.048**	-.078**	-.046**
Question # 6 (I can freely express my opinions or concerns to my teachers)	.015*	-.008	-.006
Question # 7 (I can talk to my teachers, counselors, or other adults at school when I need to)	.009	-.038*	.042*
Question # 8 (My teachers care about me and treat me with respect)	.007	.013	.038*
Question # 9 (Students get along with each other pretty well at my school)	.010	.008	.019
Question # 10 (My teachers give me extra help when I need it)	-.001	-.007	.028
Question # 11 (I get help from counselors in selecting courses and programs)	-.025**	-.012	.001
Question # 12 (I enjoy coming to school)	.022**	-.001	.014

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 18

Correlation Results High School Students

	All High Schools	High School A	High School B
Correlation results between high school student survey responses and overall school discipline incidents related to bullying and harassment	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient	Pearson Coefficient
Total Dimension	.014	.025	-.025
Question # 1 (I feel safe at school)	-.013	.048**	.013
Question # 2 (I get appropriate care if I get hurt or sick at school)	.012	.003	-.051**
Question # 3 (Most of the students in this school are well behaved)	.038**	.043**	.025
Question # 4 (Discipline problems are handled quickly and fairly)	.001	.002	-.011
Question # 5 (Gangs and bullying are a problem at my school)	-.062**	-.009	.048**
Question # 6 (I can freely express my opinions or concerns to my teachers)	.015*	.042**	-.020
Question # 7 (I can talk to my teachers, counselors, or other adults at school when I need to)	.021**	-.021	-.024
Question # 8 (My teachers care about me and treat me with respect)	.013	.010	-.019
Question # 9 (Students get along with each other pretty well at my school)	.015	.048**	-.008
Question # 10 (My teachers give me extra help when I need it)	.009	.031*	-.008
Question # 11 (I get help from counselors in selecting courses and programs)	.017*	-.077**	-.062**
Question # 12 (I enjoy coming to school)	.042**	.071**	-.058**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In reviewing the data for all students across the district, the overall district and Elementary A had strong correlations between their quality survey results improving and their discipline data declining. Elementary B, however did not show the same type of overall correlation. For the intermediate level, results showed more alignment across the district versus the two sample campuses. Notably, in question 5, which directly speaks to bullying and gang activity, the district saw a positive shift at the intermediate level overall and both sample campuses. Finally, at the high school level, alignment concerning all high schools in comparison to the sample campuses was similar as only one campus did not have a strong correlation for question 5. Overall, the elementary level in general had the strongest correlation of the three levels.

The tables and correlation data show that campuses had mixed results between growth and decline in the overall average Likert score between 2010-2011 and 2014-2015 depending on the question asked. In particular, those questions that focused on bullying and students' feelings of safety (Questions 1,3,4, and 8) showed an overall decline throughout the implementation of the program.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this study was to evaluate a school district that had adopted and implemented a well-known bullying intervention plan/strategy and examine whether the method had been effective. The district's bullying prevention program and selected policies attempted to increase the level of awareness among students and staff of what constitutes acceptable behaviors and how to go about addressing intolerable behaviors. In addition, the district looked to reduce the number of incidents of bullying behavior and to provide better awareness of how to identify bullying and how to address incidents of bullying through the proper channels. In order to evaluate the success of the qualitative and quantitative measures, a Piecewise Growth Model was used to determine the overall effectiveness of the bullying program prior to implementation and after implementation (Heck & Takahashi, 2006). It takes time for new policies or programs to make an impact on an organization; therefore, I looked at several years of data prior to and after implementation to determine if the new program and policies were institutionalized or not (Smith, 1973). This model allowed for me to see trends in discipline data and survey results from both before and after implementation of the school district bullying prevention program.

In addition to the Piecewise Growth Model, I used a Logic Model to provide a visual representation of the overall relationships between inputs (investments), outputs

(what we do and who we reach), and the outcomes (short to long term goals) of the program being evaluated. The logic model allowed for the qualitative coding to link back to the model in order to determine overall effectiveness of the bullying program (Holliday, 2014).

Finally, at the beginning of the research evaluation, I determined that I would need to answer the following questions to determine the overall success of the school district bullying prevention program.

Evaluation Questions

Does the bullying program influence the number of incidents of bullying behavior in a positive way?

Does the bullying program help to provide a safer and more positive environment on campus for students and staff?

Does the bullying program improve the knowledge base of students, parents, and staff on what is considered bullying behavior and what is not?

Does the bullying program improve character development of students?

Does the bullying program improve communication between teachers, students, and parents?

Does the bullying program improve positive interaction throughout the school community overall?

In reviewing the research from Chapter 2 around bullying prevention, districts should always take the necessary first step in developing a successful intervention program by involving parents especially as it relates to the definition of bullying, signs

of bullying activity, and actions to take when parents suspect bullying is taking place (Sawyer, Mishner, Pepler, & Wiener, 2011). In reviewing the data provided in Chapter 4, although the district had a clear definition of bullying and clear procedures in place on how incidents of bullying and harassment are handled, the district needs to do more to help parents understand the definition of bullying. Principals explained that parents at all levels cited incidents of bullying that did not align with the district's definition of bullying. This caused tension and disagreement around how the district handled certain incidents. Parents' responses from the quality survey, however, provided evidence that parents do feel their child is safe at school and that the district address incidents of bullying in a timely manner. Moving forward, the district plans to continue to educate parents and help them advocate for their child. This plan helps to operationalize what Sawyer, Mishner, Pepler, and Wiener (2011) advise, which is a clear education for parents on the clear policies, procedures and signs of bullying behavior. The role of the school counselor can also contribute to bully-free schools (Kolbert, Schultz, & Crothers, 2014). The school counselor can help students by providing resources and creating engaging opportunities for parents. The counselor can also provide consultation with parents and provide opportunities for parents to participate in school-based programs to help better meet the needs of their child. As was mentioned in chapter two, the school counselor can make a significant impact on bullying prevention because they provide the connection for resources, strategies, and supports for parents to help their children navigate bullying incidents.

As a second strategy, districts should always implement effective training of teachers, administrators and students on how to handle and prevent bullying behaviors and situations (Yerger and Gehert 2011). Based on the data provided through interviews with campus principals, bullying training varied from campus to campus for all three groups. Though campuses began with standard training at the beginning of the year, program differed by content and presentation. Elementary campuses and intermediate campuses had programs such as Capturing Kids' Hearts and Nurtured Heart, but high school programs depended largely on student led organizations. The district can build on the positive at the elementary level, where there are multiple programs that are being implemented with fidelity which will help develop student character at a young age. According to the research of Yerger et al. (2011), training and development in the early years helps to foster expectations and standards that are harder to develop in students as they age. In addition to anti-bullying, character education programs focus on how to share difficult information with adults which encourage students to share incidents of bullying rather than not sharing for fear of retaliation (Tenenbaum, Varjas, Meyers, & Parris, 2011).

Finally, districts can work to prevent bullying by having a strong bullying policy and safe school environment. According to Shah (2011), having set expectations around "right" and "wrong" helps students feel more secure on campus and provides teachers and staff with support and structure. Additionally, districts should improve the overall school climate of a school campus as campus climate can have a direct impact on how students feel within the school environment and how they respond to internal and

external stressors (Gerlinger & Wo, 2016). The district for this program evaluation had clear policies and procedures that they disseminated at the district level and the campus level. In reviewing the interviews from campus leadership, principals identified clear procedures and steps taken around how administrators and faculty identified, reported, monitored, and investigated bullying and how campuses issued discipline. In addition, the quality data provided by students, parents, and staff provided evidence that all three groups overall felt safe at campuses throughout the district. Campuses must operationalize the kind of prevention program that not only provides structure and discipline but also work with students who commit bullying offenses on how to reach them from a therapeutic standpoint and not just disciplinary action. Moon, Hwang, and McClucky (2011) addressed this issue by discussing the importance of really focusing on the factors and underlying issues that cause bullying behavior in the first place. Many campuses that focus on character education as a strong foundation for bullying prevention align with the research of Walton (2011) who suggests that districts should focus on programs that address diversity, school safety, and acceptance as the main contributing factors to a successful program.

In addition to a strong prevention program, research shows that districts and campuses need effective disciplinary consequences and policies in order for bullying incidents to be reduced over time (Brown, 2008). According to Brown (2008), campuses should make discipline for bullying behavior timely and consistent. Also, campuses should discuss the behavior with all parties involved to try to find the source of the problem in order to effectively and permanently change the behavior and situation. This

intentionality and consistency, in many cases, can bring about new awareness to bullying behavior. This awareness, in turn, allows for campuses to collect more accurate data and for parents, staff, and community members to better assess what is taking place on their campuses, thereby better informing data gathered from surveys. Campus data along with principal interviews indicated that campuses had strong policies and procedures and that each campus and staff member understood their expectations regarding the reporting and investigating of bullying incidents. This clear focus also allowed for stronger validity of discipline data as no stakeholder had concerns that campuses incidents were not documenting correctly. This focus supports Zubrzycki's (2011) notion that a lack of consistency or perceived mixed messages can make bullying policies confusing and less effective.

Although researchers note the importance of strong policies and procedures, campuses must follow bullying behavior with some form of counseling and parent involvement. Dayton and Dupre (2009) remind administrators and faculty not to accept bullying as normal behavior and, instead, consider it as behavior that requires some form of intervention to help address the possible needs of the student. The program evaluation revealed a lack in this kind of additional support. Elementary campuses indicated that the campuses involved parents and counselors, but at the secondary campuses, procedures mainly focused on discipline. According to Cassidy (2005), discipline that only focuses on the behavior and not the root cause only victimizes the student in the end, especially when the disciplinary action results in the administration removing the student from the educational setting. In addition, Reyneke and Pretorius (2017) indicated

that a lack of support and intervention that considers a student's personal and academic needs could lead to the assumption that student discipline and interaction is only punitive in nature. The district can grow in this area by establishing a focus on parent involvement in order to make sure that campuses resource parents in a way that positive change and models for growth continue outside of the school setting. Dayton and Dupre (2009) argue that parents must have a role in student discipline and support and that failure on the part of parents to participate in the process should be considered neglect. To this collective discipline and engagement approach, schools should reach out to parents to offer support in the disciplinary process (Sawyer, Mishner, Pepler, & Wiener, 2011).

In reviewing the research questions provided at the beginning of this chapter, along with the research provided around successful bullying prevention programs and effective disciplinary consequences, the district accomplished many of the items and goals it had set forth before implementing the program. Specifically, when reviewing discipline data and survey results, the district saw reductions in bullying behavior over time across the district, and all campuses and survey data resulted in correlations that supported the relationship between discipline and level of satisfaction of parents, staff, and students regarding school safety and bullying. Smith (2011) suggests that districts should employ preventative measures because they minimize the number of incidents that take place in the school setting, improve school culture, bring about awareness, and support the character education of students in addition to academics. Based on the evidence from the data collected, the reduction in discipline incidents districtwide

indicates that the programs and preventative measures implemented over time did have a positive impact on reducing the overall number of bullying behaviors taking place on campuses. Aligned with the research, this reduction in discipline incidents would also suggest that district took a positive step by focusing on school climate and culture through the utilization of research-based prevention programs. In order to reduce bullying behavior, schools must improve the overall school climate of a school campus by creating a highly structured school environment where administrators and faculty communicate and enforce rules and guidelines in a fair and timely manner (Gerlinger & Wo, 2016). In addition, as mentioned earlier in chapter two, Ttofi and Farrington (2011) through their meta-analysis of several studies on bullying prevention programs found that, overall, research-based bullying prevention programs implemented with fidelity successfully reduced bullying behavior. This combination of research-based practices and a focus on school culture could provide a strong foundation for the district moving forward.

Implications for Future Research and Leadership Practice

Based on the findings of this evaluation the researchers could engage in several areas of future research that would be beneficial to campuses and districts regarding bullying practices and could build practical leadership development tools to better the overall practice of school leadership.

One line of future research should center on gender, race, and sexual preference as it relates to bullying. This evaluation focused more around general bullying tendencies and campus or districtwide programs to prevent bullying. This research did

not consider how race, gender, and sexual preference may influence bullying and bullying behavior. According to Shah (2011), if policies focus on sexual orientation and race, students tend to show an increased level of safety and security at the campuses they attend. In addition, research lines could include how campuses and districts educate families, students, and staff to address these issues, since it falls into character development and bullying prevention. According to the research from chapter two, the three groups that bullies most often target include students with disabilities, African American students, and students who identify themselves as LGBTQ. In this particular evaluation, the district used character education and preventative programs to address how to treat everyone in general, but the district gave no specific instruction to certain groups which may need more support to better understand how to educate and prevent bullying and harassment. Future research in this area could benefit students, parents, schools, and the community as a whole, especially if schools accept the recommendations from the American Educational Research Association (2013) that suggest bullying can be mitigated through ongoing teacher training, support groups or clubs for students to join, and the inclusion of role models as part of the school curriculum.

A second area for future research should focus on the training and development of school leaders in addressing the symptoms behind bullying practices and overall interactions with students. According to Gini, Pozzoli, & Hauser (2011), bullies lack moral compassion and not, necessarily, the knowledge between right and wrong. This concept, which stems from Rest's model of moral development, focuses on the

behavioral aspect of the action and not on the cognitive piece (Gini, Pozzoli, & Hauser, 2011). In this particular evaluation, school leaders knew the discipline that their policies prescribed for bullying and had a clear understating of the systems and protocols in place. The district did not, however, create trainings for administrators to build better relationships with students and to focus on the whole student as opposed to the discipline actions needed at the time of a particular incident. In addition, a focus on how to use discipline data to ask better questions and reflect on current systems in place is lacking as well. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Administration should follow disciplinary consequences for bullying behavior with some form of counseling and parent involvement. Dayton and Dupre (2009) argue that bullying is not normal behavior, and it requires intervention and support for the student. The relationship a campus administrator builds with students, parents, and community members is a key piece of school leadership, and based on the findings from this evaluation, it is evident that as students move up to intermediate and high school, the level of interaction on a personal basis begins to lesson. Research focused on this aspect of school leadership could present important information and practical ideas to help schools and districts related to bullying prevention and bullying behavior. According to the research, the quality of the relationship between students and staff can indicate whether a school will score the low or high end of disciplinary and violent incidents. In addition, the campus principal sets the climate and culture for the building by being visible and interacting with students and staff in a positive manner which staff can then can emulate (Benbenishty & Estrada, 2009). The importance of relationships between teachers and students is vital in order to

keep discipline and bullying behavior to a minimum (Gerlinger & Wo, 2016). A focus on SWPBS and restorative practices will help to build relationships and teach student-ownership for their behavior and actions. This focus will also allow for an atmosphere that supports surveillance and openness among students, parents and staff to report issues and know that there is a plan on how to work through the situation that supports all parties involved.

Finally, a third area of future research and leadership practice should focus on school structures and personalized learning pathways. Many schools have implemented personalized learning pathways in order to provide curriculum and support for students. The movement is changing how the traditional campus looks and feels. According to the iNACOL (2016), the sole purpose behind personalized learning is to provide students with voice and choice in their learning. The iNACOL, a non-profit organization, devotes its time and resources towards student-centered education. The definition of personalized learning, according to iNACOL is, “Tailoring learning for each student’s strengths, needs, and interests—including enabling student voice in what, how, when, and where they learn to provide flexibility and supports to ensure mastery of the highest standards possible.” Having students take ownership of their own learning and providing pathways for them to have the right learning taking place at the right time changes how the traditional education system works and functions. This new research around this new way of educating students and its unique school setup could affect discipline behavior and bullying incidents as a whole when districts “level” students up and support them at the level they need instead of a “one size fits all” model.

Conclusions

In conclusion, considering discipline data, quality survey data, and qualitative data from interviews with campus principals, in relation to the evaluation questions stated above, the bullying prevention program did have a positive impact on bullying prevention and overall campus safety in the school district. Although the district needs to work on several areas, including a sustained financial support model for the program, the program itself has led to data that reflect positive changes at the district and campus level. Campus principals feel that the programs and dedication to making bullying prevention and character education priorities on their campuses has made a positive difference in their schools. As a district, the focus on bullying and character education programs has shown stronger student-led initiatives which, in turn, has resulted in campus principals feeling that the overall bullying topic is more manageable and that the campuses are making great strides.

Overall, this program evaluation helped to provide clarity and important data that the local school district can use to help make future decisions around their bullying prevention program. Recommendations based on the outcomes of this study address certain areas of the research that provided possible difficulties. These areas of difficulties included funding, ethnicity, gender, and levels other than 5th, 8th, and 12th grades. A focus on these areas would provide a more detailed picture of what groups of students and grade levels within the building experience the highest degree of bullying behavior. In addition, I recommend that districts obtain parent data, not only at the district level but at each grade level. This data will help districts understand if parent responses

change based on the age of the student. Finally, the importance of providing leadership support and training around continuously learning and knowing how to utilize data effectively to create positive change is key to positive change with regards to bullying. As leaders the students should be at the focus of every decision and action that takes place in order to ensure every student has a promising future ahead.

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APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL LETTERS

DIVISION OF RESEARCH



DATE: October 05, 2015
MEMORANDUM
TO: Mario Torres
 TAMU - Texas A&M University - Not Specified

FROM: Dr. James Fluckey
 Chair, TAMU IRB
SUBJECT: Expedited Approval

Study Number: IRB2015-0584D
Title: Program Evaluation of a Local School District's Bullying Prevention Program
Date of Determination:
Approval Date: 10/05/2015
Continuing Review Due: 09/01/2016
Expiration Date: 10/01/2016

Documents Reviewed and Approved: Only IRB-stamped approved versions of study materials (e.g., consent forms, recruitment materials, and questionnaires) can be distributed to human participants. Please log into iRIS to download the stamped, approved version of all study materials. If you are unable to locate the stamped version in iRIS, please contact the iRIS Support Team at 979.845.4969 or the IRB liaison assigned to your area.

Submission Components			
Study Document			
Title	Version Number	Version Date	Outcome
Recruitment Letter/Phone Script	Version 1.0	09/16/2015	Approved
Proposal Letter from Texas A&M	Version 1.0	09/01/2015	Approved
approval letter for dissertation from Klein ISD	Version 1.0	09/01/2015	Approved
interview question template	Version 1.0	09/01/2015	Approved
proposal approval page - jeff bailey	Version 1.0	09/01/2015	Approved
cititraining document	Version 1.0	09/01/2015	Approved
Informed Consent Revised	Version 1.0	09/16/2015	Approved

Document of Consent: Written consent in accordance with 45 CF 46.116/ 21 CFR 50.27

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Comments:

- This protocol has been approved.
 - Research is to be conducted according to the study application approved by the IRB prior to implementation.
 - Any future correspondence should include the IRB study number and the study title.
-

Investigators assume the following responsibilities:

1. **Continuing Review:** The study must be renewed by the expiration date in order to continue with the research. A Continuing Review application along with required documents must be submitted by the continuing review deadline. Failure to do so may result in processing delays, study expiration, and/or loss of funding.
2. **Completion Report:** Upon completion of the research study (including data collection and analysis), a Completion Report must be submitted to the IRB.
3. **Unanticipated Problems and Adverse Events:** Unanticipated problems and adverse events must be reported to the IRB immediately.
4. **Reports of Potential Non-compliance:** Potential non-compliance, including deviations from protocol and violations, must be reported to the IRB office immediately.
5. **Amendments:** Changes to the protocol and/or study documents must be requested by submitting an Amendment to the IRB for review. The Amendment must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.
6. **Consent Forms:** When using a consent form or information sheet, the IRB stamped approved version must be used. Please log into iRIS to download the stamped approved version of the consenting instruments. If you are unable to locate the stamped version in iRIS, please contact the iRIS Support Team at 979.845.4969 or the IRB liaison assigned to your area. Human participants are to receive a copy of the consent document, if appropriate.
7. **Post Approval Monitoring:** Expedited and full board studies may be subject to post approval monitoring. During the life of the study, please review and document study progress using the PI self-assessment found on the RCB website as a method of preparation for the potential review. Investigators are responsible for maintaining complete and accurate study records and making them available for post approval monitoring. Investigators are encouraged to request a pre-initiation site visit with the Post Approval Monitor. These visits are designed to help ensure that all necessary documents are approved and in order prior to initiating the study and to help investigators maintain compliance.
8. **Recruitment:** All approved recruitment materials will be stamped electronically by the HRPP staff and available for download from iRIS. These IRB-stamped approved documents from iRIS must be used for recruitment. For materials that are distributed to potential participants electronically and for which you can only feasibly use the approved text rather than the stamped document, the study's IRB Study Number, approval date, and expiration dates must be included in the following format: TAMU IRB#20XX-XXXX Approved: XX/XX/XXXX Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX.
9. **FERPA and PPRA:** Investigators conducting research with students must have appropriate approvals from the FERPA administrator at the institution where the research will be conducted in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) protects the rights of parents in students ensuring that written parental consent is required for participation in surveys, analysis, or evaluation that ask questions falling into categories of protected information.
10. **Food:** Any use of food in the conduct of human research must follow Texas A&M University Standard Administrative Procedure 24.01.01.M4.02.
11. **Payments:** Any use of payments to human research participants must follow Texas A&M University Standard Administrative Procedure 21.01.99.M0.03.
12. **Records Retention:** Federal Regulations require records be retained for at least 3 years. Records of a study that collects protected health information are required to be retained for at least 6 years. Some sponsors require extended records retention. Texas A&M University rule 15.99.03.M1.03 Responsible Stewardship of Research Data requires that research records be retained on Texas A&M property.

This electronic document provides notification of the review results by the Institutional Review Board.

APPENDIX B
RECRUITMENT LETTER

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION PROGRAM
RECRUITMENT LETTER/PHONE SCRIPT

To Whom It May Concern:

You are invited to take part in a research study being conducted by Jeffrey Bailey a researcher from Texas A&M University in the Department of Educational Administration. The purpose of this study is to focus on a school district that has adopted and implemented a popular bullying intervention plan/strategy and examine whether such methods are being effective. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a campus principal at a campus that has been in existence for at least 5 years and has implemented some form of bullying prevention process on your campus. Six campus principals will be invited to participate in this study. The breakdown will be two principals from the high school level, two from the intermediate level and two from the elementary level. You will be asked to participate in one 45 minute interview with the researcher to discuss bullying prevention practices at your campus and campus culture. Aside from your time, there are no costs for taking part in the study and you will not be paid for being in this study either. If you are interested please contact Jeffrey Bailey by phone at 832-868-6914 or by email at jbailey1@kleinisd.net

Thank you.

Jeffrey Bailey

Version Date:

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IRB NUMBER: IRB2015-0584D
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 10/05/2015
IRB EXPIRATION DATE: 10/01/2016

APPENDIX C
CONSENT FORM

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION PROGRAM
CONSENT FORM

Program Evaluation of a Local School District's Bullying Prevention Program:

You are invited to take part in a research study being conducted by Jeffrey Bailey a researcher from Texas A&M University. The information in this form is provided to help you decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this consent form. If you decide you do not want to participate, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits you normally would have.

Why Is This Study Being Done?

The purpose of this study is to focus on a school district that has adopted and implemented a popular bullying intervention plan/strategy and examine whether such methods are being effective.

Why Am I Being Asked To Be In This Study?

You are being asked to be in this study because you are a campus principal at a campus that has been in existence for at least 5 years and has implemented some form of bullying prevention process on your campus.

How Many People Will Be Asked To Be In This Study?

Six campus principals will be invited to participate in this study. The breakdown will be two principals from the high school level, two from the intermediate level and two from the elementary level.

What Are the Alternatives to being in this study?

No, the alternative to being in the study is not to participate.

What Will I Be Asked To Do In This Study?

You will be asked to participate in one 45 minute interview with the researcher to discuss bullying prevention practices at your campus and campus culture.

Will Photos, Video or Audio Recordings Be Made Of Me during the Study?

Language for Optional recordings:

The researchers will make an audio recording during the study so that comments being made are not misinterpreted by the researcher only if you give permission to do so. If you do not give permission for the audio recording to be obtained, the researcher will hand write comments instead. Please indicate your decision below by initialing in the space provided.

_____ I give my permission for audio recordings to be made of me during my participation in this research study.

_____ I do not give my permission for audio recordings to be made of me during my participation in this research study.

Version Date:

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IRB NUMBER: IRB2015-0584D
IRB APPROVAL DATE: 10/05/2015
IRB EXPIRATION DATE: 10/01/2016

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION PROGRAM
CONSENT FORM

Are There Any Risks To Me?

The things that you will be doing are no greater than risks than you would come across in everyday life. Although the researcher has tried to avoid risks, you may feel that some questions/procedures that are asked of you will be stressful or upsetting. You do not have to answer anything you do not want to.

Will There Be Any Costs To Me?

Aside from your time, there are no costs for taking part in the study.

Will I Be Paid To Be In This Study?

You will not be paid for being in this study.

Will Information From This Study Be Kept Private?

The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records.

Information about you will be stored in locked file cabinet; computer files protected with a password. This consent form will be filed securely in an official area.

People who have access to your information include the Principal Investigator and research study personnel. Representatives of regulatory agencies such as the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) and entities such as the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program may access your records to make sure the study is being run correctly and that information is collected properly.

Who may I Contact for More Information?

You may contact the Principal Investigator, Mario Torres at mstorres@tamu.edu , to tell him about a concern or complaint about this research.

For questions about your rights as a research participant, to provide input regarding research, or if you have questions, complaints, or concerns about the research, you may call the Texas A&M University Human Subjects Protection Program office by phone at 1-979-458-4067, toll free at 1-855-795-8636, or by email at irb@tamu.edu.

What if I Change My Mind About Participating?

This research is voluntary and you have the choice whether or not to be in this research study. You may decide to not begin or to stop participating at any time.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I agree to be in this study and know that I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. The procedures, risks, and benefits have been explained to me, and my questions have been answered. I know that new information about this research study will be provided to me as it becomes available and that the researcher will tell me if I must be removed from the study. A copy of this entire consent form will be given to me.

Version Date:

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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION PROGRAM
CONSENT FORM

Participant's Signature

Date

Printed Name

Date

INVESTIGATOR'S AFFIDAVIT:

Either I have or my agent has carefully explained to the participant the nature of the above project. I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge the person who signed this consent form was informed of the nature, demands, benefits, and risks involved in his/her participation.

Signature of Presenter

Date

Printed Name

Date

Version Date:

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APPENDIX D

PROPOSAL FORM

Reset Form

Print Form

Office of Graduate and Professional Studies



PROPOSAL APPROVAL PAGE FOR THESIS, DISSERTATION, OR RECORD OF STUDY Full proposal should be attached

Major: Educational Administration Date: 6-10-15

I submit for approval the following research proposal for my: thesis dissertation record of study

Tentative Title: Program Evaluation of a Local School District's Bullying Prevention Program

Verification of research regulatory compliance: Check each category below if included in any research to be reported in the final document and provide the requested protocol or permit numbers, if relevant.

- Yes No Human subjects, including survey data Human tissue/cell lines Protected health information (human subjects) Vertebrate animals Animal tissues/cell lines Recombinant DNA/transgenic animals, plants Agents infectious to humans, animals or plants

*Additional information can be obtained at http://rcb.tamu.edu (click on "Obtain Approval" link) or by calling the Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety, Division of Research, at 979.458.1467.

Approval Recommended:

Approval Recommended: EAHR 121006883 Student's I.D. Number Mario Torres Dept. Jeffrey Bailey Student's Name Jean Madsen Dept. Student's Signature Judy Sandlin Dept. Student's Email Larry Kelly Dept. Student's Mailing Address Date of Approval:

Name For the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (Department head OR Intercollegiate Faculty Chair)

** I certify that all research compliance requirements have been addressed prior to submission of this proposal.

Last Revised: 9/20/2013

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Question Template:

1. What is your title/position?

2. How long have you served in this position?

3. What is your background experience in education?

4. Do you feel bullying is an issue on your campus? Explain/Describe?

5. What programs do you have in place to address bullying behavior or character development?

6. What type of training do you or the district provide the staff with regards to character development and bullying prevention?

7. What processes do you have in place to address bullying behavior?

8. What are the levels of consequences for bullying on your campus?

9. Do you feel the district initiative for bullying prevention is reducing the number of incidents of bullying behavior? Why?

10. Do you feel the bullying program is helping to provide a safer campus for students and staff?
Why?
11. Do you feel the bullying program is improving the knowledge base of students, staff and parents
on what is bullying behavior and how to handle it?
12. Do you feel the bullying program is improving character development of students on your
campus? Why?
13. Do you feel the bullying program is improving communication on your campus? Why?
14. How much money does the campus spend on bullying prevention and character development
each year?
15. How much training does your staff receive each year on bullying prevention and character
development?
16. To what degree is bullying and character development in you CIP? Why?
17. What more do you think the campus can do to improve bullying prevention?
18. What more can the district do to prevent bullying?
19. Do you or your parents attend district events regarding bullying and character development?

20. Anything else you would like to share?