

Implementation Level and the Perceived Effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying
Prevention Program

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Prevention Program

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ABSTRACT

Bullying has become a significant problem for children of all national, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds and it is one of the most underreported antisocial behaviors. Its negative impact causes psychological, physical, and social maladies and other long-lasting consequences for victims of bullying including suicide ideation. Recently, more emphasis has been placed upon the ill effects of school bullying prompting more empirical exploration in the U.S. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the recent efforts to identify means to reduce and mitigate bullying incidents in schools by exploring the implementation level and the perceptions of people who are responsible for the implementation of the bullying prevention program.

This research examined the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) through the perspective of teachers located in a northeast Ohio county who received a grant to implement the program over a period of several years. The current investigation involved a mixed methods' survey research design. The survey instrument included selected responses, Likert-style questions, as well as open-ended questions of which many were developed using the general implementation requirements of the OBPP. Teacher perception data were collected regarding implementation level, sustainability, support from other stakeholders, strengths and weaknesses of the program, and whether or not they perceive it to reduce instances of bullying. Other moderators affecting perceptions were also researched. These moderators include time, training, gender of teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of building, and general topology. The responses from the survey administration were exported from Survey Monkey and imported into SPSS. The responses were analyzed for both reliability and validity. Data

analysis provides descriptive analysis, tests of statistical assumptions, followed by multiple regression analysis. Results from both the selected-response items and open-ended responses were synthesized to address all research questions.

Results from this research indicate that the respondents believe that the OBPP was delivered with fidelity with a perception of moderate decreases in bullying incidents in both classrooms and within the school setting. The majority of surveyed respondents believe that they feel supported or significantly supported by district administration, building principal, peer teachers, parents, and students in regards to bullying prevention efforts using the OBPP. The data revealed that male teachers reported slightly higher levels of feeling supported compared to female teachers. Teachers, ages 20-29 and 30-39 as well as teachers with the least amount of experience 0-5 and 6-10 years, reported the highest level of feeling supported in regards to bullying intervention. Teachers from urban districts felt most supported followed by the rural districts and then suburban districts. There was no difference in the level of support reported by teachers from public or parochial schools.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family. I would like to express my gratitude and love to my wife Renee Whelan Kalis for inspiring me to finish this research. Her support and encouragement throughout this journey was vital for its completion. I am forever grateful for her unconditional love and patience. My children Katie, Clara, and Zach remind me every day how blessed and proud I am to be their father. I thank God and Savior Jesus Christ for the life I have been given.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	
Background	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study	2
Research Questions	3
Significance of the Study	4
Limitations	4
Definition of Key Terms	5
Summary	6
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
Defining Bullying	7
Bullies	8

Victims of Bullying	8
Cyber-Bullying	9
Prevalence of Bullying	11
Program Implementation to Reduce Bullying	13
Efficacy of Bullying Prevention Programs	16
The Role of Teachers	18
Bullying Prevention Programs	21
Kiusaamista Vastaan (KiVa)	21
Bully Busters	22
Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)	23
Federal Response to Bullying	29
State of Ohio Response to Bullying	32
Summary	34
III. METHODS	
Introduction	36
Research Design	38
Participants, Population, and Sampling	39
Instrumentation	42
Data Collection Procedures	43
Data Analysis	44
Significance	44

Summary	45
IV. RESULTS	
Introduction	46
Descriptive Analysis	47
Summary	70
V. DISCUSSION	
Introduction	71
Discussion and Implications	72
Responses to Survey Questions	72
Strengths	77
Weaknesses	77
Limitations	78
Recommendations for Practice	80
Recommendations for Future Research	82
Summary	83
REFERENCES	85
APPENDICES	90
Appendix A Stark County Demographic Information	96
Appendix B Survey	101
Appendix C Qualitative Responses	109
Appendix D Informed Consent Form	120

LIST OF TABLES

1.	Components of Awareness and Involvement of Adults in Schools	26
2.	Participant Districts and Schools	40
3.	Gender of Participants	47
4.	Age of Participants	48
5.	District Type	49
6.	Building Type	49
7.	Grade Level Taught	50
8.	Years of Experience	51
9.	Teacher to Student Ratio	52
10.	Building Enrollment	53
11.	PBIS as a Resource	54
12.	Is a Bullying Prevention Program Used?	55
13.	Name of Bullying Prevention Program	56
14.	When Program was Implemented	57
15.	Implementation Level Components	58
16.	Implementation Level Components	59
17.	Pearson's Zero-Order Correlations between the Factors	60
18.	Bullying Incidents in Classroom and School	61
19.	Reduction of Bullying Incidents in School	63
20.	Support Response Data	64
21.	Regression Results	68

22.	Responses to Effectiveness of Programming by School Type	69
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LIST OF FIGURES

1.	Percentage Response to Bullying Incidents	62
2.	Support from Stakeholders	66
3.	Pearson's Correlation between Support Variables and Potential Moderators	67

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

During the past decade, there has been a greater emphasis on the implementation of strategies for creating safer school environments. A supportive school climate is essential for student learning and positive peer interaction; however, school officials find themselves frequently challenged by the demands associated with all aspects related to educational leadership. Financial and time constraints have stifled even the best intentions for the efforts of school administrators and school boards' of education cognizance of the need for school climate improvement. One of the most basic needs for student success is to provide for the care, custody, and control of each child. As there is a new concern about school safety, the public demand for greater administrative oversight has dominated the efforts of policymakers responsible for creating effective and enforceable policies designed to reduce the actions associated with violence in our schools. An area of great concern is bullying and peer harassment because it affects no less than 33% of the student population (Shetgiri, 2013). Although the bullying phenomenon is nothing new, as the advent of the schoolyard bully can be traced back as far as recorded history, it has recently stirred the conscience of many.

Bullying is typically considered by many as a childhood rite of passage and many people believe that it is part of the life experience as it builds character for those who need to toughen up. This archaic thinking has now given way to a more sensible and accurate outlook that bullying has long-lasting and harmful effects for both the victim

and bully. Bullying is prevalent in our schools and one of the most underreported antisocial behaviors that have caused, in extreme cases, two-thirds of recent school shootings in the United States (Sampson, 2009). International research suggests that school bullying occurs at all ages and grade levels but is occurring more frequently with younger children. Bullying also has a high correlation with suicidal ideation in Europe, Asia, and the United States, in bullies, victims, and bully-victims (Shetgiri, 2013). Boys who are bullied are 2.5 times more likely to consider suicide than non-bullied boys, and bullied girls are four times more likely to consider suicide than non-bullied girls (Shetgiri, 2013). Although bullying is one of the variables that may increase the rate of suicide, bullying cannot be considered the only factor; instead, it is more likely to be a contributor to suicide ideation.

Statement of Problem

As educators search for programs to reduce bullying in schools, the impact and effectiveness of such programs should be researched and measured. This cannot happen until intense scrutiny occurs concerning the effectiveness of school programs. Since bullying and harassment can occur over time and across various school settings, it has long-lasting implications for the victim, the bully, and bully-victim.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine implementation level and teachers' perceived effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) in their school buildings so quantitative and qualitative data can be used as feedback for administrators. This information can be used to determine how best to serve children subject to bullying and whether the OBPP is considered an effective intervention among

teachers. This study will provide information that may enhance the knowledge base of teachers as it relates to bullying; it will help teachers by providing a formal instrument for reflection of a bullying program that is overwhelmingly accepted by school districts. Not all educators are well trained or prepared to handle bullying situations and very few studies reveal the opinions and perceptions of the groups of people responsible for the implementation of the program. This research study will be conducted in public schools in northeast Ohio.

Research Questions

This study will attempt to answer these questions:

1. Do teachers in districts using the OBPP perceive that the program was implemented with fidelity?
2. Do these teachers report improvement in the relationship/interactions between bullies, victims, bully-victims, and non-status students as a result of the OBPP programming?
3. What are teachers' perceptions regarding program support and sustainability?
4. What potential moderators impact teachers' perceptions regarding the OBPP programming? Moderators include time, training, gender of teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of building, and topology.
5. What are the perceptions of the teachers regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP?

Significance of the Study

The realization that bullying can have long-lasting negative consequences has ignited a greater emphasis on intervention efforts to mitigate the frequency of such occurrences (Modecki, Minchin, Harbaugh, Guerra, & Runions, 2014). Since there are many bullying prevention programs from which to choose, school districts must find the most effective program available for the needs of the students. This study may enable districts to review responses from the very educators who are expected to implement and execute the program and compare the responses with the intended purpose for which it was designed. Insight from their experiences may be used when developing administrative guidelines, district policy, and the creation of clear expectations for students to refer to in the student code of conduct. The OBPP is commonly used by schools worldwide; thus, studying its effectiveness may help policymakers gain a better understanding of the phenomenon.

Limitations

This research will be limited to the perceptions of teachers in a northeast Ohio school county who have since implemented the OBPP for two or more years. The teachers who were directly involved in the implementation process of OBPP may have an exaggerated positive perception of the program. Some respondents may be new teachers to the district and may not have been present during the initial training; moreover, a self-reporting instrument leaves little control over any factors that may influence responses as schools could have implemented the OBPP at varying levels of fidelity and formality. Respondents may have biases based upon experiences they may have had regarding bullying as school-aged children, or they may have children of their own who have

experienced bullying in a school where the OBPP was absent or implemented.

Additionally, the impact and frequency of cyber bullying may not be adequately reported and addressed since many of these instances occur off school campus and during non-school hours.

Definition of Key Terms

Bully- An individual who engages in open repeated harmful acts directed at another who cannot defend himself because of an imbalance of power (Smith & Brain, 2000)

Bullying- Repeated harmful acts of aggression and an imbalance of power. Hateful acts of aggression may include verbal, physical, or relational and psychological attacks/intimidation directed against a victim who cannot adequately defend himself because of strength, size, being outnumbered, or because of the lack of psychological resilience (Sampson, 2009)

Bully-Victim- An individual who is an aggressor and target in a bullying cycle (Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010)

Bystander/Non-Status Student- An individual who is neither a victim nor a perpetrator of bullying but may witness acts of bullying (Padgett & Notar, 2013)

Cyber Bullying- Bullying through the use of electronic means such as e-mail, text messages, instant messaging, and various forms of social media (Mishna, F., 2008; Mishna, Khoury-Kassabri, M., Gadalla, T., & Daciuk, J., 2012)

Direct Bullying- Causing physical harm, threats, taunting, name-calling, and face-to-face ostracization (Evans, Fraser, & Cotter, 2014)

Indirect (Relational) Bullying- Spreading rumors, graffiti, encouraging others to ostracize the victim (Sampson, 2009)

Victim- An individual who tends to be smaller and less psychologically resilient who experiences repeated harmful acts of bullying by someone who is more powerful (Sampson, 2009)

Implementation Fidelity-The program was delivered as prescribed by the program's creator (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Dusenbury et al., 2003).

Summary

School districts are in need of effective programs designed to reduce the potential for bullying, however many of the anti-bullying programs that are available exist with little research to gauge the effectiveness of such programs. It is difficult for educators to discern the difference between programs that are truly impactful and ones that are marketed solely for commercial profit. The challenge for schools is to solicit buy-in from teachers and administrators responsible for the implementation, while hoping that the effort is not futile. Moreover, multiple attempts of implementing several programs, due to the failure of others, will diminish the confidence of even the best of educators. This study will examine the perceptions of a widely used anti-bullying model designed to increase awareness, improve school climate, and equip students and educators with the skills to counter bullying incidents.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Defining Bullying

Since bullying is prevalent in all national, cultural, religious, and ethnic groups, bullies cannot be defined by appearance or group membership (United Nations Educational Scientific & Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2017, p. 12). There has been an attempt to define bullying over the past few years resulting in the identification of two reoccurring components: an imbalance of power, and repeated acts of aggression.

Although bullying is considered a type of aggression, not all aggression involves acts of bullying (Farrington & Ttofi, 2010). Several elements need to be considered when defining bullying. “Bullying is the repeated physical, verbal, and psychological attacks and intimidation directed against a victim who cannot defend him/herself because of an imbalance of power due to his lack of strength, being outnumbered, or less psychological resilience” (Sampson, 2009, n.p.).

There has been more attention regarding the bullying phenomenon and as a result researchers have used a variety of terms in their attempt to define it which has led to some inconsistency and confusion. It is generally accepted among researchers that three types of bullying exist: physical, verbal, and relational (Olweus, 2001). Bullying can manifest itself in other forms of anti-social behavior such as, but not limited to, assault, rumor spreading, intentional isolation, extortion, theft, destruction of property, threats, teasing, and name-calling. Batsche (as cited in Elias & Zins, 2003) reported verbal and physical victimization are the most prevalent type of bullying for school-aged children, with males engaging in more bullying behaviors than females. Although bullying can

occur anywhere, many instances of bullying occur during unsupervised times such as class change, lunch, in locker rooms, arrival and dismissal from school, and in cyberspace using e-mail, texting, and other forms of electronic communication including social media (Veenstra, Siegwart, Huitsing, Sainio, & Salmivalli, 2014).

Bullies

Two characteristics of the typical bully include physical strength, most particularly in males, and aggressive reaction pattern. Aggressive reaction pattern has been prevalent in children who have been reared by parents who: (a) have an indifference to affection and involvement, (b) exhibit permissive attitudes toward aggressive behaviors, (c) use authoritarian techniques such as corporal punishments, and (d) have children with an active aggressive temperament (Olweus, 1994). Males engage in acts of bullying at a higher rate than females; however, males perpetrate acts of direct bullying, whereas females are more apt to engage in indirect bullying (Beaty & Alexeyev, 2008).

Victims of Bullying

The American Medical Association (AMA) encouraged physicians to identify physical and mental damages, along with instances of death, associated with the results of bullying and to advocate for partnerships with parents, schools, and public health entities to create programs designed to prevent bullying (Srabstein, Berman, & Pyntikova, 2008). Children who experience frequent and relentless bullying suffer consequences beyond embarrassment and many of the psychological and physiological effects are long lasting. Victimized children are three to four times more likely to develop low self-esteem, feelings of isolation, depression, and anxiety that cause health ailments including headaches, gastric stress, insomnia, and other stressors that can manifest into high rates of

absenteeism and poorer grades than children who are not bullied (Beaty & Alexeyev, 2008). Research suggests that bullied children experience chronic emotional problems including feelings of low self-worth and mal-adjustment, which can further intensify peer rejection episodes causing the bullied children to blame themselves for what they perceive as social dysfunction (Committee for Children, 2001, 2005; Graham & Juvonen, 1998, p. 21). Frequent victims tend to show visible signs of passivity, anxiety, and insecurity, which may reveal to others that they are easy targets for bullying and harassment. Olweus (1994) made commentary on such a dilemma:

It does not require much imagination to understand what it is to go through the school years in a state of more or less permanent anxiety and insecurity, and with poor self-esteem. It is not surprising that the victims' devaluation of themselves sometimes becomes so overwhelming that they see suicide as the only possible solution. (pp. 1182-1183)

In extreme cases, high incidences of suicide are prevalent.

Cyber Bullying

In recent years, there has been a greater emphasis on cyber bullying. Many of today's children are frequent users of technology and can be online with little or no adult supervision (Agatson, Kowalski, & Limber, 2007). This lack of supervision can lead to negative behaviors such as exposure to drugs, violence, pornography, interaction with criminals, and bullying. Mishna et al. (2012) reported that 93% of U.S. youth between the ages of 12 to 17 log on to online sites regularly and 63% go online on a daily basis. Furthermore, by 2010 75% of teenagers owned a cellular telephone, with 88% having the capability to text (Mishna et al.).

The contrasting differences between traditional bullying and cyber bullying is that the former is typically face-to-face, and the latter has the potential to occur with anonymity or with a large group of bystanders. Although harmful cyber posts can be created anonymously, the cyber bully can also masquerade as someone else and cyber posts can easily be left in cyber space for all to see for a long duration of time; or, in contrast, can be taken down quickly to reduce the chances of being caught. Additionally, traditional bullying has a smaller audience whereas instances of cyber bullying has larger audiences.

In a study by Sticca and Peeren (2012), seventh- and eighth-grade students were provided with bullying scenarios and were asked to rank them by severity. The results of the study showed that scenarios that occurred more publicly were worse than those that were private, and instances of anonymous bullying were perceived to be worse as well. Results of research by Schade, Larwin, and Larwin (2017) suggested that cyberbullies who post in public social media domains might be motivated by having their acts of bullying for all to see, including other victims and bullies alike. Scholars have a difficult time defining cyber bullying because technology, and the use of it, is constantly expanding; however, they do agree that traditional bullying and cyber bullying differ (Heller, 2015). Traditional bullying is often direct or face-to-face, whereas cyber bullying is not; instead it is perpetrated easily because it can occur at any time and any location. In this case, cyber bullies do not necessarily need to be more powerful in the context of the accepted definition of bullying and they do not witness the distress of the victim and are less likely to get caught (Heller, 2015).

In a study by Agatston et al. (2007), students were less likely to report instances of cyber bullying to adults at school because they believed the adults were more likely to react to the rules prohibiting the use of cellular phones and not the bullying itself. Although at a low rate, students were more likely to report cyber bullying to a parent but feared the loss of technology use.

Current legislation should require schools to control cyber bullying; however, there is much debate on how far school administrators can discipline students without violating a student's right to free speech (Beale & Hall, 2008). Additionally, state lawmakers cannot agree to the degree of when parents should assume the responsibility for harmful acts committed by their own children.

Prevalence of Bullying

Since the 1960s, researchers have examined conflict resolution programs in an attempt to understand peer/adolescent interrelationships, antisocial behavior, and victimization; however, empirical data reported over the years lack consistency as a result of poor definition, weak outcome measures, and deficiently controlled research designs (Garrad & Lipsey, 2007). Research from the United States is generally more specific to school violence than bullying compared to other countries (Farrington & Ttofi, 2010). The 1980s brought much more attention to bullying, particularly in 1982 when a Norwegian newspaper article reported that three boys committed suicide as a result of experiencing relentless bullying (Hjort-Larsen, 1982). This event caused a national outcry prompting Daniel Olweus to conduct groundbreaking research collected from 140,000 students in 715 schools, which suggest that 15% of Norwegian children were involved in bullying with 6% named bullies and 94% labeled as victims (Beaty &

Alexyev, 2008). Although Olweus researched the bullying phenomenon nearly a decade earlier, it was not until this highly publicized event that other researchers began to scrutinize bullying from an empirical approach (Olweus as cited in Juvonen & Graham, 2001)

Bullying is significantly prevalent in schools worldwide, occurring in all countries and affecting between 9% and 54% of children depending on the study (Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010). Nearly 71% of students reported they have witnessed bullying in their school (stopbullying.gov, 2019), 30% of U.S. adolescents in Grades 6 through 10 were involved in acts of bullying; 13% were labeled as bullies, 11% as victims, and 6% as bully-victims (Srabstein et al., 2008). Rates vary among geographical locations, ages of children, gender, and by the type of bullying. Since there is a lack of significant research studies and reliable scholarly material on bullying in the United States, practitioners face many societal and institutional obstacles when pursuing meta-analytical data (Olweus 2001).

The state of Ohio is no exception as it also lacks research regarding bullying and bullying prevention programs. Two recent dissertation studies were found that pertained to Ohio. One study explored the bullying prevention efforts and grade level differences in urban elementary schools and the other “educator interventions in bullying of male and female high school students in Ohio”(Bucy, 2010, n.p.). The former was to examine any differences between schools only “after a treatment group participated in a bullying prevention program while testing for grade level differences” from the start of the year to the end. In essence, the study did not yield any results suggesting that the targeted bullying prevention efforts reduced bullying in the sample population (Ball, 2018, vi).

The latter researched gender differences between male and female educators and the level of intervention they chose for dealing with high school student bullying incidents. The results of the study “indicated that educators chose a higher level of intervention for verbal bullying than for relational and physical bullying, and female educators deploying higher level of intervention to male victims than did male educators.” (Bucy, 2010, n.p.).

The lack of scholarly research strengthens the argument for the need for more robust efforts to understand the bullying phenomenon particularly in Ohio. Although the attempt of a few student researchers is promising, more initiative is needed from statewide stakeholders, especially those who are in positions to make a difference in the lives of children through policymaking.

Program Implementation to Reduce Bullying

Olweus (as cited in Juvonen & Graham, 2001) stated that, in the 1980s, measuring social status through positive and negative peer interactions was the preferred approach for the study of peer relationships in North America. This approach emphasized the social relationships and environments related to the peer rejection phenomenon, not the behavioral or personality characteristics of the individual child. During the same time, researchers championed programs hoping to improve self-esteem resulting in the reduction of bullying since many believed that the root of bullying manifested itself in low esteem in the bully. However, current research suggests that bullies do not suffer from low self-esteem. On the contrary, many studies support the notion that bullies have a positive and inflated self-image (Graham, 2010). Scandinavian researcher, Daniel Olweus (1994), emphasized that bullies have little anxiety or insecurity, about as much as the average child, but the assumption has been that bullies are insecure. This assumption

has been researched and tested using various means including stress hormones and projective methods, however, no significant correlation can be found (Olweus, 1994).

Bullies tend to be aggressive toward others as well, including adults and parents.

The challenge that many schools face in choosing and implementing an anti-bullying program is two-fold: (a) there is lack of sufficient data to determine whether a given program is effective, and (b) there is little emphasis placed upon the importance of choosing a program and how it will align with the demographic needs of the school. Educational practitioners have relied on the adoption of programs spawned from marketing gimmicks, fads, and political pressures without any regard for the strong empirical support (Ertesvag, 2015). This further complicates any genuine attempt to determine what makes an effective program and how schools identify and implement programs suited for their needs. Research indicates that successful school change is generally a result of positive school culture, however, there is little research available that correlates positive school culture and the successful implementation of a bullying intervention program (Coyle, 2008). Furthermore, types of programs, implementation rates, and levels of fidelity are critical components to determine the efficacy of a program designed to improve a culture within a school environment and how outside factors may influence an initiative's efforts. In a study by Kasen, Berenson, Cohen and Johnson (2004), schools that did not experience high levels of distress were ones that were organized, academically focused, and placed an emphasis on protective ideologies. They also suggested that the implementation of any anti-bullying program might be dependent on the congruence of the school's readiness to assess needs and the willingness to do what it can to change the school climate to reduce bullying. Positive school culture

exhibits a shared sense of what stakeholders believe is important and a shared commitment to student learning (Peterson & Deal, 1998). Additional research by Sugai and Horner (2006) suggested that programs designed to promote a positive school climate also have a positive impact on reducing school bullying and peer victimization.

A multilevel study was conducted by Kallestad and Olweus (2003) with an emphasis on factors that predict or affect differences in a school's implementation of school-based bullying prevention and intervention programs. Two implementation measures were constructed: intervention measures deployed in classrooms, and individual contact with the bully, the bullied, and/or parents. The study also explored the variability, differences, and the implementation of the program. The degree of fidelity in implementation of a prescribed intervention program relied heavily upon teacher attitudes and experiences. Kallestad and Olweus (2003) stated,

The main concern of the present study was with the teachers/schools responses to a specific, circumscribed intervention program offered to the schools/teachers at a particular point in time. To the best of our knowledge, empirical, quantitative studies of factors predicting differences in implementation of a circumscribed intervention program in the personal/social-development area are very scarce. (p. 4, para. 1)

Inasmuch there is limited empirical data regarding the science of program implementation and the affect it can have on a program's success, Kallestad and Olweus (2003) suggested that further inquiry in this area would prove to be beneficial. Other variables that may influence program implementation rates include, but not limited to, teacher efficacy, appropriate skills, values and attitudes, affective involvement, school

factors, and communication and orientation to change (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003).

Efficacy of Bullying Prevention Programs

Efforts to identify the frequency and types of bullying have been given significant attention in many schools worldwide; however, the efficacy of invention programs to mitigate the bullying phenomenon has recently come to the forefront of researchers. Nation-wide studies regarding bullying and the efficacy of anti-bullying efforts are often estimated using data gathered from local and state survey studies (Evans et al., 2014). There has been a considerable increase in bullying awareness and subsequent implementation of intervention-based programs and an emphasis has been placed upon other factors not directly related to bullying. Some states have required school districts to adopt policies to identify and address bullying. This heightened awareness has caused an increase in the creation of intervention programs designed for schools, but many school district-wide prevention programs have demonstrated vaguely negligible to insignificant results (Low & Van Ryzin, 2014).

Anti-bullying school-based programs vary in scope and approach. Various programs include interventions that are designed to focus on the bully, the victim, peers, staff, parents, curriculum, and overall school climate (Mishna, 2008). Further consideration has been given to the very nature of individuals or groups intending to implement the program in a manner consistent with its design. Mishna (2008) referred to a 2004 study conducted by Smith, Pepler, and Rigby suggesting that there is the greatest degree of variation in programs where the emphasis of intervention strategies is focused on the bully and the degree of commitment by school personnel largely responsible for the implementation of the program. Furthermore, commitment itself can present a

complexity of biases related to the personal experiences of the staff, the school's financial commitment to the program, and the general support of the administration to vigilantly monitor and evaluate outcomes (Mishna, 2008). Many programming factors exist causing researchers have become more cognizant of variables that may affect the effectiveness of a bullying intervention program. One such variable is school climate dynamics. Researchers are exploring the correlation and significance of school climate and the impact it has on bullying prevention programs.

Often, school personnel are ill equipped when faced with the responsibility of developing and implementing strategies to reduce instances of bullying in the school setting. The typical response is to seek an existing and well-established program and have a school conform to its provisions. Moreover, a developmental perspective is gaining momentum as researchers are beginning to realize that one type of intervention strategy may not effectively reduce the instances of bullying at all age levels. Aggressive behavior developed at a young age can increase in intensity and frequency as an individual moves from childhood into adolescence (Good, McIntosh, & Gietz, 2011). Killen, Pisacane, Lee-Kim, and Ardila-Rey (2001) suggested that children, slightly over age four, express gender bias when engaging in play. A type of relational bullying can occur when a group of boys exclude girls from playing with trucks or footballs or when girls exclude boys when playing with dolls or engaging in domestic role-play. These types of instances provide the opportunity for conflict resolution and use of prompts to stress moral reasoning and to encourage a sense of inclusivity and fairness. Initiating bullying prevention programs to students as young as preschool may set the stage for future interventions where adolescent students may experience other forms of harassment

as dating violence and sexual harassment (Mishna, 2008). Intervention is difficult once a culture of bullying is prevalent in the school setting; however, a benefit to a comprehensive program is that it is ongoing and seamless as students progress into the next grade. Unfortunately, many of the most widely used prevention programs fail due to the lack of integrating basic youth development strategies, and, instead, emphasis is placed upon punitive consequences spawned from ill-conceived zero-tolerance policies (Black, Washington, Trent, Harner, & Pollock, 2010). These punitive consequences often reflect many problems associated with racism, gender biases, and other social injustices (Black et al.).

In a re-examination of Farrington's and Ttofi's (2009) meta-analysis of bullying interventions, researchers Evans and colleagues (2014) findings were mixed, however, data suggested that bullying programs implemented outside the United States were more successful than programs implemented in the United States (Evans et al.). These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Farrington and Ttofi (2009).

The Role of Teachers

In her article, *What Educators Need to Know About Bullying Behaviors*, Graham (2010) argued that educators must first understand what bullying is by dismissing six myths about the bullying phenomenon:

Myth #1 Bullies have low self-esteem and are rejected by their peers: Bullies often enjoy high status at school and are perceived as “cool” among their peer group.

Myth #2 Getting bullied is a natural part of growing up: Bullied children experience depressive affects which have long lasting implications during developmental years and often progressing into adulthood.

Myth #3 Once a victim, always a victim: There is more discontinuity of victimization than continuity. In a study, Graham (2010) showed that in the fall only a third of sixth-grade victims were less likely to be victimized by the time they reached eighth grade.

Myth #4 Boys are physical, and girls are relational victims and bullies: Although research suggests that girls are more likely to engage in relational bullying, physical and indirect (relational) bullying are correlational and are prevalent among girls.

Myth #5 Zero tolerance policies reduce bullying: Zero tolerance policies that result in suspensions and other punitive measures often backfire, resulting in further intense antisocial behaviors.

Myth #6 Bullying involves only a perpetrator and a victim: Bullying is often seen as an interaction between a bully and a victim, however, since bullying can occur in a public setting, witnesses can also experience the negative antisocial effects of bullying. (Graham, 2010, n.p.).

Educators must understand the dynamics of bullying and help dismiss the myths that have been associated with traditional views and perceptions of bullies, victims, and bystanders. Self-esteem of the bully should not be the focus of intervention; instead, program design should include strategies for controlling anger and taking responsibility for one's own problem and not blaming others. Children who are chronically harassed

are more likely to be rejected by their peer group, the development of positive self-perception intervention is needed for the victim to reinforce the notion that he is not to blame for the bullying (Juvonen & Graham, 2001). Bullying can negatively impact bystanders and a focus should be placed on the development of strategies that seek to change the entire culture and climate of the school (Whitted & Dupper, 2005).

The expectation for school personnel to prevent bullying typically falls under the notion that educators are responsible for the care, custody, and control of children during school hours; however, there is evidence that they are less effective in this regard for several factors. Although teachers have the most frequent interaction with students, they are seldomly aware of instances of bullying because incidents often occur during unstructured times. In a study by Pepler and Craig (1998), teachers intervened in only 4% of bullying incidents on the playground and in 18% in the classroom (Atlas & Pepler, 1998). Students who are bullied have developed a perception that teachers are unable to protect them because direct intervention occurs at a very low rate (Veenstra et al., 2014). This perception also prevents students from reporting bullying because they believe that nothing will be done about it and will ultimately be dismissed by school personnel; if it is addressed, students are fearful of reprisals from the bully.

Teachers may also be viewed as ineffective due to cognitive developmental coping differences between adults and children and often view relational bullying as something other than bullying, i.e., an instance of an act less serious than physical or verbal bullying. Furthermore, teachers expect victims to work through their problems while ignoring the seriousness of bullying, often believing that such incidents are a part of the normative developmental process (Veenstra et al., 2014).

Bullying Prevention Programs

KiVa

Kiusaamista Vastaan or KiVa is a Finnish research-based bullying-prevention program developed by Salmivalli and colleagues in 2009 at the University of Turku, Finland with funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Swift et al., 2017). Kiusaamista Vastaan is a term meaning *against bullying*, while the word Kiva means *nice* in Finnish. KiVa has two main guiding principles: (1) bullies are motivated by peer status, and (2) bystanders can play either a supportive or unsupportive role for the victim (Swift et al.). Since bullying behavior is often the result of the bully's desire for high status among peer groups, the role of bystanders is critical since their reaction to bullying incidents have an impact on moderating victim outcomes.

KiVa requires 20 hours of curricular training to strengthen anti-bullying sentiment, defensive attitudes, and self-efficacy among bystanders. Student activities include role playing, group work, discussions, visual media about bullying, and interactive computer games. Another component enlists three school staff members whose task is to work directly with the classroom teacher to provide supports including group and individual discussions with victims and bullies (Williford et al., 2012). During such discussions, the staff members and teacher help the victim identify who he or she believes are friendly classmates. These classmates are identified and are asked to provide support for the victim.

Although KiVa is a relatively new program, there has been significant attention because of its potential. Juvonen et al. (2016) led a study of more than 7,000 students in 77 elementary schools in Finland; 39 schools used the KiVa program and the other 38 did

not subscribe to any particular program but were given some information regarding techniques that could be used to mitigate bullying. KiVa was found to be effective in helping to promote perceptions of a caring school climate among the most victimized students prior to the intervention (Juvonen et al.).

Bully Busters

Bedell and Horne (2005) stated that Newman, Horne, and Bartolomucci (2000) developed the Bully Busters' program using data empirically supported by research. The prevention program supports three tenets for success:

- (a) all children can learn academic content and behavioral skills to establish positive relationships,
 - (b) all people in the school community are to be treated with respect and dignity, and
 - (c) there is no place for violence, bullying, or aggression in school
- (Bedell & Horne, 2005, p.65).

An emphasis is placed upon positive school climate and encouraging increased peer social competence, while promoting a concept of setting the students and the school up for success.

Teacher training for the Bully Buster program is delivered through a professional development workshop that occurs over a three-week period consisting of two-hour meetings. Typically, the educators initially participating in the training are counselors, administrators, and other personnel involved with staff development. The educators who are trained are expected to provide training to colleagues. Once the staff is trained, they can utilize more than 50 activities to engage students in bullying prevention skills.

In a piloted study in a public elementary school in Georgia, Orpinas, Horne, and Staniszewski, (2003) found that the Bully Buster program reduced aggressive behaviors by 40% and decreased student victimization by 19%. The study was replicated two times in Georgia schools: once, in an elementary school by Newman-Carlson and Horne (2004), and once, in a middle school by Howard, Horne, and Joliff (2001). Both studies found the program to be effective and Newman-Carlson and Horne (2004) yielded results suggesting that teachers “felt a significant increase in their sense of efficacy for managing incidents of bullying” (p. 66).

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)

Daniel Olweus was the director of the Erica Foundation, a training institute for clinical psychologists, in Stockholm, Sweden, from 1962 to 1970. Olweus received his doctoral degree in psychology in 1969 from the University of Umea, Sweden. He dedicated his professional life to child mental health advocacy as a psychology professor at the University of Bergen, in Norway, from 1970 to 1995. In 1996, he affiliated with the Research Center for Health Promotion with an emphasis psychological research and, in 2010, served at the Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health at Bergen (Olweus, 2012). Although bullying was both prevalent and acknowledged, it was not until Olweus’ effort to approach the phenomenon in a more practical and systemic manner thus causing a heightened awareness in Scandinavia. Other areas of the world did not yet place emphasis on bullying until the 1980s and 1990s. Olweus has researched bullying for nearly 48 years, as his first large-scale research began in 1970 and was regarded as one of the first known scientific research studies on bullying. This research was published in 1973 in Scandinavia and 1978 in the United States, under the title of

Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys (Olweus, 2012). In the 1980s, Olweus continued his research on bullying intervention, which resulted in the developmental stage of what would become the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP). This research was a catalyst for the implementation of the OBPP in Norway, and, eventually, in other countries including the United States.

In 1989, Olweus called for a reorientation of peer relationship research designed to focus on behavioral or personality characteristics in contrast to reactions caused by social environments (Juvonen & Graham, 2001). The OBPP established school-wide awareness and expectations designed to modify the social norms regarding bullying behavior and mal-acceptance of bullies and bystanders/non-status students. This is evident in the OBPP core beliefs to promote a comprehensive approach targeting individual, classroom, school, and community-level interventions and include dialogue about bullying and other activities designed to engage students with a focus on changing student perceptions and attitudes regarding bullying (Bauer, Lozano, & Rivera, 2007). This whole-school approach emphasizes four areas of prevention (Liepe-Levinson & Levinson, 2005; Olweus, 1994):

1. Increase awareness by removing the veil of secrecy that enables most bullies to operate unchallenged in our schools, creating, in its place, an atmosphere in which children and adults feel secure to help both the bullies and the targets by “telling.” This principle component is a critical step for parents and school administrators in obtaining the knowledge, frequency, and intensity of the bullying. Community groups should share the anti-bullying message as well. Law enforcement, media,

governmental and community-based agencies are also paramount in the success of the program;

2. Replace the standard either/or method for dealing with bullies “fight ‘em or ignore ‘em” with new scripts and ways to talk to bullies that challenge the bullies’ privileged position within our schools. Behavioral expectations should be clear with school-wide rules and authoritative methods used when dealing with incidents of bullying;

3. Provide professional development for teachers in the identification of bullying and methods by which to deal with it and emphasizing effective self-management/anger management techniques to children and adults while cultivating a school climate where bullying is contested by all stakeholders; and

4. Provide empathy training for children and adults. Support and protection help victims feel empowered and not alone. School personnel must establish strategies to elicit inclusive attitudes among classmates.

(Liepe-Levinson & Levinson, 2005, p. 8)

The key principle of the OBPP is to underscore the importance of a non-authoritarian, multicomponent, school-wide model where the school climate includes warmth and acceptance while cultivating an atmosphere that will not tolerate hostile and other inappropriate aggressive behaviors. Educators function as positive role models and consequences for bullying are proactive instead of punitive in nature (Olweus et al., 2007). Unfortunately, many schools will use a single component event such as a school-wide assembly in an effort to increase bullying awareness. This one-time approach is

unlikely to reduce bullying on a long-term and sustained basis (Bradshaw, 2015).

Program prevention should focus primarily on stakeholder awareness, climate, consistency of messaging using discussions and lessons in the classroom, and integration into school programs, sustained at all grade levels (Mishna, 2008).

Olweus and Limber (2007) published the following table outlining the general implementation requirements of the OBPP:

Table 1.

Components of Awareness and Involvement of Adults in Schools

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	
Generate awareness and involvement on the part of the adults in the school	
<p>SCHOOL-LEVEL COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee. • Conduct committee and staff trainings. • Administer the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire schoolwide. • Hold staff discussion group meetings. • Introduce the school rules against bullying. • Review and refine the school’s supervisory system. • Hold a school kick-off event to launch the program. • Involve parents. <p>CLASSROOM-LEVEL COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post and enforce schoolwide rules against bullying. • Hold regular class meetings. • Hold meetings with students’ parents. 	<p>INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervise students’ activities. • Ensure that all staff intervene on the spot when bullying occurs. • Hold meetings with students involved in bullying. • Hold meetings with parents of involved students. • Develop individual intervention plans for involved students. <p>COMMUNITY-LEVEL COMPONENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve community members on the Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee • Develop partnerships with community members to support your school’s program. • Help to spread anti-bullying messages and principles of best practice in the community.

The OBPP was first evaluated as a longitudinal study that followed 2,500 Norwegian schoolchildren between 1983-1985.

The researchers did not conduct an experimental study with schools or classes assigned randomly to treatment or controlled conditions, but instead, extended selection cohorts were used as same-aged children from the same schools were compared spanning three points in time (Olweus & Limber, 2010, p. 126).

The empirical research revealed significant reductions in student self-reporting of bullying incidents after an 8-month period. Children experienced a 62% decrease in being bullied, and bullies bullying other children decreased by 33%; after a 20-month period, the decrease was 64% and 52.6%, respectfully (Olweus & Limber, 2010).

Similar evaluation studies of the OBPP have occurred in rural South Carolina, suburban California, inner-city Pennsylvania, and Washington State. In the mid-1990s, South Carolina was the location of the first OBPP evaluation in the U.S. The study consisted of “elementary and middle schools in six rural school districts of low socioeconomic status spanning over a seven-month period. Results revealed a 16% decrease in students who reported that they had bullied someone” (Olweus & Limber, 2010, p. 128).

The remaining states conducted the evaluation studies in 2007 and found similar results. Three suburban community schools were used in Southern California over a three-year period. In the first year, self-reports of being bullied decreased by 21% after the first year, and 14% after the second year, and an 8% reduction was self-reported by bullies who bullied others, a 17% reduction, after two years. In Pennsylvania, six inner-city schools in Philadelphia were studied, and, within a four-year period, bullying

incidents' density decreased by 45%. In Washington State, 10 middle schools were used: seven intervention and three control. The research uncovered significant program effects for white students but did not show similar effects for minority students (Olweus & Limber, 2010).

The OBPP has been the most widely researched bullying prevention program due to large-scale studies in Norway. Several of these Norwegian studies revealed compelling evidence that the OBPP resulted in reductions in student self-reporting of bullying incidents in schools. Although studies in Norway appear to be promising, studies conducted in the U.S. have not been similarly consistent and show only moderate improvement in student self-reporting (Olweus & Limber, 2010). Bauer et al. (2007) suggested that a developmental stage of adolescence is one where children attempt to discover or form their own identity and in a homogeneous society may be less difficult to do so. In diverse settings such as in the U.S., children are influenced more by experiences and attitudes toward others, in part, because of ethnic differences. Since the OBPP was developed for a relatively homogeneous population like Norway, its application in more diverse populations like the U.S. would have a diminished impact on the reduction of bullying.

Olweus and Limber (2010) also suggested that the challenges in OBPP program dissemination unique to U.S. schools are related to the schools' and staffs' readiness to implement the program with fidelity. They found some staff resistance due to their belief that bullying was not a critical concern and that any incident of bullying was viewed as a rite of passage, a type of valuable learning experience for developing children. The

attitudes of educational leaders must not allow apathetic attitudes to prevail. As with any educational programming success, a buy-in type of mentality with staff is critical.

Federal Response to Bullying

With the need to create legislation to further protect children and promote safe school environments, the United States Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 including provisions in Title IV of the law that formally addressed the problem of school violence; however, direct bullying was not initially included (stopbullying.gov, 2018). The provision required support of programs that prevent violence in and around schools and provided federal assistance and grants to states for the development and operation of local drug and violence intervention programs (Yerger & Gehret, 2011). Prior to the enactment of this law, no state in the nation created legislation designed to address school violence or bullying. By 2005, 17 states established laws that prohibited acts of bullying in schools. As of June 2007, 35 states passed laws prohibiting bullying, impacting approximately 77% of students enrolled in schools, and, by 2011, 49 of the 50 states passed laws prohibiting bullying (Srabstein et al., 2008). These laws vary in definition and scope, however, the United States Department of Education (ED) reported that only a few states follow best practices shown to be effective in reducing bullying. Such best practices include the aggregation of the types and severity of bullying, the enumeration of groups, and the availability of mental health supports for the victim and the bully (Kennedy & Temkin, 2013).

Since there is no specific federal law that addresses bullying, discriminatory harassment laws exist based upon race, national origin, color, sex, age, disability, and religion. Students, who are bullied based upon these protected classes may find judicial

relief from the policies and procedures outlined and enforced by the ED and the United States Department of Justice (DOJ). Federally funded school districts, colleges, and universities have an obligation to investigate and resolve reported cases of harassment and other conduct that is:

- Severe, pervasive, or persistent;
- Causal of a hostile environment at school. That is, it is sufficiently serious that it interferes with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school; and
- Based upon a student's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or religion (stopbullying.gov, 2018)

Although the ED, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 does not directly cover religion, often religion-based harassment is based on shared ancestry of ethnic characteristics, which is covered. The DOJ has jurisdiction over religion under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In late February 2013, Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) reintroduced an anti-bullying act that would require schools to address bullying, establish an accountability system, and collect data on incidents and response (Kennedy & Temkin, 2013). The Safe Schools Improvement Act (SSIA) of 2013 would compel local educational agencies to establish provisions that would expand the requirements of federal harassment laws to include the protection of sexual orientation and gender identity. The local educational agencies would call for: (a) giving annual notice to parents, students, and educational staff conduct that is prohibited, (b) publicizing the grievance procedures concerning such conduct, and (c) ensuring annual data on the frequency and type of incidence is available to the public (SSIA, 2013). The Secretary of

Education would conduct an independent biennial evaluation of programs and policies designed to reduce bullying in local educational agencies. Furthermore, the Commissioner for Educational Statistics would collect bullying and harassment data to determine the frequency and incidents of conduct that are prohibited by state and federal laws and policies, and the consistency by which each state fulfills the requirements of the law.

In 2011, The United States Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) examined the nature, frequency, and effects of peer-to-peer violence in K-12 public schools. The USCCR also reviewed policies and procedures of the DOJ and ED. Commission Chairman, Martin R. Castro et al. (2011), explained why the USCCR was concerned about peer-to-peer violence and bullying in his Commissioner's statement and rebuttal response:

When student violence, harassment or bullying is motivated by race, national origin, religion, disability, gender identity, and gender stereotypes, it falls within the Commission's mandate to shine a light on the issue in an effort to remedy the wrong. As the Third Circuit Court of Appeals said in the Sypniewski case, 'there is no constitutional right to be a bully.' (p. 91)

Although not unanimously supported by the eight-person commission, the majority of the commission found that bullying and harassment, including bullying and harassment based on sex, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or religion, are harmful to American youth. Other findings included the following points:

- Current federal civil rights laws do not provide the U.S. Department of Education with jurisdiction to protect students from peer-to-peer harassment that is solely on the basis of religion; and
- Current federal civil rights laws do not protect students from peer-to-peer harassment that is solely on the basis of sexual orientation. (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2011, p. 88)

State of Ohio Response to Bullying

Ohio’s anti-harassment and bullying laws are outlined in three major Ohio Revised Codes (ORC): Model Harassment Prevention Policy §3301.22, District Policy Prohibiting Harassment Intimidation, or Bullying Required §3313.666, and District Bullying Prevention Initiatives §3313.667

ORC §3301.22. This code requires the Ohio State Board of Education (ODE) to develop a “model policy to prohibit harassment, intimidation, or bullying in order to assist school districts in developing their own policies under section §3313.666 of the revised code” (codes.ohio.gov). The ODE was required to issue a model policy no later than six months after March 30, 2007.

ORC §3313.666. The District Policy Prohibiting Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying Required outlines the requirements for defining, identifying, reporting, investigating, protecting, training, and disciplining bullying incidents. Electronic acts of bullying, through the use of personal communication devices, are prohibited as a result of the expansion of this law in 2012, when Ohio Governor John Kasich signed House Bill 116 (Jessica Logan Act). This expansion was a result of a Cincinnati teen who committed suicide due to bullying via text messaging. The development of a district’s

model policy must solicit input from parents, school personnel, students, and community members, and include provisions that provide parents with notification of bullying and access to written reports pertaining to the incident as permitted by ORC §3319.321 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) as amended. Furthermore, a district must provide a written statement describing the policy and consequences related to offenses, including dating violence (Ohio House Bill 19 Tina Croucher Act, Volume Source, § (2010), to all custodial parents each school year. Board policy must appear in the student code of conduct or in any location where the student rules are displayed outlining bullying rules and the expectations for acceptable student conduct and procedural protection for students who report a bullying incident. Such incidents must have a means by which a student can report them anonymously and prohibit students from making false reports. District administration must document and report all incidences of bullying semiannually to the president of the board of education and post this information on the district's website. Any individual who reports bullying in good faith and in compliance with policy and law shall be immune from civil liability and for any damages arising from making such a report.

ORC 3313.667. District Bullying Prevention Initiatives allow school districts to create anti-bullying programs involving parents, law enforcement institutions, and community members to serve on such initiatives. Moreover, any program where state or federal funds are appropriated must provide training for school personnel.

Summary

Although more attention is being paid to the bullying phenomenon, very little has been found to be effective deterrents to this persistent and pervasive problem. School bullying typically begins at a young age, which enforces the notion that school-based intervention programs should begin in the primary grades (Bowes et al., 2009). Acts of bullying tend to peak in the middle school setting and generally decrease as students progress into adolescence (Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992; Pelligrini & Bartini, 2000). Farrington and Baldry (2010) also found that the number of children bullied decreases as the children move into adolescence, and Vanderbilt and Augustyn (2010) found that less than half of adolescent children were willing to talk or confide in someone about their victimization. Bullying prevention programs can be more effective when targeting younger children than adolescents; however, programs specifically designed for adolescent children show promise because of their higher cognitive ability and maturity, albeit it may take longer to see positive results.

Bullying is a challenging and complex phenomenon with many players. Since there is no universal definition for bullying, confusion exists as to what bullying truly is and how to mitigate its effects. Many researchers have conflicting data regarding the number of schools that reported having anti-bullying policies in place, and, to further the problem, many of the schools that reported having anti-bullying policies in place believe that they are developmentally inappropriate (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, O'Brennan, & Gulemetova, 2013). To complicate matters, Bradshaw et al. reported that the percentages of teachers and students differ greatly when asked about the effectiveness of programs. Teachers tend to believe that programs are more effective than students.

In Abby K. Gorsek's and Melissa M. Cunningham's (2014) article, *A Review of Teachers' Perceptions and Training Regarding School Bullying*, they outlined the dilemma that many teachers face:

Because teachers spend the most time with students at school, they may need to confront a bullying incident while, or immediately after, it occurs. When confronting a bully incident, it is important that teachers provide effective, age appropriate consequences. Yet, without training, teachers lack knowledge of effective discipline practices for bullying behavior, and confidence for implementing such strategies. In addition to this, more research is needed to fully explore the extent of teachers' roles in providing targeted interventions to identified youth, and whether or not additional training will produce more effective outcomes. (Discussion section, para. 1)

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

Understanding the perception of educators regarding school-based intervention programs is difficult. Perceptions vary depending upon the individual as many do not fully understand the identifying factors of bullying, the prevalence, and the negative impact it has on children (Doll, Song, & Siemers, 2004, as cited in Bradshaw et al., 2013; Swearer Napolitano, Espelage, Vaillancourt, & Hymel, 2010). Current research suggests that school-wide prevention delivery models seem to be most effective, however, the existence of research designed to study the role and genuine fidelity of those charged with the implementation of intervention programs is sparse (Bradshaw et al.) Although OBPP is a widely accepted and disseminated bullying prevention program, research in the United States varies as to whether or not it truly decreases instances of bullying and victimization behaviors (Bauer et al., 2007).

Durlak and Dupre (2008) and Dusenbury, Brannigan, Falco, and Hansen (2003) found that the variables affecting the implementer, and the characteristics that he has, greatly influences how well a program is implemented. Variables such as the grade level that the educator teaches, the ability to recognize bullying, the capacity to intervene, and what former experience and training the educator has received are critical to the understanding of program effectiveness and the goal of reducing bullying. Furthermore, an educator who is more confident in his ability to successfully manage a program is also more likely to implement a program with a high level of fidelity (Dusenbury et al.;

Kallestad & Olweus, 2003). Program implementation fidelity and dosage are two critical components to a successful OBPP. Implementation with fidelity means the program was delivered as prescribed by the program's creator (Durlak & DuPre et al.; Dusenbury et al.). Researchers have discovered a positive correlation between implementation fidelity of bullying prevention programs and the level of success of the program (O'Moore & Minton, 2005; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, & Voeten, 2005; Stevens, de Bourdeaudhuij, & Van Oost, 2001). Further investigation regarding school climate, administrative support, and sustainability may also provide a clearer perspective on bullying intervention efforts.

Although bullying is a concern, children who identify or are perceived as different from typically conforming children are at a higher risk of victimization. Implementers must take into consideration special populations which may include students who are gay, bisexual, or transgender (Berlan, Corliss, Field, Goodman, & Austin, 2010, as cited in Bradshaw et al., 2013), overweight, socially awkward, cognitively challenged (Rose, Monda-Amaya, & Espelage, 2011), and racially and ethnically different than their peers (Sawyer, Bradshaw, & O'Brennen, 2008, as cited in Bradshaw et al.). Still, more research is needed concerning how educators view bullying that is motivated by nonconforming characteristics as well as educators' training related to intervention efforts in preventing victimization of special populations (Bradshaw et al.). Bradshaw et al. stated,

To date, there has been little systematic research on staff members' perceptions of cyberbullying. Taken together, these gaps in the extant research highlight the need for further examination into staff members' perceptions of bullying among

special populations, as well as different forms of bullying (e.g., relational, physical, verbal, cyberbullying). (p. 281)

This research will answer the following questions:

1. Do teachers in districts using the OBPP perceive that the program was implemented with fidelity?
2. Do these teachers report improvement in the relationship/interactions between bullies, victims, bully-victims, and non-status students as a result of the OBPP programming?
3. What are teachers' perceptions regarding program support and sustainability?
4. What potential moderators impact teachers' perceptions regarding the OBPP programming? Moderators include time, training, gender of teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of building, and topology.
5. What are the perceptions of the teachers regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP?

Research Design

Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) defined survey research as an attempt to obtain data from members of a population or a sample to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables (p. 281). In contrast with traditional survey methods, the Internet and virtual domains offer researchers from a variety of disciplines access to large groups and individuals in a relatively cost-effective and precipitous manner (Wright, 2005). The current research investigation employed a

quantitative survey designed to explore the relationship that exists between the OBPP and the perception of teachers who have been part of its implementation and a qualitative component utilizing data collection through a survey. This mixed methods' strategy was designed to allow corresponding methods to strengthen the claims of this research while limiting the weaknesses present if only one method was used (Creswell, 2009). Data were gathered from teachers in northeast Ohio public schools who have used the OBPP for two or more years.

Participants, Population, and Sampling

Bullying has received more attention in recent years and as a result, avenues for reporting bullying incidents to authorities have become more available to victims. However, children who have been victims of bullying may feel reluctant to report bullying in fear of retaliation from the bully. Although research solely focusing on children's perspective of bullying may solicit feedback from a primary source, this particular research will place emphasis on teachers' perspectives concerning the efficacy of the OBPP by the very people charged with the responsibility of properly executing the program.

In August 2011, two northeast Ohio educational entities joined forces in an effort to reduce bullying incidents in schools. The Stark County Educational Service Center (SCESC) and the Diocese of Youngstown pursued a grant from the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton to fund the OBPP for 52 public and parochial schools located in Stark County. Not all schools in Stark County participated in the grant. The first of four cohorts consisted of 23 schools and implemented the OBPP during the 2012-2013 school year. Cohort II consisted of five schools and implemented OBPP in 2013-2014; Cohort

III, 15 schools in 2014-2015; and Cohort IV, nine schools and a 2015-2016 implementation year. After a four-year period, from 2012 to 2016, 52 Stark County Schools implemented the OBPP. As with most grants, sustainability typically requires compliance with the conditions and guidelines of the grant. In the case of Stark County, this allowed research to be conducted with the expectation that the implementation process was delivered as prescribed.

Participants in the current investigation consisted of teachers serving in Stark County Ohio school districts including one school located in Carroll County, but subscribed to Stark County Educational Service Center programs. Two schools have since closed leaving 50 schools represented with an estimated population size of 1,557 teachers. All of the 50 schools were part of one of the original four cohorts. A breakdown of the number of educators in each school is provided in Table 2.

Table 2.

Participant Districts and Schools

District	School	Grades	# of Licensed Teachers
Alliance City	Alliance Middle	6-8	40
Brown Local	Malvern Middle (Carroll County)	6-8	16
Canton City	Allen Elementary	PK-2	22
Canton City	Altitude Career Tech and Wellness	6-8	Closed
Canton City	Arts Academy	K-8	26
Canton City	Belden Elementary	3-5	18
Canton City	Belle Stone Elementary	PK-2	15
Canton City	Cedar Elementary	3-5	28
Canton City	Clarendon Elementary	3-5	25
Canton City	College & Career Readiness at Lehman	6-8	45
Canton City	Compton Learning Center	6-12	35
Canton City	Dueber Elementary	PK-2	25
Canton City	Early College Academy	6-8	70
Canton City	Gibbs Elementary	3-5	24

Canton City	Harter Elementary	PK-2	27
Canton City	Mason Elementary	3-5	23
Canton City	McGregor Elementary	PK-2	15
Canton City	McKinley Senior High	9-12	150
Canton City	Schreiber Elementary	PK-2	55
Canton City	STEAMM Academy	6-8	45
Canton City	Timken Early College High	9-12	20
Canton City	Worley Elementary	PK-2	29
Canton City	Youtz Elementary	3-5	22
Canton Local	South High	9-12	56
Canton Local	Faircrest Memorial Middle	5-8	52
Canton Local	Walker Elementary	PK-4	50
Diocese of Youngstown	Our Lady of Peace Elementary	PK-5	21
Diocese of Youngstown	Regina Coeli St. Joseph Elementary	PK-5	8
Diocese of Youngstown	St. Barbara Elementary	PK-8	11
Diocese of Youngstown	St. Joan of Arc Elementary	PK-8	13
Diocese of Youngstown	St. Joseph Elementary	PK-8	Closed
Diocese of Youngstown	St. Louis Elementary	PK-5	7
Diocese of Youngstown	St. Mary Elementary	PK-8	12
Diocese of Youngstown	St. Michael Elementary	PK-8	24
Diocese of Youngstown	St. Paul Elementary	PK-8	18
Diocese of Youngstown	St. Peter Elementary	PK-5	6
Diocese of Youngstown	SS. Philip and James Elementary	PK-8	15
Fairless Local	Fairless Middle	6-8	27
Louisville City	Louisville Elementary	K-5	31
Louisville City	North Nimishillen Elementary	PK-3	12
Minerva Local	Minerva Elementary	K-5	46
Minerva Local	Minerva High	9-12	36
Minerva Local	Minerva Middle	6-8	36
Northwest Local	Stinson Elementary	3-5	31
Northwest Local	Northwest High	9-12	40
Northwest Local	Northwest Middle	6-8	31
Northwest Local	Northwest Primary	K-2	28

Perry Local	Pfeiffer Intermediate	5-6	47
Perry Local	Watson Elementary	K-4	23
Sandy Valley Local	Sandy Valley Elementary	PK-5	40
Sandy Valley Local	Sandy Valley High	9-12	32
Sandy Valley Local	Sandy Valley Middle	6-8	29

Participating Stark County Schools demographic information can be found in Appendix A (Ohio Department of Education, Cupp Report, 2018).

Instrumentation

Survey questions (Appendix B) were used for this research.

- Questions 1-11 asked participants to provide basic demographic information about themselves and whether or not the district prescribes to positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) and a bullying prevention program.
- Questions 12-31 were developed using the components of awareness and involvement of adults in schools when implementing the OBPP. These leveled components include school, classroom, individual, and community.
- Questions 32-34 were developed to answer the research questions for the current investigation. These items aimed to understand the impact of bullying prevention programs based on the participants' earlier responses.
- Questions 35-39 were developed to answer the research questions of support from district and building level administration, peer teachers, parents, and students.
- Questions 40-41 were developed to answer the questions about teachers' perceptions as it relates to increased or decreased instances of bullying and whether or not they perceive the bullying prevention program is valuable.

- Questions 42-44 provided participants with an opportunity to respond to open-ended responses about their experiences.
- Question 45 provides the respondent an optional opportunity to identify what district and school building in which he works.

Data Collection Procedures

A pilot survey was created and distributed to 19 teachers: six elementary school teachers, six middle, six high, and one traveling teacher who is assigned to several buildings. They were asked to complete a hardcopy of the survey while tracking the time it took to complete and to give consideration concerning any perceived ambiguity regarding any of the questions. After collecting the completed surveys, the completion times were averaged to be 12 minutes with no one reporting any ambiguity with any of the questions.

The researcher submitted an Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol application, letter of consent, and the survey to the Youngstown State University (YSU) IRB to gain approval to proceed with this research. Contact was made with a Stark County Educational Service Center representative who agreed to send an email to Stark County teachers consisting of the consent form and survey along with an explanation of the scope and intent of the study. The survey was developed through a Survey Monkey platform and was accessible for a two-week period. The representative of the Stark County Educational Service Center followed-up with a second email reminding them that access to the survey will be available for one more week. At the end of the two-week period, 301 participants completed the survey for a 19% response rate, however 205

identified using the OBPP for a response rate of 13.1%. These 205 respondents were considered this current study's sample.

Data Analysis

The current investigation involved a mixed methods' survey research design. The items that were collected included selected responses, Likert-style questions, and open-ended questions. The responses from the survey administration were imported into SPSS. The responses were analyzed for both reliability and validity. Data analysis provided descriptive analysis, tests of statistical assumptions, followed by multiple regression analysis. Results from both the selected-response items and open-ended responses were synthesized to address all research questions.

Significance

This research study was designed to investigate the implementation level and perceptions of teachers concerning of the effectiveness of OBPP. Since many schools have implemented the OBPP, the results of this study will help examine the perceptions teachers have regarding program implementation, any improvement in relationships between students, program support and sustainability, and the potential moderators that may impact teachers' perceptions such as time, training, gender of teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of school building, and topology. Moreover, the study will attempt to underscore teacher perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP. The benefit of survey research will allow school policymakers to concentrate their efforts on research-based data coming directly from the very educators with the responsibility of implementing and discharging such programs.

Summary

This research applied a quantitative and qualitative mixed methods' survey designed to investigate the relationships that exists between the OBPP and the perception of teachers using the program. This mixed methods' strategy was designed to allow corresponding methods to strengthen the claims of this research while limiting the weaknesses present if only one method was used (Creswell, 2009). Data were gathered from teachers in northeast Ohio public schools located in Stark County who have used the OBPP for two or more years.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to research the implementation level of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and to gauge the perceived effectiveness through the eyes of the personnel responsible for its implementation. Research results were able to answer these questions:

1. Do teachers in districts using the OBPP perceive that the program was implemented with fidelity?
2. Do these teachers report improvement in the relationship/interactions between bullies, victims, bully-victims, and non-status students as a result of the OBPP programming?
3. What are teachers' perceptions regarding program support and sustainability?
4. What potential moderators impact teachers' perceptions regarding the OBPP programming? Moderators include time, training, gender of teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of building, and topology.
5. What are the perceptions of the teachers regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP?

Descriptive Statistics

The surveys distributed to teachers contained questions asking topological information including gender, age, size and type of building and district, grades taught, and name of bullying program if one is used. Data collected for these questions are outlined below.

Table 3.

Gender of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	79	26.2
Female	221	73.4

Almost three-quarters of the respondents identified themselves as female whereas slightly over a quarter identified as male.

Table 4.

Age of Participants

What is your age?	Frequency	Percent
20 – 29	40	13.3
30 – 39	78	25.9
40 – 49	89	29.6
50 – 59	69	22.9
60+	23	7.6

The age of the respondents suggest that 78.4 percent are between the ages of 30-59, while relatively younger respondents, ages 20-29 represent 13.3%, and older respondents over the age of 60 represent 7.6%.

Table 5.

District Type

Do you consider the district you teach in to be	Frequency	Percent
Rural	106	35.2
Suburban	67	22.3
Urban	124	41.2
Not sure	3	1

Respondents from rural, suburban, and urban district are well represented as Stark County provides for a desirable cross-section of districts.

Table 6.

Building Type

Is your school considered to be	Frequency	Percent
Public	275	91.4
Private	7	2.3
Parochial	19	6.3

Public school districts are well represented with a 91.4% teacher participation rate. Parochial respondents represent 6.3% and private schools 2.3%. Since there were

no private secular schools in the sample, the assumption is that the private responses are parochial. When examining Table 2 parochial schools were only represented by 10 schools out of 50 with relatively low student enrollment, which in turn represents a low number of teachers.

Table 7.

Grade Level Taught

What grade(s) do you teach?	Frequency	Percent
Pre-kindergarten	4	1.3
Kindergarten – 3rd	62	20.6
4th – 5th	40	13.3
6th – 8th	121	40.2
9th – 12th	40	13.3
Multiple grades	33	11

A wide range of grades taught are represented as 40.2% of the teachers reported that they teach in the middle school grade range of 6-8. The next prominent group includes kindergarten through third grade representing 20.6% percent. It is beneficial to have all grade levels represented, especially middle school since school bullying begins at a young age and peaks during the middle school years and decreases as students progress into adolescence (Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992; Pelligrini & Bartini, 2000).

Table 8.

Years of Experience

How many years of experience do you have as a teacher?	Frequency	Percent
0 – 5	58	19.3
6 – 10	41	13.6
11 – 20	96	31.9
21 – 30	80	26.6
31+	25	8.3

The majority of participants are veteran teachers with 80.4% having more than 5 years of experience.

Table 9.

Teacher to Student Ratio

How many students do you serve throughout the day?	Frequency	Percent
1 – 15	28	9.3
16 – 29	67	22.3
30 – 49	33	11
50 – 99	60	19.9
100 – 149	70	23.3
150+	43	14.3

Responses may vary when considering whether the teacher is in self-contained elementary or special education units where student enrollment is lower than middle or high school classrooms where large numbers of students travel from teacher to teacher throughout the day. Co-curricular programs such as band also serve larger numbers of students on a regular basis.

Table 10.

Building Enrollment

How many students are enrolled in your school?	Frequency	Percent
Less than 100	3	1
100 – 299	38	12.6
300 – 499	107	35.5
500 – 999	125	41.5
1,000 – 1,999	15	5
2,000+	4	1.3
Not sure	9	3

The majority of respondents come from buildings with a student enrollment between 300 and 999. Larger buildings of 1,000 or more students are not well represented in the sample with only 6.3%.

Table 11.

PBIS as a Resource

Does your school use Positive Behavior Intervention		
Supports (PBIS) as a resource?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	250	83.1
No	26	8.6
Not sure	25	8.3

The majority of schools use Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) suggesting that other resources and programs are used to improve student behavior and school climate.

Table 12.

Is a Bullying Prevention Program Used?

Does your school subscribe to a bullying prevention program?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	214	71.1
No	29	9.6
Not sure	57	18.9

Most schools use a prescribed bullying prevention program; however 18.9% are unsure whether their buildings utilize a program at all.

Table 13.

Name of Bullying Prevention Program

If so, what is the name of the bullying prevention program?	Frequency	Percent
Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)	205	68.1
Bully Busters	1	0.3
Kiusaamista Vastaaan (KiVa)	1	0.3
Not sure	65	21.6
Other	15	5

The OBPP is the most popular program used by the respondents as it represents 68.1% of the responses. There were 205 teachers in the sample that currently use the OBPP program. The 205 teachers represent 13.1% of the population of approximately 1,557 teachers.

Table 14.

When Program was Implemented

How many years ago was the bullying prevention program implemented?	Frequency	Percent
Less than two	15	5
2 – 4	107	35.5
5 – 8	76	25.2
9 – 12	4	1.3
Not sure	90	29.9

Sixty-two percent of respondents suggested that program implementation occurred more than two years ago.

Research Question 1 asked, “*Do teachers in districts using the OBPP perceive that the program was implemented with fidelity?*” Table 15 provides reliability estimates for participant responses across the four implementation level components.

Table 15.

Implementation Level Components

Factor	α	Number of Items
School Level	0.80	8
Classroom Level	0.70	3
Individual Level	0.57	5
Community Level	0.90	3

As indicated above, all estimates of reliability are within acceptable ranges with the exception of Individual Level Components. The lower reliability estimate is impacted by participants' responses to one item, "*Do you intervene on the spot when bullying occurs?*" in which 90% of the respondents indicated the "Always" level of response. Eliminating this item results in a Cronbach $\alpha=.73$

Four implementation-level component factors were computed by taking the average response across the respective items for each factor. Table 16 provides the basic descriptive statistics for the Implementation Level Components.

Table 16.

Implementation Level Components

	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Community Level	2.82	0.87	-0.68	-0.19
Individual Level	3.06	0.53	-0.55	0.10
Classroom Level	2.85	0.76	-0.34	-0.58
School Level	3.15	0.64	-0.60	-0.69

As seen in Table 16, school level has the highest level of endorsement followed by individual level. However, all levels exceed an average response of 2.5. Additionally, these results indicate that the responses have relatively normal distributions with skewness and kurtosis within acceptable levels, $|2.0|$ and $|5.0|$, respectively (Field, 2016).

Pearson’s zero-order correlations between the factors are presented in Table 17.

Table 17.

Pearson’s Zero-Order Correlations between the Factors

Variable	1	2	3	4
Community Level (1)	-	.221**	.402**	.473**
Individual Level (2)	-	-	.357**	.232**
Classroom Level (3)	-	-	-	.466**
School Level (4)	-	-	-	-

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

As seen in Table 17, the four factors are positively related to each other with the strongest correlation existing between Classroom Level and School Level followed by Classroom Level and Community Level.

Research Question 2 asked, “*Do these teachers report improvement in the relationship/interactions between bullies, bully-victims, and non-status student as a result of the OBPP programming?*” Table 18 presents the distribution of responses regarding bullying incidents in the classroom and the entire school.

Table 18.

Bullying Incidents in Classroom and School

Questions	Significantly		No	Significantly	
	Increased	Increased	Change	Decreased	Decreased
Have bullying incidents					
in your classroom:	0.5	5.9	33.2	41	10.7
Have bullying incidents					
in the entire school:	1.5	8.3	23.4	36.1	6.3

Reliability estimate of the responses to these two items indicates good consistency, $\alpha=.67$, based on Cronbach Alpha analysis.

The bullying incidence data are provided graphically in Figure 1.

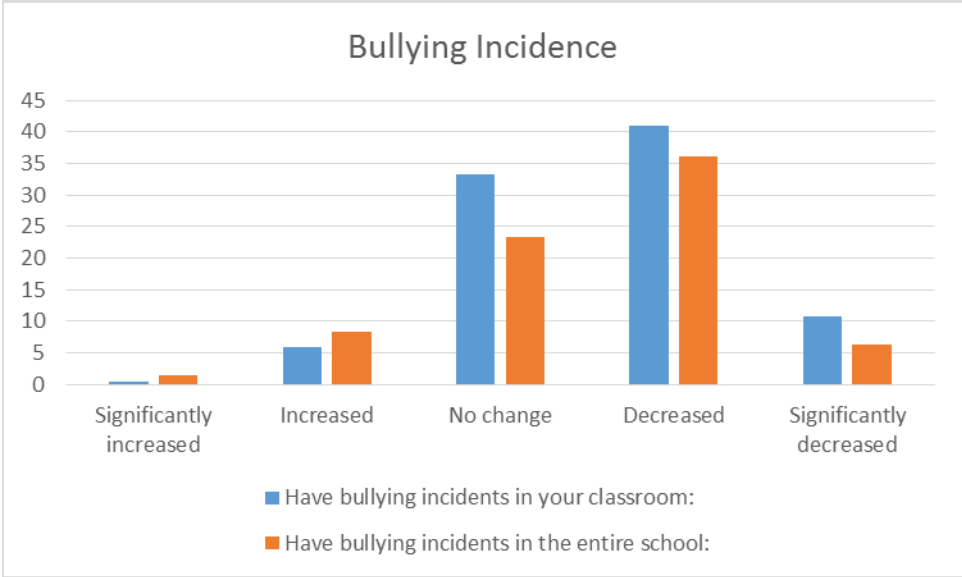


Figure 1. Percentage Response to Bullying Incidents

As seen in Figure 1, most respondents indicated a decrease at the classroom level (51.7%). Additionally, most respondents indicated a reduction in bully incidence throughout the school (42.2%).

Table 19 provides the percentage of responses to a secondary question about bullying incidences.

Table 19.

Reduction of Bullying Incidents in School

Question	Significant		No	Significant	
	Increase	Increase	Change	Reduction	Reduction
Do you believe that the bullying prevention program is reducing the incidents of bullying in your school?	2	8.3	27.8	55.1	5.9

As indicated in Table 19, most respondents indicate that they believe the bullying prevention program has reduced the incidence of bullying occurrences (61%).

Research Question 3 asked, “*What are teachers’ perceptions regarding program support and sustainability?*” Reliability estimate of the responses to these five items indicates good consistency, $\alpha=.89$, based on Cronbach Alpha analysis. The support response data is provided in Table 20.

Table 20.

Support Response Data

	Significantly Not Supported	Not Supported	No Change	Supported	Significantly Supported
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by school district level administration?	2	9.3	10.2	49.3	28.3
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by your principal(s)?	0.5	3.4	12.7	46.3	36.1

To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by peer teachers?	0.5	2.9	14.1	52.2	29.3
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by parents of your students?	1.5	11.2	23.9	53.2	8.8
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by your students?	1	7.3	20	60.5	10.2

As indicated in Table 20, the respondents indicated that they are supported by the building principals, peer teachers, district administration, students, and parents.

These results are graphically represented in Figure 2.

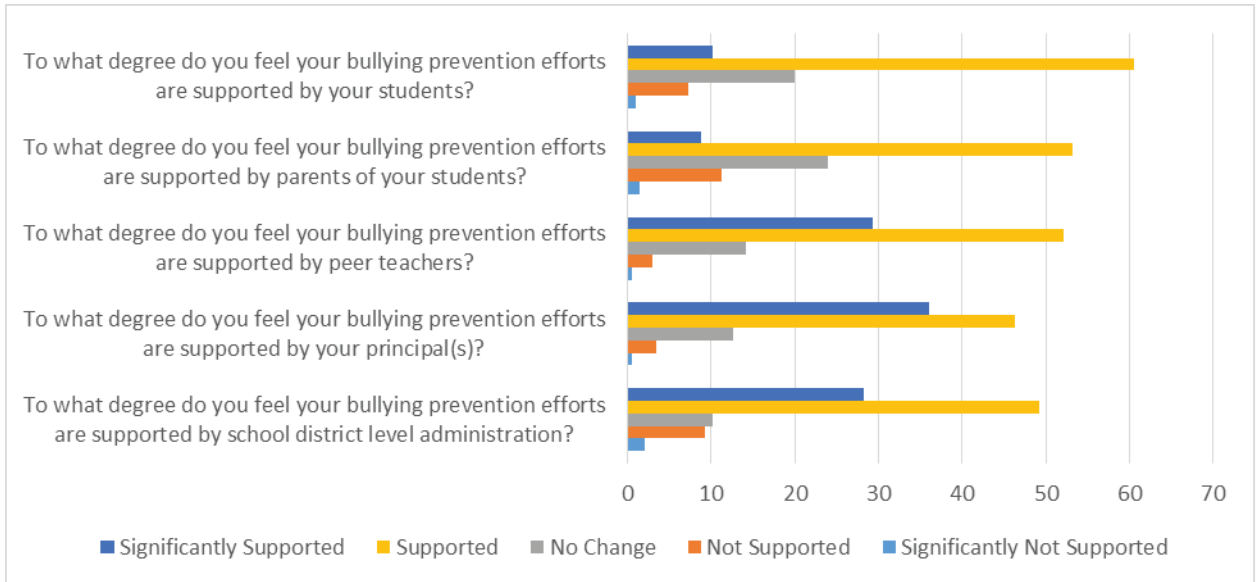


Figure 2. Support from Stakeholders

Additionally, respondents were asked, “Do you have the support needed to sustain the bullying prevention program in your school?” Responses indicate that 73.9% agree that they do receive support to sustain.

Research Question 4 asked, “*What potential moderators impact teachers’ perceptions regarding the OBPP programming? Moderators include time, training, gender of teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of building, and topology.*”

Figure 3 provides Pearson’s zero-order correlation across the support items and the potential moderators.

Question	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by school district level administration?(1)	.845**	.680**	.518**	.542**	.637**	0.061	.371**	0.052	.185**	.214**	-0.051	-.162*
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by your principal(s)?(2)		.725**	.469**	.472**	.628**	0.065	.371**	0.04	.143*	.150*	-0.037	-0.103
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by peer teachers?(3)			.593**	.558**	.450**	0.078	.364**	0.069	.159*	.233**	-0.099	-0.084
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by parents of your students?(4)				.720**	.340**	0.045	.342**	0.046	.217**	.265**	-.193**	-.203**
To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by your students?(5)					.329**	0.043	.316**	0.044	.246**	.218**	-.238**	-.194**
Sustain(6)						0.163	.417**	0.005	0.16	0.203	-0.13	-0.102
How many years ago was the bullying prevention program implemented?(7)							-0.009	-0.018	-.141*	-.143*	-0.034	-0.066
Did your school conduct committee and staff trainings?(8)								0.139	.192**	.200**	-0.114	-.158*
What is your gender?(9)									-0.052	-0.002	-.175*	0.033
How many years of experience do you have as a teacher? (10)										.709**	-.156*	-.144*
What is your age?(11)											-0.058	-.147*
How many students are enrolled in your school?(12)												-0.114
Do you consider the district you teach in to be?(13)												

"*" indicates $p < .05$; "***" indicates $p < .01$

Figure 3. Pearson’s Correlation between support variables and potential moderators.

As indicated in Figure 3, five support variables present significant correlation with the potential moderators. These include time, training, gender of teacher, years of

experience, age of teacher, size of building, and topology. A multiple regression analysis was conducted after creating a Support Score based on the teacher average responses to the five support items. The regression analysis was used to understand the variance explained in the teacher's level of reported support based on their age, years of experience, number of students in the school, type of district working in, and whether the school offered training. Results indicate that these moderators explain approximately 25.2% of the variance in teachers' reported level of support, $F(5, 177) = 11.90, p < .001$. The full results are presented in Table 21.

Table 21.

Regression Results

	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig
(Constant)	2.85	0.36		7.88	0.00
Age	0.11	0.06	0.16	1.79	0.08
Experience	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.51	0.61
Enrolled Students	-0.09	0.05	-0.13	-1.93	0.06
Trainings	0.32	0.06	0.35	5.20	0.00
Topology	-0.09	0.06	-0.11	-1.69	0.09

Specifically, the data indicate that male teachers report slightly higher levels of feeling supported ($M = 2.21$) relative to female educators ($M = 2.12$). Younger teachers (ages 20-29 and 30-39) as well as teachers with the least amount of experience (0-5 and 6-10 years) report the highest level of feeling supported. Educators from the urban districts ($M = 2.31$) followed by the rural district ($M = 2.09$) feel more supported than the educators in the suburban districts ($M = 1.91$). There was no difference in the level of support

reported by educators from public, private, or parochial schools. Educators who most recently experienced the implementation of the bullying program report the highest levels of support (less than two years and 2 to 4 years) relative to those whose program was implemented five or more years ago.

Research Question 5 asked, “*What are the perceptions of the teachers regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP?*” Teachers’ responses are examined across the public and parochial schools. Private school responses were combined with parochial responses since no private secular school were part of the sample. These results are presented in Table 22.

Table 22.

Responses to Effectiveness of Programming by School Type

	Significant Increase	Increase	No Reduction	No Change	Reduction	Significant Reduction
Public	1	4	26	85	134	18
Parochial	0	0	1	3	22	0

Chi-square analysis indicates that the differences in response for the parochial and public schools were not significant, $p > .05$.

Additionally, survey questions #44-45 were qualitative in design and attempted to solicit teachers’ perceptions regarding the overall strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP. Of the 205 respondents who identified the OBPP as the bullying prevention program used in their school, 108 of them responded to question #44, “*What do you perceive to be the strengths of the bullying prevention program?*”, and 119 responded to question #45,

“What do you perceive to be the weaknesses of the bullying prevention program?”

These qualitative responses (Appendix C) allowed for the capture of emerging themes.

Summary

The online mixed methods’ survey instrument was sent to 1,557 teachers serving in Stark County Ohio schools with the exception of one school district that is located in an adjacent county. Of the 301 teachers who responded to the survey, 205 identified as using the OBPP for a response rate of 13.1%. The results revealed the varying demographic backgrounds of the respondents, components of awareness and involvement of adults in schools when implementing the OBPP, perception of the support, and sustainability, and whether teachers perceive that the OBPP is reducing instances of bullying.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This intent of this study was to examine the implementation level and teachers' perceived effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) in their school buildings so the results of this research data can be used when considering potential bullying prevention programs. Findings from this study can be used to help reveal the relationships that exist between the leveled components of the OBPP and the stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the program. Results of this study might also help teachers and policymakers by providing quantitative and qualitative data regarding the perceived effectiveness of the widely accepted OBPP.

This study attempted to answer these five questions:

1. Do teachers in districts using the OBPP perceive that the program was implemented with fidelity?
2. Do these teachers report improvement in the relationship/interactions between bullies, victims, bully-victims, and non-status students as a result of the OBPP programming?
3. What are teachers' perceptions regarding program support and sustainability?
4. What potential moderators impact teachers' perceptions regarding the OBPP programming? Moderators include time, training, gender of

teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of building, and topology.

5. What are the perceptions of the teachers regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP?

Discussion and Implications

After the review of scholarly literature and data collection, synthesis of information is presented below:

Demographical data revealed that the majority of respondents identify as public school, mid-career, female teachers, with an average age range of 30 to 49 serving in middle schools with an enrollment of 300-999 students. Respondents identified their districts as rural (35.2%), suburban (22.3%), urban (41.2%), and unknown (1%) providing a good cross-section of district location.

Responses to Survey Questions

“Do teachers in districts using the OBPP perceive that the program was implemented with fidelity?” Since the OBPP is a multicomponent program having protocols for implementation, the researcher created a survey question asking, *“How many years ago was the bullying prevention program implemented?”* This question attempted to identify districts that have had a minimum of two years for OBPP implementation. Time was not considered a variable for fidelity for initial implementation because only schools with two or more years using the OBPP were part of the sample. However, time was used for teacher moderators impacting sustainability perceptions. Sixty-two percent responded that implementation occurred more than two years ago. Reliability estimates indicate that survey participant responses perceive that

the OBPP was implemented with fidelity in all leveled components including individual, classroom, school, and community. One lower reliability estimate was impacted by survey participant response to “*Do you intervene on the spot when bullying occurs?*” in which participants responded in the affirmative.

Additionally, a teacher who is more confident in his or her ability to manage a program is also more likely to implement a program with a high level of fidelity (Dusenbury et al.; Kallestad & Olweus, 2003). Self-reported confidence was not a moderator considered in this study.

“Do these teachers report improvement in the relationship/interactions between bullies, victims, bully-victims, and non-status students as a result of the OBPP programming?”

Survey questions 34-35 asked participants whether bullying incidents have increased or decreased in the classroom and the entire school since the implementation of the OBPP. Most respondents, 51.7%, believe that the OBPP programming has resulted in a decrease or significant decrease of bullying in the classroom, whereas 33.2% indicated no change. When asked about whether bullying has increased or decreased in the entire school setting, 42.4% responded that bullying decreased or significantly decreased.

The respondents perceived that the OBPP was implemented with fidelity. Fidelity means that the program was delivered as prescribed by the program’s creator (Durlak & DuPre et al; Dusenbury et al.). The majority of the participants indicated that they have seen a decrease in classroom bullying is supported by the research of O’Moore & Minton, (2005), Salmivalli et al., (2005), and Stevens et al., (2001) that the level of success of the program heavily depends of the fidelity of the implementation process.

This current study and research strengthens the claim that the implementation process is a critical component to the ultimate success or failure of an intervention program. School leaders should be cognizant of this concept while choosing a program to implement. They should pay special attention to the prescribed requirements necessary for successful implementation and the needs for nurturing the program well beyond its inception.

Survey question 41 also asked, “*Do you believe that the bullying prevention program is reducing the incidents of bullying in your school?*” and 61% of the respondents perceived that there was a reduction or a significant reduction in bullying incidents. These results suggest that teachers perceive that the OBPP has had an impact of the reduction of bullying incidents both in the classroom and school settings. These results are promising, however more data are needed concerning the developmental level of the students. Researchers are beginning to realize that one program may not be developmentally appropriate for all grades pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Furthermore, Kasen, Berenson, Cohen, and Johnson (2004) concluded that schools that did not have high levels of distress were ones that were academically focused and emphasized protective ideologies. Although this can be considered a responsibility of all stakeholders in a school building, much of culture and climate is a result of the effectiveness of building leadership and a shared sense of what is important for student learning (Peterson & Deal, 1998). The current study did not gauge whether the respondents believed that their building was academically focused or exhibited protective ideologies, although an argument can be made that protective ideologies are exhibited through the use of a bullying prevention program.

“What are teachers’ perceptions regarding program support and sustainability?”

The majority of surveyed respondents believe that they feel supported or significantly supported by building principal, peer teachers, district administration, students, and parents in regards to bullying prevention efforts using the OBPP. Respondents perceived the strongest sense of support comes from the building principals with 82.4% of respondents feeling supported or significantly supported, followed by peer teachers with 81.5%, district level administration with 77.6%, students with 70.7%, and parents of students with 62%.

The issue of sustainability was also addressed by asking, *“Do you have the support needed to sustain the bullying prevention program in your school?”* to which 73.9% agreed that they did.

Mishna (2008) stressed the importance of commitment to a bullying prevention program. Commitment can present an array of issues from the perspective of different stakeholders. For example, staff commitment can be influenced by personal biases, school administration by budgetary constraints, and general challenges for all as it relates to training time and effort necessary to discharge the program properly. Respondents did suggest that lack of time and a negligence to adequately sustain the program through ongoing training stifled the progress of the program. Olweus and Limber (2010) suggested that dissemination obstacles in the OBPP program in U.S. schools are related to the schools’ and staffs’ readiness to implement the program with fidelity. They found some staff resistant because of their belief that bullying was a rite of passage, a type of learning experience for developing children.

“What potential moderators impact teachers’ perceptions regarding the OBPP programming? Moderators include time, training, gender of teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of building, and topology.” The data collected indicated that male teachers reported slightly higher levels of feeling supported compared to female educators. Teachers, ages 20-29 and 30-39 as well as teachers with the least amount of experience 0-5 and 6-10 years, reported the highest level of feeling supported in regards to bullying intervention. Teachers from the urban districts felt most supported followed by the rural districts and then suburban districts. There was no difference in the level of support reported by teachers from public or parochial schools. Teachers who most recently participated in the implementation process, within two to four years ago, reported the highest levels of support relative to those whose program was implemented five or more years ago.

Kallestad and Olweus (2003) assert that teachers are the key agents for change when adopting and implementing the OBPP. The success of an intervention program is only possible when it is consistent with what the teachers believe are the needs of the classroom or school setting. Individual teacher perception of this need is typically related to the level of bullying in his classroom. This relationship is one of the predictors of whether a teacher will be a successful participant in the implementation of the program. The participants who believe that there is a need for an intervention program are more apt to provide genuine effort toward its success (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003).

Topological data gathered in this current study indicates that there are many variables that exist regarding moderators that might impact teachers perceptions. These attributes may change over time due to experiences not predicted in this study. There is a

need for more research regarding factors that predict or affect differences in individual teachers implementation efforts of school-based intervention programs.

“What are the perceptions of the teachers regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP?” Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) defined qualitative research as an investigation to study naturally occurring phenomena in all their complexity (p. 669). Two qualitative survey questions were designed to generate teachers’ perception regarding the overall strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP. These qualitative responses originated from teachers and allow for the capture of emerging themes.

Strengths

Strengths include the comprehensive messaging through actions, words, and signage, and the fostering of respect, kindness, understanding, and empathy toward others. The respondents emphasized that the bullying prevention program allowed all stakeholders to use a program perceived to be systematic and routine. The concept of consistency was mentioned due to the program’s levels of components and the expectation that stakeholders will follow its *modus operandi*. Additional emerging themes included the importance understanding the definition of bullying, how to report it, and what steps to follow to mitigate its occurrence. Overall sentiment seemed to be one of gratitude for having a sustained program to which to turn. One respondent stated, “still in existence, so I believe that says something.”

Weaknesses

The respondents did not criticize the program in its totality, instead concern revolved around lack of follow-through on behalf of the adult stakeholders. Two very prominent themes were borne out of this inquiry which included the perception of lack of

consistency and follow-through from peer teachers, administrators, and parents. Additionally, students were rarely mentioned as a reason for frustration on the part of the respondents. Two other emerging themes included time constraints to genuinely discharge the program as it was intended and the idea that, even with the best intentions, many stakeholders did not grasp the definition of bullying. This also caused the respondents to express frustration as many school personnel would react, or not react at all with any consistency regarding bullying incidents. One respondent stated,

“We kicked off the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program about four years ago. We made a strong implementation but from my knowledge there hasn’t been much follow through since with classroom meetings, committee meetings or school functions. Overall, it set the tone for our building and we do not tolerate bullying.”

Limitations

All survey research is subject to how the respondents interpret the questions. This self-reporting can have varying and unintended results. No inquiry was used to gauge how the respondents defined bullying nor was there any way to solicit differences regarding individual experiences or prejudices. The survey was sent to 1,557 teachers resulting in 301 responses for a 19.3% response rate, however, only 205 teachers indicated that they use the OBPP. Therefore, only 205 survey results were analyzed for a 13.1% sample size. The sample size is small considering that over 1,256 teachers decided not to participate in the study. The OBPP is used worldwide and while the focus of this research included only a small cross-section of respondents from Stark County

Ohio, the data results cannot be considered universal or applied without prudence to other regions.

Additionally, the impetus of the OBPP in Stark County was the result of a grant awarded to the participating schools. As with most grants, a strong adherence to an outside funding source may have caused the participants to be more vigilant in their attempt to implement the program than if the OBPP was funded by their own district. In essence, could the implementation fidelity level be higher in Stark County than other school districts using the OBPP due to external requirements and oversight?

Many respondents indicated that their school used the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program. This program and others that operate concurrently may have a significant impact on school climate and culture. The OBPP and PBIS are two intervention programs designed to improve school climate. Both programs share similar implementation strategies in engaging students with consistent school level procedures, best practices in classrooms, and specific interventions for students (Barto et al.). PBIS uses a three-tiered framework to promote strategies aimed at improving a positive school climate. Tier one encourages all students to behave appropriately while tier two provides for interventions in small group settings to help struggling students to build the necessary skill set to be successful in school. Tier three provides specialized individual supports to children exhibiting high risk behaviors.

The Center for Safe Schools facilitated a pilot program to integrate the OBPP and PBIS in Pennsylvania schools. The implementation process of the integrated programs was fluid because of the common language used by both programs and the overlap of strategies. Many of the Stark County schools that implemented both programs may be

experiencing higher levels of success than if only one program was used. The OBPP may not be the only reason why the respondents feel that the bullying situations in their schools are getting better.

The OBPP may not be the only strategy used to facilitate positive change involving student interaction. There are several intervention programs available to school districts, each offering various components and strategies promising to mitigate bullying. This research presents data pertaining to only one program, albeit a popular one; much more empirical research is needed in the field of bullying to truly begin to understand its implications.

Recommendations for Practice

In an effort to create a safer environment for school children to feel secure and grow, educators must be aware of the climate and culture of their school buildings and facilitate positive interactions between students. School culture is a significant and powerful component to the success or failure to provide an appropriate environment for children to learn (Peterson & Deal, 1998). This responsibility falls on the shoulders of all stakeholders especially teachers and administrators serving children in their school buildings. Through this research, the following points should be considered in improving the likelihood of reducing and mitigating incidents of bullying:

- School personnel should find means by which to gauge the perceptions of all stakeholders as it relates to school culture. Stakeholders should include students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration. Age-appropriate surveys can be used to solicit feedback from stakeholders and can be reviewed for emerging themes;

- School leaders should collect and review data on bullying prevention programs and share findings with parents and teachers. Further discussion should occur to decide what program best fits school and student needs;
- Bullying prevention programs should be implemented the way they have been suggested by the creator of the program. This includes kick-off events, messaging, training techniques, parental involvement, student activities, and evaluating the progress of the program. Deviation from its directives may increase the chance of inconsistency. Although the data suggest that the teachers feel a sense of support from peers, the research also revealed that teachers were critical of the inconsistencies that exist in how their peers dealt with bullying incidents;
- Sampson (2009) stated 66% of victims believe that school personnel mishandle incidents of bullying causing many students not to report bullying issues. This realization should result in the creation of confidential pathways for students to report bullying;
- Educators function as positive role models and consequences for bullying should be proactive instead of punitive in nature (Olweus et al., 2007). Program prevention should focus primarily on stakeholder awareness, climate, consistency of messaging using discussions and lessons in the classroom, and integration into school programs, sustained at all grade levels (Mishna, 2008);

- An emphasis should be placed upon sustainability as many bullying prevention programs consist of a single component event such as a school-wide assembly in an effort to increase bullying awareness. This one-time approach is unlikely to reduce bullying on a long-term and sustained basis (Bradshaw, 2015);
- The key principle of the OBPP is to underscore the importance of a non-authoritarian, multicomponent, school-wide model where the school climate includes warmth and acceptance while cultivating an atmosphere that will not tolerate hostile and other inappropriate aggressive behaviors; and
- Frequent checks and debriefing should occur with stakeholders in an effort to keep a pulse on how the program is working.

Recommendations for Future Research

Kallestad and Olweus (2003) stated that there is sparse empirical data regarding factors that may affect program implementation. Coyle (2008) endorsed the notion that successful school change is generally a result of positive school culture, however, there is little research available that correlates positive school culture and the successful implementation of a bullying intervention program. Moreover, programming implementation rates and degree of fidelity are just a few components worth further scrutiny. Further research should include an emphasis on factors that predict or affect differences in a school's implementation rate of a prescribed intervention program and the moderators that influence bullying attitudes and experiences of the implementer.

The federal government has been collecting school-based bullying data since 2005 and reported the first decrease in bullying incidents in 2013. This recent data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported a decrease in bullying from 28% to 22% among students from the age of 12 to 18 (DE, 2015). This development should prompt policymakers to research the bullying prevention efforts at the local, state, and federal levels to identify the causes for such a dramatic reduction considering that the percentage of bullying incidents consistently ranged between 28% to 32% for over a decade (DE, 2015).

Summary

Results from this research indicate that the respondents believe that the OBPP was delivered with fidelity with a perception of moderate decreases in bullying incidents in both classrooms and within the school setting. The majority of surveyed respondents believe that they feel supported or significantly supported by building principals, peer teachers, district administration, students, and parents in regards to bullying prevention efforts using the OBPP. The data revealed that male teachers reported slightly higher levels of feeling supported compared to female teachers. Teachers, ages 20-29 and 30-39 as well as teachers with the least amount of experience 0-5 and 6-10 years, reported the highest level of feeling supported in regards to bullying intervention. Teachers from the urban districts felt most supported followed by the rural districts and then suburban districts. There was no difference in the level of support reported by teachers from public or parochial schools.

Bullying continues to create concern among students, parents, and educators. Much of this concern did not result in scholarly research 30 to 40 years ago as many

large-scale, bullying research studies have occurred outside of the U.S., especially in Scandinavian countries; however, during the past 20 years, more emphasis has been placed on the ill effects of school bullying prompting more empirical exploration in the U.S. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the recent efforts to identify means to reduce and mitigate bullying incidents in schools. It is important to emphasize the need to research the implementer and implementation level when gauging the effectiveness of any bullying prevention program. This does not mean that a program can be evaluated solely on factors impacting the implementer and implementation level but can reveal challenges experienced early on in the implementation process. It is critical for school districts to explore these factors and give consideration to what best fits what the school wants to accomplish in regard to bullying prevention.

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Appendix A

(Ohio Department of Education, Cupp Report, 2018)

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF BUDGET AND SCHOOL FUNDING
DISTRICT PROFILE REPORT FOR CITY, EXEMPTED VILLAGE AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

IRN: 043497

DISTRICT: Alliance City SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	12.00	15.38	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	258.41	219.93	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	3,100.93	3,382.66	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	2,980.37	2,904.33	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.41%	0.32%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.03%	0.07%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	12.19%	23.91%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.28%	0.15%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	3.33%	7.53%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	69.69%	56.08%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	14.06%	11.94%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	100.00%	96.64%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.27%	2.20%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	17.82%	18.80%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$54,353.28	\$56,158.64	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	19.62%	27.41%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	15.31%	16.82%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	65.07%	55.77%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	25.00	26.45	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$77,092.87	\$75,596.54	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	123.91	125.70	138.58

IRN: 046177

DISTRICT: Brown Local SD

COUNTY: Carroll

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	33.00	57.24	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	22.28	15.41	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	735.38	881.84	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	626.37	848.51	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.16%	0.28%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.06%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	2.57%	0.98%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.11%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	1.78%	2.60%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	91.32%	93.12%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	4.17%	2.85%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	54.66%	47.00%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.00%	0.34%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	15.90%	14.19%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$41,151.39	\$51,501.47	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	35.56%	32.45%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	35.56%	18.44%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	28.89%	49.11%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	13.50	9.29	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$27,658.37	\$62,510.43	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	51.68	91.70	138.58

IRN: 043711

DISTRICT: Canton City SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	17.00	17.62	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	593.76	406.03	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	10,093.86	7,153.84	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	8,650.32	5,550.53	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.20%	0.43%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.16%	0.10%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	36.83%	39.43%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.21%	0.16%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	5.67%	11.35%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	41.56%	39.46%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	15.37%	9.07%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	100.00%	89.49%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	2.02%	4.46%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	16.90%	18.21%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$61,609.95	\$58,200.99	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	35.56%	32.48%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	13.97%	17.05%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	50.48%	50.46%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	95.63	50.87	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$85,592.89	\$82,540.15	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	105.48	139.23	138.58

IRN: 049833

DISTRICT: Canton Local SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	36.00	65.67	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	51.17	35.92	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	1,842.13	2,358.76	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	1,916.88	2,064.54	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.37%	0.51%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.07%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	9.07%	6.77%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.02%	0.10%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	1.23%	4.35%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	81.84%	79.77%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	7.48%	8.43%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	81.12%	77.56%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.26%	0.60%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	15.04%	16.65%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$65,159.34	\$57,183.11	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	20.16%	28.64%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	16.28%	18.28%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	63.57%	53.08%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	17.00	19.02	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$93,656.65	\$73,146.19	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	108.29	119.95	138.58

IRN: 049841

DISTRICT: Fairless Local SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	65.00	104.57	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	25.10	15.00	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	1,631.25	1,568.45	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	1,500.51	1,503.71	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.27%	0.32%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.04%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.53%	0.64%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.05%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	1.77%	1.65%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	95.01%	95.30%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	2.41%	2.00%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	44.31%	41.43%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.27%	0.50%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	15.24%	14.13%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$49,382.27	\$55,060.62	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	37.23%	25.56%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	10.64%	16.17%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	52.13%	58.27%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	14.00	11.12	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$76,375.57	\$76,590.62	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	112.36	135.38	138.58

IRN: 049874

DISTRICT: Louisville City SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	37.00	99.95	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	77.30	21.07	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	2,860.12	2,106.05	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	2,838.01	2,088.28	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.25%	0.42%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.02%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.18%	0.73%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.07%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.94%	1.27%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	96.33%	95.60%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	2.31%	1.89%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	33.08%	35.25%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.22%	0.17%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	15.12%	13.40%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$59,306.90	\$57,159.82	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	18.97%	22.95%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	7.47%	18.33%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	73.56%	58.73%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	15.00	14.89	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$92,862.47	\$77,288.04	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	185.83	136.98	138.58

IRN: 049890

DISTRICT: Minerva Local SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	81.00	114.24	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	22.94	15.46	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	1,858.11	1,765.60	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	1,793.03	1,684.46	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.17%	0.29%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.03%	0.04%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.77%	0.66%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.08%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	1.20%	1.72%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	95.39%	94.92%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	2.44%	2.29%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	47.98%	48.03%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.02%	0.43%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	16.04%	14.46%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$57,104.88	\$55,484.33	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	22.22%	27.96%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	19.19%	17.10%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	58.59%	54.94%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	8.51	12.64	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$78,755.35	\$76,168.14	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	206.13	134.28	138.58

IRN: 049908

DISTRICT: Northwest Local SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	32.00	80.90	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	58.98	21.41	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	1,887.47	1,732.14	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	1,817.10	1,694.04	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.77%	0.40%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.04%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	1.24%	0.54%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.07%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.66%	1.25%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	96.13%	95.80%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	1.20%	1.91%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	31.11%	30.45%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.17%	0.13%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	11.79%	12.94%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$56,794.01	\$57,236.96	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	13.16%	22.85%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	14.91%	16.98%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	71.93%	60.17%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	13.59	13.01	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$82,009.20	\$74,113.85	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	135.42	128.27	138.58

IRN: 049924

DISTRICT: Perry Local SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	24.00	58.14	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	188.33	60.32	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	4,519.97	3,507.02	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	4,760.98	3,361.88	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.50%	1.10%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.06%	0.07%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	2.94%	3.28%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.06%	0.12%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	3.09%	4.83%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	87.95%	85.91%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	5.38%	4.68%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	37.65%	40.37%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.55%	1.36%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	10.88%	14.35%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$63,517.32	\$60,433.30	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	12.96%	22.75%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	25.58%	17.69%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	61.46%	59.56%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	29.00	22.85	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$91,266.17	\$80,021.08	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	155.68	148.66	138.58

IRN: 049940

DISTRICT: Sandy Valley Local SD

COUNTY: Stark

	DISTRICT DATA	SIMILAR DISTRICT AVERAGE	CITY, E.V. & LOCAL S.D. STATEWIDE AVERAGE
A - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:			
1) SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA SQUARE MILEAGE (FY18)	73.00	106.05	67.94
2) DISTRICT PUPIL DENSITY (FY18)	17.91	12.97	41.22
3) TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP (FY18)	1,307.71	1,374.95	2,800.09
4) TOTAL YEAR-END ENROLLMENT (FY18)	1,307.62	1,321.36	2,568.11
5) ASIAN STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.15%	0.23%	2.49%
6) PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.03%	0.08%
7) BLACK STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.67%	0.62%	14.60%
8) AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.00%	0.07%	0.12%
9) HISPANIC STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	0.63%	1.39%	5.64%
10) WHITE STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	96.87%	95.90%	71.98%
11) MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS % OF TOTAL (FY18)	1.67%	1.78%	5.09%
12) % OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS (FY18)	46.87%	45.42%	48.30%
13) % OF STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (FY18)	0.08%	0.44%	3.00%
14) % OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (FY18)	12.46%	14.39%	14.95%
B - PERSONNEL DATA:			
15) CLASSROOM TEACHERS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$49,635.65	\$53,394.69	\$62,353.25
16) % TEACHERS WITH 0-4 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	28.89%	28.52%	25.14%
17) % TEACHERS WITH 4-10 YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	18.89%	18.33%	17.75%
18) % TEACHERS WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE (FY18)	52.22%	53.15%	57.10%
19) FTE NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (FY18)	10.00	10.65	19.81
20) ADMINISTRATORS' AVERAGE SALARY (FY18)	\$85,110.70	\$67,213.65	\$81,278.70
21) PUPIL ADMINISTRATOR RATIO (FY18)	130.37	123.57	138.58

Appendix B

Survey Instrument

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. What is your age?
 - a. 20 – 29
 - b. 30 – 39
 - c. 40 – 49
 - d. 50 – 59
 - e. 60+

3. Do you consider the district you teach in to be
 - a. Rural
 - b. Suburban
 - c. Urban
 - d. Not sure

4. Is your school considered to be
 - a. Public
 - b. Private
 - c. Parochial
 - d. Charter
 - e. Other

5. What grade(s) do you teach?
 - a. Pre-kindergarten
 - b. Kindergarten – 3rd
 - c. 4th – 5th
 - d. 6th – 8th
 - e. 9th – 12th
 - f. Multiple grades

6. How many years of experience do you have as a teacher?
 - a. 0 – 5
 - b. 6 – 10
 - c. 11 – 20
 - d. 21 – 30
 - e. 31+

7. How many students do you serve throughout the day?
 - a. 1 – 15
 - b. 16 – 29
 - c. 30 – 49
 - d. 50 – 99
 - e. 100 – 149
 - f. 150+

8. How many students are enrolled in your school?
 - a. Less than 100
 - b. 100 – 299
 - c. 300 – 499
 - d. 500 – 999
 - e. 1,000 – 1,999
 - f. 2,000+
 - g. Not sure

9. Does your school use Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) as a resource?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure

10. Does your school subscribe to a bullying prevention program?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure

11. If so, what is the name of the bullying prevention program?
 - a. Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)
 - b. Bully Busters
 - c. Kiusaamista Vastaaan (KiVa)
 - d. Not sure
 - e. Other

12. If “Other” please indicate the name of the bullying prevention program here:

13. How many years ago was the bullying prevention program implemented?
- a. Less than two
 - b. 2 – 4
 - c. 5 – 8
 - d. 9 – 12
 - e. Not sure

School-Level Components

14. Did your school establish a bullying prevention coordinating committee?
- a. Completed
 - b. Making progress
 - c. More progress needed
 - d. No progress made
 - e. Not sure
15. Did your school conduct committee and staff trainings?
- a. Completed
 - b. Making progress
 - c. More progress needed
 - d. No progress made
 - e. Not sure
16. Did you participate in the bullying prevention program training?
- a. Completed
 - b. Making progress
 - c. More progress needed
 - d. No progress made
 - e. Not sure
17. Did your school administer a bullying questionnaire?
- a. Completed
 - b. Making progress
 - c. More progress needed
 - d. No progress made
 - e. Not sure

18. Did you participate in monthly staff discussion groups concerning the bullying prevention program?
- Completed
 - Making progress
 - More progress needed
 - No progress made
 - Not sure
19. Did your school review and refine the supervisory system in regard to bullying?
- Completed
 - Making progress
 - More progress needed
 - No progress made
 - Not sure
20. Did your school hold a kick-off event to launch the program?
- Yes
 - No
 - Not sure
21. Did the school involve parents during the school event(s)?
- Yes
 - No
 - Not sure

Classroom-Level Components

22. Do you post rules and enforce schoolwide rules against bullying?
- Completed
 - Making progress
 - More progress needed
 - No progress made
23. Do you hold regular class meetings with students to explain and discuss the bullying prevention rules?
- Completed
 - Making progress
 - More progress needed
 - No progress made

24. Do you hold meetings with your students' parents to have discussions about bullying?
- a. Completed
 - b. Making progress
 - c. More progress needed
 - d. No progress made

Individual-Level Components

25. Do you supervise students' activities during non-instructional time (i.e., lunch, recess, etc.)?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

26. Do you intervene on the spot when bullying occurs?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

27. Do you hold meetings with students involved in bullying?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

28. Do you hold meetings with parents of students involved in bullying?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

29. Do you develop individual intervention plans for students involved in bullying?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

Community-Level Components

30. Does the school involve community members on a bullying prevention coordinating committee?
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
 - Not sure
31. Does your school develop partnerships with community members to support your school's bullying prevention program?
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
 - Not sure
32. Does your school help to spread bullying prevention messages and principles of best practice in the community?
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
 - Not sure
33. Have you consistently reinforced positive consequences for bullying incidents?
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
34. Have bullying incidents in your classroom:
- Significantly increased
 - Increased
 - No change
 - Decreased
 - Significantly decreased
 - Not sure

35. Have bullying incidents in the entire school:
- Significantly increased
 - Increased
 - No change
 - Decreased
 - Significantly decreased
 - Not sure
36. To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by school district level administration?
- Significantly supported
 - Supported
 - No change
 - Not supported
 - Significantly not supported
37. To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by your principal(s)?
- Significantly supported
 - Supported
 - No change
 - Not supported
 - Significantly not supported
38. To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by peer teachers?
- Significantly supported
 - Supported
 - No change
 - Not supported
 - Significantly not supported
39. To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by parents of your students?
- Significantly supported
 - Supported
 - No change
 - Not supported
 - Significantly not supported

40. To what degree do you feel your bullying prevention efforts are supported by your students?
- a. Significantly supported
 - b. Supported
 - c. No change
 - d. Not supported
 - e. Significantly not supported
41. Do you believe that the bullying prevention program is reducing the incidents of bullying in your school?
- a. Significant reduction
 - b. Reduction
 - c. No change
 - d. Increase
 - e. Significant increase (In bullying incidents)
42. Do you think having a bullying prevention program in your school is valuable?
- a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree
43. Do you have the support needed to sustain the bullying prevention program in your school? How so?
44. What do you perceive to be the strengths of the bullying prevention program?
45. What do you perceive to be the weaknesses of the bullying prevention program?
46. Would you be willing to share in what district and school you teach? If so, please answer here:
- District _____ School _____

Appendix C

What do you perceive to be the strengths of the bullying prevention program?

Zero tolerance, rewarding positive relationships and respect for others at all times.

Well defined rules and expectations

We have caring individuals in these positions who are really great at their jobs!!! Plus, all of our staff is on board with the program.

We don't have one right now.

We do not have a formal program at the high school level.

We do a nice job of presenting speakers. the message comes in and it changes kids for a day or two then they go right back to the same behaviors.

Very straightforward and easy for kids to understand.

unsure

to my knowledge we do not have a program

To make younger students aware that their actions and words are harmful and should start making better choices early on.

They, the students, are able to have a voice during our monthly meetings.

The weekly meetings and safe circle time discussions are super valuable.

The support of the administration for teachers.

The students can report things anonymously, so they don't have to worry about being singled out by the other students for trying to do the right thing.

the students are understanding what bullying is and if they start bullying other students their will be consequences,

The students are not afraid to speak up and tell an adult if there is bullying going.

The strengths are that consistent procedures have been put into place for all teachers/students to use.

The strengths are in the team collaboration to push the initiative. They are also in the immediate addressing of incidents and the unified message that bullying is NOT ok.

The strength is the consequence we have in place.

The strength is how fast we deal with the issues. It also helps that we have data from LiveSchool.

The staff involved hold circle times and individual conversations with students.

The positive rewards

The positive outlook to each other.

The non negotiables of PBIS

The kids say monthly meetings remind them of bullying and thus, causes more bullying.

The focus on upstanders, kindness, mistreatment. We don't use the word bully.

The class meetings

The children now understand what constitutes bullying as opposed to before when a lot of them felt bullied by someone simply being mean occasionally.

The bullying survey so we can pinpoint who is the bully and who is the victim, so we can intervene at the appropriate time

The best part is building community.

The behavior modification.

That we are aware and care. If a teacher hears or is told then they will advocate and help.

teamwork

Teaching them life skills and manners that will transfer over as diversity grows and as they grow.

Teaching others to stand up for others.

Teaches students why people bully a how to handle certain situations when bullied

teacher/student interactions

Talking about problems our students face daily is identifying and taking active steps to correct the social issues our students have.

Students feel like they have an avenue to get help, rather than feeling alone or isolated.

Students reaching out to help each other is especially powerful, as it can give them opportunities to make a positive connection with a peer.

Students are rewarded and gain attention for doing the right thing.

Students are reminded often about the effects of bullying and that they are to respect all people.

Students are involved and take ownership. They are willing to have the hard conversations.

Students are becoming more aware.

Student involvement

Strategies are taught to students to utilize when dealing with a bully.

Some students respond well to it.

Showing teachers how to model and intervene successfully and positively

Setting a positive tone for kids to stand up for those that are being bullied.

Sets clear consequences

see previous response

see 43

school-wide involvement and weekly class meetings

school counselor and administration-teacher involvement with individuals and notifying parents

Restorative practices

Reinforcing to students that bullying is wrong and hurtful.

Quick action when it is reported

protect kids

prevention/ positive actions conversations with students. "Upstanders"

Posted signage, reminders to students/staff, class meetings

Positive reinforcements and helps to make students aware of what to look for

Positive Reinforcement, Support from Principal and Counselor, Class Meetings

Positive points

PBIS has been in place for a longer period of time, so it is stronger

PBIS framework

Overall awareness and prompt investigation of reported incidents

One of the strengths of the program is constant reiteration of what students should do if they witness any bullying to another student.

Once a month talking to the students in class setting.

on the spot training and the classroom meetings are very beneficial when done appropriately

Not sure.

Not sure we have a specific program.

Not aware of a program implemented

None. Bullies are talked to and then not held accountable.

No tolerance.

na

na

NA

n/a

n/a

N/A

n/a

n/a

Most students and parents don't truly understand what bullying is. Most feel that one offense is considered bullying. Parents also don't see what role their child plays in specific incidents and only expects consequences for other students.

minimal

Mindset Monday meetings/classroom conversation meetings

Many involved

making students aware of what bullying is and how to deal with it

Listen to the student being bullied and take quick, appropriate steps to counter it.

Knowledge, education, resource allocation.

Kids can feel safe knowing that any issues will be solved. Kids know teachers are there for them. They learn to stand up for others.

Just constantly discussing bullying. Positive reinforcement for positive behavior.

It's regularly talked about.

It's proactive, rather than reactive.

It was a great program to allow for conversations BEFORE, so then students understood situations BEFORE situations arise.

It talks specifically what is and is not bullying

It makes the kids more aware of different situations and how they can make a difference.

It makes people aware of the types of bullying and it teaches students to be upstanders.

It is still in existence, so I believe that says something.

It is a well-known program that has the potential to be very successful.

It gives us a time to talk to our kids about non-academic content, which I believe is important.

It explains to the students what bullying is.

It encourages students to report bullying and to stand up for others.

It doesn't require a lot of time.

It comes from a positive perspective, and the class meetings help to form more of a community in the classroom.

It can be used to reinforce proper behavior when bullying incidents occur.

Insight On the type of bullying that is taking place
immediate consequences, both positive and negative
immediate and logical consequences

IDK

I think that Start with Hello and the efforts to teach kids about being an "upstander" are really good concepts which may either promote a prevention of bullying by encouraging students to learn how to be friendlier with others and/or teach students how to address bullying in the moment-where it happens which is typically not around any adults who could intervene.

I think it's great for the kids to see. It really opens their eyes. I'm not sure it causes change immediately, but I think if they discussed it and saw it in action more often it might cause more change.

I see kids happy about the chance to blow up school schedules and rules.

I heard a speaker discuss that bullying programs have increased the problem.

I don't know.

Helps some students to feel more secure about going to school.

Helping everyone understand what bullying really is and the effects of bullying behavior on others.

Having follow through from education to positive behavior reinforcement.

Has the potential to develop better relationships.

Guidance office

great interventions

Good reinforcers school wide. Small group of handpicked kids meet monthly and have conducted a couple of inclusion events.

Good methods and ideas

Giving students the chance to get to know other students on a more personal level.

getting to really understand the students point of view..and making our schools..safe for all involved..

Everyone working together on the situation at hand.

Everyone on the same page for not tolerating it; and not "blowing it off".

everyone on same page

EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS

easy to manage

Don't see a strength

discussions to be had, and communications to spread awareness

different components to focus on

Conversations must be had so that people can recognize how to identify bullying, what it is, as well as, what it is not. There needs to be a catalyst to start these conversations. I believe we got it started but we haven't done much since. Perhaps there is more going on behind the scenes.

Consistent message to the students of expected behaviors

Consistency of open group discussions.

Consistency and fairness

Consistency

Communication with counselors

communication and meetings

Collaboration

Classroom meetings and awareness for prevention.

Classroom meetings

Class meetings

Class meetings

Building rapport with the students through class meetings helps students report bullying.

I think the peer surveys to ask if bullying is being seen is an opportunity for students to report that might not normally do so.

Brings awareness to what bullying is

bringing awareness

Behaviors are identified quickly and in a safe manner by people who are equipped to help. It is easily accessible to students who need help. Students were trained to know how to implement the program.

Awareness, identification

awareness of bullying

awareness and what steps to follow

Awareness

Awareness

Awareness

Awareness

awareness

At our level, distinguishing between what bullying is and isn't is really opening their eyes. Bullying as it pertains to social networking is also becoming focused on.

anonymous website access

always good to teach kindness, empathy, and understanding

All stakeholders are engaged

All staff participates in the program.

Administration Teachers Decreased incidents. Increased feeling of security.

Addressing bullying on the spot.

Accessibility and Routine

A warning whenever students are displaying risky behaviors

A system of responses and interventions

What do you perceive to be the weaknesses of the bullying prevention program?

When we did use the program time was the weakness.

What does the word bully mean. I think it is a wide spectrum word that is misused.

We need to build on the opportunities for students to reach out to each other in positive ways. We have made a good start with this, but we really need to expand on it, so that students feel empowered and motivated to be kinder to one another.

We kicked off the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program about four years ago. We made a strong implementation but from my knowledge there hasn't been much follow through since with classroom meetings, committee meetings or school functions. Overall, it set the tone for our building and we do not tolerate bullying.

We kick it off in the beginning of the year and then never talk about it again.

We just don't have enough counselors to address all of the issues between bullying and mental health.

We have students in our school with "major issues" and behavioral problems and it's hard to reach them with the anti-bullying messages.

We don't take the time to do it enough.

We do not have a formal program at the high school level.

using the word bullying. and trying to change the bully. We need to focus on how to cope with meanness as well.

unsupervised areas

Understaffed.

TRegular and consistent timme spent with entire class room, including students who tend to be kind and inclusive and those who bully and everyone in between. we need to better instill a feeling of community.

Too much focus on bullying and little focus on character development and social-emotional growth. Something we changed with our own program.

Too many steps

Time to restore relationships.

time to implement program

time to have discussions with students

Time and labor intensive

time

they are teenagers and are generally self absorbed.

There will always be cracks where you will not be able to reach all of the students.

Continual awareness and observation of all students is ongoing key but yet struggle.

There isn't enough consistency within the district.

There is not a lot of in person communication.

There are times where the consequences for some children seem inconsistent and do not match the seriousness of the offense the child committed.

The weakness is that many people have to be depended on to deliver the messages.

The weakness is a common flaw within all of our initiatives. That is that we receive the training, we are told to implement, then there is zero follow up training and thus the initial startup is lost in translation. I have not heard about Olweus in some time. The latest has been IIRP restorative practices. While I think these two initiatives go hand in hand, they are not the same.

The utilization of the program consistently throughout the building.

The unreported situations of bullying and students not wanting to come to school.

The students seem to think it is funny or a joke to report something and they will report things like a broken drinking fountain instead of a real issue. Also, students will report things that aren't happening and it will cause law enforcement to spend time looking into false claims.

The students say the "right" things during meetings, but it doesn't always carry over to real life incidents

The students don't understand the difference between a rude gesture and bullying all the time.

The opposite of #44, above.

The follow through

The consistency with all staff using this program and leading by example. Many of our students are street smart. When teachers do not lead by example, that teaches the students what not to do.

That everyone is not on the same page. Once you address a kid being mean or girl drama it stops or the kids become friends. Is it bullying now?

Technology

Teacher buy-in is still not totally there. We are trying to think of ways to promote that growth.

Support to handle concerns of those student who are bullying others.

Students still not reporting it

Students see bullying everyday in the world. On TV (SNL), and in the home. The program does not address the outside world, only the school .

Students don't always realize exactly when bullying is happening if they are the ones doing the bullying.

Students do not buy into the program. Students who are bullies continue to bully. they need to be removed from the school.

Students and parents don't seem to understand what bullying really is. They see bullying in normal interactions.

Student only meet once a month for 44 minutes

Still occurs

Staying in the forefront with all the other things going on.

Sometimes things go on that we, as teachers, are not aware of happening.

Sometimes the students that repeatedly bully sometimes are not worked with enough to change their mindset.

Sometimes students use it in an inappropriate manner

Sometimes bringing up bullying makes children who are not bullied think that they are bullied. It also needs to focus on helping the ones who are bullied to stand up for themselves.

Some teachers do not have control over their groups and they interrupt other groups.

Some stakeholders are not as engaged as others

see 43

Schedule change, testing, special events, snow days

Reinforcement at home!

recognize bullying and getting students to interact.

parental support toward changing a child's behavior patterns

Parent support

Parent or community involvement

parent involvement.

parent involvement is sometimes tricky

parent buy in

One of the weaknesses is that bullying still occurs!

OLWEUS turned bullying into a hot button word. In some ways it did more harm than good.

not sure what is being done

Not sure we have a specific program.

Not really for high school students. May need to be geared more toward social media

Not implementing it.

Not having everyone on board including students & parents

not followed through with by administration

Not everyone sees things the same way.

Not enough training or background knowledge of the program

Not enough time to implement properly

Not enough punishment

Not enough hours in the day let alone the school day.

NOT ENOUGH ENFORCEMENT

Not enforced

not done with fidelity

not consistently enforced

Not consistent. We need to teach kids how to deal with bullying - they don't disappear after grade school.

Not aware of a program implemented

not as prevalent in lower grades as upper grades because there is not as much need...

Not an emphasis by principal

Not all teachers trained

not all teachers trained

Not all teachers are as willing to enforce things as others.

None. Bullies are talked to and then not held accountable.
none
Non certified staff have not received training-- playground monitors etc and they often refer incidents to teachers who didn't witness the event
no training
No follow through consequences
Needs to be consistent.
needing proof or witness support to have a office support.
NA
NA
N/A
n/a
n/a
N/A
n/a
More lesson plans.
Maybe more parent involvement.
May benefit from more parent/community participation.
Maintaining long term, staff buy in
Limited space.
limited scope...
less parent involvement than when program started
Lack of support from school counselor. Teachers take on most of the intervention in addition to teaching and other classroom tasks and responsibilities.
Lack of follow-up for both the bully and the victim.
Lack of follow through, or consistency.
Lack of follow through by the principal.
Lack of consistency across the district. Each building is at a different level.
Lack of consequences. Excuses made for lack of consequences.
Lack of consequences for bullies
Lack of buy in with the changing administration.
Lack of accountability when teachers do not follow-through on the class meetings.
It's not consistently being used by staff.
It's not consistent.
It takes committed people to sustain it. It tends to move to the back burner over time.
It takes away our students need to solve their own problems. They become reliant on the adults. And...EVERYTHING turns into a bullying situation.
It not really being implemented
It is not daily and is overcrowded.
It is difficult to maintain consistent meetings on the prevention programs as we deal with many other school issues.

It almost seems to make some students, who are more inclined to bully to talk about it more and make light of it. It makes others students upset or sensitive to situations during the school day.

Ineffective.

In a training it was stated that there would be no tolerance for bullying and parents would be contacted and told when students were aggressors or victims. I have not always seen this happen, even at the start of the program nearly five years ago.

If you focus too much on a "bullying program," then parents assume you have a huge issue with bullying. Then they label every incident as a "bullying" incident even when it clearly isn't. It allows the parents to declare the school isn't doing anything and to expect strong consequences for the other child. (even if it is a friendship issue or a one-time disagreement on the basketball court - they call it bullying.)

IDK

I have seen no noticeable change to bullying, which was already minimal at the high school.

I feel that "some" of the incidents are sometimes "brushed off" as not a bullying incident, when maybe they need to be taken more seriously. Also, I feel that some of the students involved are given "consideration" that others are not, depending on who they are.

Numerous students are given chance after chance after chance, while others are dealt with swiftly and harshly. That's just my opinion.

I feel parents that have kids that bully are often bullies themselves. Children live what they see. Some students do not have positive role modeling from home.

I feel it is not pervasive enough and regularly taught enough. I feel that this is a type of skill that requires more active practice and discussion such as role playing situations and guided group discussion about how to handle real situations. It needs to have other social skill concepts taught as well such as perspective taking skills and communication skills.

I feel as though it affects the kids in that moment, but it seems to be an "out of sight, out of mind," thing for them.

I don't know.

I can't think of any weaknesses at this time.

I believe the program was implemented one year and then forgotten.

I am not sure how to answer this question. We did not fully implement the program.

hot spots always an issue with supervision regardless of training

Getting everyone on board and maintaining a strong program.

Funding and finding ways to include parents.

For many students it does cause the to overgeneralize what bullying is and report more incidents that may or may not be incidents. When the program first started there was a large amount of students reporting because they had difficulty understanding the definitions of bullying.

follow through on consequences

Follow through from playground to classroom

follow through and time to put it in place

follow through and consequences

Follow through and consequences

Follow through

elementary based - no clear reasonable transition to HS

does not seem like enough time to do everything.

Content, Curriculum, Structured Lessons, Training

consistently used by teachers throughout the building

consistent consequences

consistent and immediate follow through regardless of the student involved

Consistency of teachers

consistency from administration

Consistency

Competing with the behaviors they are watching on their tablets and video games.

Community connections

Children who have no fears of discipline will continually bully. There isn't an internal desire to stop. These kids continue to be ruthless towards each other outside of the classroom or when they leave school.

can't answer that....

Cannot control the social media bullying and it is out of control.

Bullies get away with it.

another program to go along with everything else a teacher has to do

all teachers and classified staff should be trained

“Bully” Wording can misleading.

Appendix D

Youngstown State University

Informed Consent Form

Hello! I am James Kalis, a doctoral student at Youngstown State University, and Dr. Karen H. Larwin and I are conducting a study using the following survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated. This research study is designed to investigate the perceptions of teachers concerning of the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP). Since many schools have implemented the OBPP, the results of this study will help examine the perceptions teachers have regarding program implementation, any improvement in relationships between students, program support and sustainability, and the potential moderators that may impact teachers' perceptions such as time, training, gender of teacher, years of experience, age of teacher, size of school building, and topology. Moreover, the study will also attempt to underscore teacher perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the OBPP. The benefit of survey research will allow school policy makers to concentrate their efforts on research-based data coming directly from the very educators with the responsibility of implementing and discharging such programs.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to answer a 45-question survey that will take about 12 minutes to complete.

You will not be harmed by participation in this study. Participation is voluntary. We will minimize any risks by using the secure, password protected web-based SurveyMonkey. SurveyMonkey will allow us to activate a collector option that will allow for only anonymous responses and will exclude email and IP addresses. Your responses will be sent to and stored on a password protected link. No one, including the researcher will know if you participated in the study. Participants must be at least 18 years old. Submission of this survey implies your consent. If you have questions concerning this research, contact Dr. Karen Larwin at (330)941-2231 or khlarwin@ysu.edu or James Kalis at [REDACTED] or james.kalis@riversideschools.net

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research

project, you may contact the Office of Research at Youngstown State University at (330)941-2377 or YSUIRB@ysu.edu.

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix E



One University Plaza, Youngstown, Ohio 44555
Office of Research
330.941.2377

February 15, 2019

Dr. Karen Larwin, Principal Investigator
Mr. James Kalis, Co-investigator
Department of Counseling, School Psychology & Educational Leadership
UNIVERSITY

RE: HSRC PROTOCOL NUMBER: 125-2019
TITLE: Implementation Level and the Perceived Effectiveness of the Olweus
Bullying Prevention Program

Dear Dr. Larwin and Mr. Kalis:

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed the abovementioned protocol and determined that it meets the criteria of DHHS 45 CFR 46(d)(2), and therefore is exempt from full committee review.

Any changes in your research activity should be promptly reported to the Institutional Review Board and may not be initiated without IRB approval except where necessary to eliminate hazard to human subjects. Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects should also be promptly reported to the IRB.

The IRB would like to extend its best wishes to you in the conduct of this study.

Sincerely,



Dr. Greg Dillon
Interim Associate Vice President for Research
Authorized Institutional Official

GD:cc

c: Dr. Jake Protivnak, Chair
Department of Counseling, School Psychology & Educational Leadership