The Franklin School Committee aims to provide its students and staff with an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from student harassment, also known as bullying.

Franklin School Committee Anti-Bullying Task Force Report

October 26, 2010

Presented to Franklin School Committee

Table of Contents

I. CHARGE 5
A. Make-up of task force 6
1. Task force members included: 6
2. Superintendent and FSC chair co-chaired task force 6
B. Reviewed text of proposed legislation 7
C. Reviewed current policies in place 7
D. Reviewed current practices 7
E. Task force meeting schedule 7
1. Report back to FSC on October 26, 2010 7
2. Meetings on Monday evenings at 6 p.m. from July through October 2010 7
F. Report on the following: 7
1. Bullying in Franklin 7
2. Identify items to include in new policy 7
3. Identify potential costs associated with implementation of various recommendations in following areas: 7
4. Identify grants or other sources of funding for anti-bullying efforts 7
5. Identify how the school district policy can be implemented in a manner that is ongoing throughout the school year and integrated with 8
6. Identify acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyberbullying which may constitute criminal activity 8
7. Address first amendment, due process, and other concerns 8
G. Develop resource manual on bullying for use by the district 8
H. Develop proposed plan to address bullying prevention and intervention, including the following: 8
1. descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation; 8
2. clear procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians and others to report bullying or retaliation; 8
3. a provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously; provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report; 8
4. clear procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation; 8

5. the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation; provided, however, that the disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior; 8

6. clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assessing that victim's needs for protection; 8

7. strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about an act of bullying; 9

8. procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a victim and a perpetrator; provided, further, that the parents or guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and provided, further, that the procedures shall provide for immediate notification pursuant to regulations promulgated under this subsection by the principal or person who holds a comparable role to the local law enforcement agency when criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator; 9

9. a provision that a student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action; and 9

10. a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for perpetrators and victims and for appropriate family members of said students. The plan shall afford all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law. 9

II. Summary of New Bullying Prevention Law 10

III. Current policies pertaining to bullying: 12

A. JI Student's right and responsibilities 12

B. Right to free inquiry and expression 12

C. Right to privacy 12

D. Responsibility to observe reasonable rules 12

E. JIC – Student conduct 12

F. JICFA – Hazing prohibited 12

G. JU – Electronic Communication Policy 12

IV. Current Practices 12

A. Open Circle/Elementary Program 12

B. A Review of Franklin's Teenangel Chapter/Middle School 13

C. Rachel's challenge/Franklin High School 14

D. Other Programs 15

V. Bullying in Franklin 15
A. Overview of Current Research and Data on Bullying 15
1. Bullying As Cited in the Literature 15
2. Prevalence 16
3. Data on Bystander Behavior 16
B. Local Trends 17
1. Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center Research (MARC) June 2008 17
2. Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey 2008 17
3. References 19
4. Electronic Resources and Data 21
C. Anecdotal Reports on Franklin Schools by level 22
1. Elementary 2009-2010 22
2. Middle school 23
D. Police Response to Bullying 24
1. Incident reported to school personnel 24
2. Incident reported directly to Franklin Police Department 24
VI. Items to include in new policy 25
VII. Costs associated with implementing programs 25
VIII. Grants and other sources of funding 25
IX. Implementing the policy 26
A. Bullying in the curriculum 26
B. Procedures for handling bullying reports 27
C. District Plan 30
X. Legal issues 30
XI. Resource Manual 31
XII. Addendum to the Report 33
A. Articles on bullying 33
B. PowerPoint presentation of the Task Force 33
C. Resource Manual 33
D. Legal issues pertaining to bullying 33

E. Bullying manuals and reports 33
F. Sample policies 33
G. Programs and costs 33
H. Proposed plan to address bullying prevention and intervention 33

I. CHARGE

The Franklin School Committee aims to provide its students and staff with an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from student harassment, also known as bullying. Indeed, the mission of the Franklin Public Schools is to "cultivate each student's intellectual, social, emotional and physical potential through rigorous academic inquiry and informed problem solving skills within a safe, nurturing and respectful environment."

Among our core values are the following:

- Through our words and our actions, we create a culture of civility, thoughtfulness, appreciation and approachability.
- We partner with all members of the community to exchange ideas, solve problems and build a comprehensive educational experience.

Recent events involving bullying (including cyberbullying) in communities outside Franklin have prompted the School Committee to review its current policies and practices in these areas. In addition, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is considering anti-bullying legislation which may be implemented in the next few weeks.

The School Committee recognizes that bullying can have long-term effects on an individual's self-esteem and mental health. Children talk about feeling alone, worthless and unable to concentrate on their studies. It can wreck their education and destroy their confidence. If bullying is not tackled promptly and appropriately, the consequences can be destructive. Addressing bullying in a forthright and direct manner will help our schools become safer places. A safer school means a better environment for learning.

In consideration of the foregoing, the School Committee has decided to immediately form a task force, pursuant to Policy BDF, to address bullying concerns and make recommendations for the implementation of policies and practices to combat this social problem. The outline below shall contains the charge to the task force, and illustrates the matters we reviewed and include in this report.

A. Make-up of task force

1. Task force members included:

2. Superintendent and FSC chair co-chaired task force

(1) Jeffrey N. Roy

(2) Maureen Sabolinski

b) School Committee representative

(1) Paula Mullen

c) Student

(1) Laura Cafasso

d) Parents and school volunteers

(1) Barb Blake

(2) Cora Armenio

e) Teachers/ school staff

(1) Deb Montana

(2) Kristin Cerce

f) Administrators

(1) Sally Winslow

(2) Corine Minkle

(3) Jane Hyman

(4) Beth Witcoff

(5) Paul Peri

(6) Peter Light

g) Community representatives

(1) Bartt Pinchuck

(2) Jeanne Sherlock, YMCA

h) Local law enforcement agencies

(1) Officer Chris Spillane

B. Reviewed text of proposed legislation

C. Reviewed current policies in place

D. Reviewed current practices

E. Task force meeting schedule

1. Report back to FSC on October 26, 2010

2. Meetings on Monday evenings at 6 p.m. from July through October 2010

F. Report on the following:

1. Bullying in Franklin

a) How has it been manifested in this town?

b) Is it a problem here?

c) Comparison with surrounding communities

2. Identify items to include in new policy

3. Identify potential costs associated with implementation of various recommendations in following areas:

a) Annual distribution of written policy

b) Collecting data and reporting

c) Investigation of reports of violations and complaints

d) Counseling or referral to appropriate services

e) Programs and other initiatives regarding anti-bullying efforts

f) Annual training for school employees and volunteers

g) Annual confidential surveys of students

4. Identify grants or other sources of funding for anti-bullying efforts

5. Identify how the school district policy can be implemented in a manner that is ongoing throughout the school year and integrated with

   a) a school's curriculum,

   b) a school's discipline policies, and

   c) other violence prevention efforts.

6. Identify acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyberbullying which may constitute criminal activity.

7. Address first amendment, due process, and other concerns

   a) Identify current case law or other legal writing

   b) Identify areas of concern in policy drafting

G. Develop resource manual on bullying for use by the district

H. Develop proposed plan to address bullying prevention and intervention, including the following:

1. descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation;

2. clear procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians and others to report bullying or retaliation;

3. a provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously; provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report;

4. clear procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation;

5. the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation; provided, however, that the disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior;

6. clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assessing that victim's needs for protection;

7. strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about an act of bullying;

8. procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a victim and a perpetrator; provided, further, that the parents or guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and provided, further, that the procedures shall provide for immediate notification pursuant to regulations promulgated under this subsection by the principal or person who holds a comparable role to the local law enforcement agency when criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator;

9. a provision that a student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action; and

10. a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for perpetrators and victims and for appropriate family members of said students. The plan shall afford all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

II. Summary of New Bullying Prevention Law

The Bullying Prevention legislation was signed by Governor Deval Patrick on May 3, 2010, to be undertaken by MA public schools during the 2010-2011 school year. Under this law, MA school districts are required to participate in a number of activities aimed at preventing and addressing incidents of bullying in a prompt and effective manner when they occur. The key requirements of the law include the following elements:

1. Development of Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans by December 31, 2010 which address the following:

- Bullying prevention and intervention plans that prohibit bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation
- Must include information on reporting, notice to parents and guardians, notice to law enforcement as necessary and counseling strategies and procedures for creating safety plans for victims
- Must provide notice and a period of time for public comment

The district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan must be reviewed and updated every other year.

2. Public Schools must amend their school handbooks to include a summary of their new Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year. This summary must be written in age-appropriate language. There will also be requirements regarding the principal's duty to report which will be forthcoming by the DESE by September 30, 2010.

3. Public schools must have an internet safety policy as determined by the school committee in cooperation with the superintendent and parents must be notified.

4. The law provides for bullying prevention instruction for students in each grade to be incorporated into the curriculum. This curriculum needs to be evidenced-based and the school needs to provide parents and guardians with information regarding the school's bullying prevention curriculum.

5. The law also requires school districts to provide to all staff professional development that includes age-appropriate strategies for bullying prevention and intervention. School districts must include this in their professional development plans for the 2010-2011 school year.

6. There are also special requirements for students identified as having a disability on the autism spectrum. IEP Teams **must** consider and address skills needed for these children to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing. This provision of the law was effective as of May 3, 2010.

The DESE has indicated that it will provide the following resources to districts to facilitate compliance with the bullying legislation:

- Posting of a model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to be posted on the website Summer 2010
- Adopt regulations by September 30, 2010 to implement the law's requirements for the principal's duty to report to parents and, if necessary, law enforcement
- Bullying prevention resources for student instruction to be posted on the DESE website throughout the summer 2010 and the 2010-2011 school year
- DESE will publish guidelines for implementation of social-emotional curricula, K-12, by June 30, 2011
- By August 31, 2010, the DESE provide school districts with information on ways to fulfill the law's PD requirements for staff, including at least one no-cost option
- Guidance from the department on implementing the new law for students with disabilities is forthcoming

III. Current policies pertaining to bullying:

A. JI Student's right and responsibilities

B. Right to free inquiry and expression

C. Right to privacy

D. Responsibility to observe reasonable rules

E. JIC – Student conduct

F. JICFA – Hazing prohibited

G. JU – Electronic Communication Policy

IV. Current Practices

The task force reviewed a number of ongoing practices in the Franklin public school system. Below we have highlighted some of the programs that are available at each level in the system.

A. Open Circle/Elementary Program

Open Circle is a comprehensive K-5, research based, social skills program that offers differentiated lessons by individual grade to teach social and emotional skills to students. The Open Circle philosophy engages the school community to enable students to become ethical decision makers, successful learners, respectful and reflective citizens. The Open Circle Program helps to foster the development of relationships that support a safe and nurturing learning environment in all of our elementary schools. Open Circle emphasizes social emotional learning (SEL) which challenges students to develop social and emotional competencies that enable students to perform better academically and to develop positive relationships with peers.

Open Circle is listed in the U.S Department of Education's Panel Guidebook of Exemplary and Promising Programs. The Open Circle Program teaches students how to become socially competent learners, to express their feelings in a respectful manner, to be empathic listeners and to identify and solve problem and conflicts with reason and communication. Educators guide students to develop classroom norms with respect to classroom behavior and through common vocabulary and language feelings and opinions

are shared to collectively solve problems that occur in the classroom, on the playground or in the community.

The Open Circle curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (Please see addendum for OC lessons as they are aligned to MA Frameworks).

To implement Open Circle, teachers typically facilitate two Open Circles in their classrooms each week. The lessons range from 20 to 30 minutes. At times, teachers may use the Open Circle structure to facilitate a discussion of difficult issues or solve challenging problems. With emphasis on community, the Open Circle program is consistent with the research that has been done about stopping bullying behavior.

The elementary schools in Franklin have used the Open Circle program since 1996. All elementary teachers are trained in the Open Circle curriculum. In addition, all schools have two consultants to help new trainees use the program correctly and to plan school wide anti bullying initiatives such as No Name Calling Week. One of the two consultants from each building will be trained as a coach this year. Next year the other consultant from each building will receive training. By having our own coaches/consultants, we are developing in-house capacity to implement this systemic approach to address a variety of behavioral challenges including bullying.

Annually kindergarten parents are invited to an overview of the program. Each school has a mental health worker who has received specialized training to run a six week parent program that teaches families about using Open Circle strategies to help them at home. Parent newsletters are part of the program done in the classrooms so each family receives periodic updates about what is being taught in Open Circle in the schools.

It is significant to note that approximately eight years ago Franklin designed a program for Solutions staff, our extended day program. This training received federal recognition as a promising program.

B. A Review of Franklin's Teenangel Chapter/Middle School

Teenangels: An Overview

- Started in Spring of 2009
- Consisted of 7th graders and 8th graders from three core middle schools
- Training is done on teenangelstraining.org
- With our training we complete modules revolving around predators, staying cautious, social networking and more
- The modules are usually reviewing forums, watching videos Parry has created or reading stories posted on the site which have important facts, evidence and tragedies

- To earn our wings, which means we officially are Teenangels, we must complete required modules throughout the year and give presentations on topics we are passionate about (for instance our presentation was news bulletins about kids talking and attempting to meet strangers from interaction online and we also have a Text Think Send Pledge)
- We focus on increasing awareness of cyberbullying, textbullying and give people hope and options on how to prevent this and spread the word

Memorable Accomplishments

- Text Think Send Pledge
- Visited the state house to voice our concern to Rep. Jim Valee
- Went to some elementary schools in Franklin to hear about cyberbullying
- Wrote a group letter in memory of Phoebe Prince to Seventeen magazine (was not published)
- Developed skits we showed at Wiredkids Summit

C. Rachel's challenge/Franklin High School

Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion coupled with the contents of her six diaries have become the foundation for one of the most life-changing school programs in America.

Powerful video/audio footage of Rachel's life and the Columbine tragedy holds students spell-bound during a one hour school presentation that motivates them to positive change in the way they treat others.This is followed by a separate interactive 90 minute training session involving both adult and student leaders that shows how to sustain the momentum created by the assembly. The assembly creates the “want to” or desire for positive change. The training session teaches the “how to” and ensures that the positive impact will continue.

That evening the Rachel’s Challenge speaker conducts a powerful session with parents and community leaders. This session is similar to the assembly program and ends with a specific challenge to parents and community leaders, showing them how they can reinforce the decisions their youth are making. Entertainers, politicians, sports celebrities, educators, and even two Presidents of the United States have been impacted by Rachel’s Challenge. However, students are the target audience and they have proven that they will respond with positive words, attitudes, and actions. Your school will never be the same after being exposed to Rachel’s Challenge!

D. Other Programs

- No Name Calling Week
- Teen Angels and Wired Kids Clubs at all three middle schools
- Best Buddies Clubs at MS and FHS
- Advisor-Advisee Program at all three middle schools
- Peer Mentors- FHS
- Peer Leaders-FHS
- Gay Straight Alliance-FHS

V. Bullying in Franklin

A. Overview of Current Research and Data on Bullying

1. Bullying As Cited in the Literature

According to Nansel (2001) bullying is noted as the most frequent form of school violence. Surveys consistently indicate that about 25 percent of all students experience hurtful interactions with peers on a monthly or daily basis (Dinkes, Cataldi & Lin-Kelly, 2007. In its *Safe Communities-Safe Schools Report*, the Center for the Study and Prevention of School Violence (2008) affirms three criteria for discriminating bullying from other types of misbehavior such as isolated cases of school aggression and other forms of school violence such as assault. The criteria for bullying include:

- It is aggressive behavior or intentional harm-doing.
- It is carried out repeatedly and over time.
- It occurs within a relationship characterized by an imbalance of power.

Consequently a student is bullied or victimized when he or she is the repeated target of deliberate aggressive actions or activities by one or more individuals who possess greater verbal, physical, social or psychological power.

Kowalski & Limber (2007) describe direct bullying as physical and/or verbal. Physical bullying is an open attack on a victim (hitting, kicking, assaultive) while verbal bullying is the use of name calling, threats, taunting or malicious teasing. Indirect bullying is identified as more subtle therefore more challenging to document. It includes social isolation and types of relational aggression such as social exclusion,

spreading of rumor, inflicting damage to an individual's reputation, making faces or gestures behind ones' back or the manipulation of friendships. Citing the increase in bullying electronic communication devises, they cite *cyberbullying* as the sending of hurtful or threatening text messages and /or sending images to damage the victim's reputation or relationships with others. Cyberbullying is challenging foe adults to detect or track and 5o percent of the victims do not know the identity of the perpetrator.

2. Prevalence

According to the *School Crime and Safety Report* (2008) from the Institute of Education Sciences, 24 percent of elementary and secondary school report daily or weekly incidents of bullying (Dinkes et al., 2009). In 2007, 32 % of students ages 12-18 reported being bullied within the last year. 63% of these students reported being bullied at least once or twice in the previous year. 7 % reported being bullied on a daily basis.

According to Pelligrini, (2002) bullying declines toward the end of elementary school but increase significantly in middle school and high schools. The data show that bullying rates spike during transition years such as from grade five to six and from grade eight to nine. This reflects a desire for students to reestablish dominance or achieve a position of leadership during the transititional process.

The damage to bully victims is often compounded by the consistent nature of victimization, as the children bullied often remain the target of bullies from year to year (Nansel, Haynes & Simons-Morton, 2007). The consequences of pervasive bullying include increased instances of depression, anxiety, poor school performance and low self confidence.

Witnessing bullying and acting as a bystander can produce feelings of anger, fear, guilt and depression. (Batsche & Porter, 2006). Bystanders who witness repeated victimization of peers often experience symptoms consistent with victims. (Pepler & Craig, 2000). There is some evidence that children who bully are more morally disengaged and viewing bullying as justified or acceptable (Hymel, Roack-Henderson & Bonanno, (2005).

3. Data on Bystander Behavior

Data show that when bystanders observe bullying they spend time actively participating in the act or passively encouraging the aggressor by acting as an audience. Less than 25 percent of bystanders report the action or assist the victim. (O'Connell, Pepler & Craig, 1999; Slaby, 2005).

Reasons bystanders avoid assisting victims include:

- They are intimidate by the social or physical power of the bully
- They fear retaliation
- They are reluctant to challenge group norms that support bullying
- They do not recognize bullying
- They lack self confidence or see the moral responsibility to intervene
- They feel helpless

B. Local Trends

1. Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center Research (MARC) June 2008

Data collected from 178 public school educators

40% of educators believe students are bullied several times every day

50% of educators believe online bullying occurs in 25% of bullying incidents.

According to educators students are bullied over the following issues:

- Weight/appearance
- Popularity/social status or lack of status
- Intelligence
- Sexual orientation
- Relationships
- Religion
- Ethnicity

2. Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey 2008

Metrowest Community Health Care Foundation and the Education Development Center (EDC) collect survey data from regional high school and middle schools students. The data collected in 2008 was reported to communities in a comprehensive report. The Adolescent Health Survey informs curriculum, instruction and educational decision making. 22 of the 25 Metrowest communities participated in this survey.

a) Franklin Public Schools Data

(1) Middle School Bullying Results (Grade 7 and 8 Students)

55% of Franklin Middle School students reported being bullied in 2008.

44% of the students reported bullying took place in school.

36% of students reported they acted as a bully.

18% of students reported they were bullied using electronic devices

10% of students reported they bullied using technology.

38% of males and 33% of females reported that they bullied peers.

62% of females and 49% of males reported being bullied.

(2) Metrowest Regional Data / Middle School

49 % of all students in the region (22 towns) reported that they were bullied in the last 12 months.

16% of the students were bullied using technology.

Bullying behavior increased in the region from 44% to 49% between 2006 and 2008.

(3) Data from other local communities:

Milford Middle Schools 49 % of students reported being bullied

Medway MS 45% of students reported being bullied

18% were bullied using technology

34% of students reported they acted as a bully

(4) Franklin High School

37% of Franklin High School students reported being bullied in 2008.

34% reported being bullied on schools property.

33% of students reported that they actively bullied others.

18% of students reported they were electronically bullied.

11% reported they bullied others using technology.

22% of students reported they were both victims and perpetrators of bullying.

42% of females and 32% of males report being victimized by bullies.

39% of males and 28% of females reported they bullied others.

Substantially more 9th grade students (46%) then 12th grade students (27%) were victimized by bullies.

(5) Metrowest Regional Data/ High School

26% of Metrowest students reported being bullied on school property.

(6) All Metrowest communities reported increase in bullying behavior.

b) Data from other local communities:

Milford HS increases but no percent reported

Medway HS 30% students report being bullied and 28% report they have acted as a bully.

Hudson HS 31% of students reported being bullied and 35% reported they bullied others.

3. References

Batsche, G.M. & Porter, L.J. (2006). Bullying. In *Children's Needs III: Development, Prevention and Intervention*.135-148. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Center for the Study and Prevention of School Violence (2008). *Safe schools, safe communities: fact sheet*. Retrieved October 26, 2009. http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/publications/factsheets/safeschools/FS-SC07.pdf.

Dinkes, R., Kemp, J.& Baum, K. (2009). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2008* (NCES 2009-022/NCJ 226343) Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Institutes of Education Sciences, US Department of Education. http://www.nces.ed.gov or http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs.

Hymel, S., Rocke-Henderson, N., & Bonanno, R.A. (2005). Moral disengagement: A framework for understanding bullying among adolescents. *Journal of Social Sciences,* 8 (Special issue), 1-11.

Kowalski, R.M.& Limber, S.P. (2007). Electronic bullying among middle school students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41(6) Supplement. S22-S30.

Nansel, T.R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R.S., Ruan, W.J., Simons-Morton, B. & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth: Prevalence and associations with psychological adjustment. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 288 (16), 2094-2100.

O'Connell, P., Pepler, D.J. & Craig, W.M. (1999). Peer involvement in bullying: Insights and challengers for intervention. *Journal of Adolescence*. 22(4), 437-452.

Pelligrini, A.D. (2001). Bullying, victimization and sexual harassment during transition to middle school. *Educational Psychologist*, 37 (3), 151-163.

Pepler, D.J. & Craig, W.M. (2000). Making a difference in bullying. LaMarshe Research Report # 60. Toronto: York University. http://www.psycserver.psyc.queensu.ca/craigw/Craig_Pepler_2000_REPORT_Making_a-Difference_n_Bullying.pdf.

4. Electronic Resources and Data

American Association of University Women
Surveys and resources for students, parents and educators
Harassment -Free Hallways: How to Stop Sexual Harassment in Schools
http://www.aauw.org/research/upload/completeguide.pdf

Bullying in Schools and What TO Do About It
Dr. Ken Rigby
http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying/

CDC Violence Compendium
Downloadable assessment measures on school violence and bullying.
http://www.cdc.gove/ncipc/pub-res/measure.htm

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
Safe and Sound Guide
http://www.casel.org/pub/safeandsound

Steps to Respect
Lessons for classroom teacher grades 3-6
http://www.cfchildren.org/media/files/str%5Fms%5Flesson.pdf

Lions Quest
In-service workshop on bullying prevention.
http://www.lions-quest.org/

Responsive Classroom
http://www.responsiveclassroom.org

Developmental Studies Center
http://www.devstu.org

Committee for Children
http://www.cfchildren.org/media/files/str_sel_checklist.pdf

Stop Bullying Now
US Department of Health and Human Services
Webisodes for students and student surveys
http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp?area=main

C. Anecdotal Reports on Franklin Schools by level

1. Elementary 2009-2010

Potential Bullying incidents

- Verbal harassment on playground/bus Name calling (gay, stupid, whore, sexy, hot)
- Excluding students on bus, recess, lunch
- Excluding special needs student
- One female student pinned up against the wall in bathroom
- Mean statements about a child via instant messaging at home
- Inappropriate messages on cell phone (perpetrator was a middle school student)
- Student was the target of an "I hate____" group on facebook with 2-3 members. The perpetrator was a middle school student. The parent did not want to contact the bully's parents directly, but wanted schools to do it.
- Complaints about neighborhood issues

Discipline incidences:

- Misbehavior on bus: impulsive, some aggression, exclusion
- Fight on playground, hitting, kicking, punching, rock throwing, spitting, pushing
- Arguing/poor sportsmanship during recess games
- Name calling
- Bathroom misbehavior (climbing on sinks, throwing water, feces being smeared, urinating on the floor, writing on stalls)
- Disruptive behavior in the classroom
- Students running away from school
- Assault and battery behavior students
- I'll kill you statements
- Forged parent signatures
- Stealing
- Lying
- Cell phones
- Inappropriate language

Police involved:

- Weapon brought to school
- Cyber bullying

- Student run away
- Adult bully behavior given notice
- 51A
- Court orders
- Severe behavioral issues

2. Middle school

- Name-calling/ also through cyber space...especially with Facebook and Formspring
    - physical appearance (hair color, weight, height, development, etc.)
    - academics/athletic ability (e.g. "sped")
    - race/ethnicity/religion
    - calling people "gay" or "lesbian"

- Rumor-spreading (often related to sexual activity or homosexuality, drug/alcohol use or sometimes about others' families)

- Exclusion-asking people not to sit at your lunch table, or be in your group for an activity (often subtle e.g. discouraging them with a roll of the eyes)

- Physical bullying or physical threats (not common, but there have been incidents of "tripping" others, bumping into someone "accidentally" etc.)

- Taking or destroying others' property (not common)

- Targeting a person's vulnerabilities- "going for the jugular"-Webkinz, web toes

- The "Pay It Forward" bullying model. A former victim joining the aggressor to pick on someone else. Takes the focus off the once victim.

D. Police Response to Bullying

Franklin police officer Christopher Spillane offered an overview of police interaction in reports related to bullying incidents both in the schools and outside the confines of the school building.

1. Incident reported to school personnel

The school administration should investigate all reports of Bullying incidents involving students. Incidents may occur on or off school property. Investigation should consist of, but not limited to the following:

- Identify nature of bullying
- Identify all individuals involved (victim, aggressor, bystanders, witnesses)
- Interview all individuals.
- Gather any evidence supporting incident.

Determine if the incident is criminal. If criminal the Franklin Police Department should be contacted immediately. All information and evidence gathered by the school administration can be used to assist in the police department's investigation. If the bullying incident does not rise to a criminal level the Franklin Police Department can be contacted as a resource to assist the administration.

2. Incident reported directly to Franklin Police Department

The Franklin Police Safety Division will immediately contact the school administration advising them of the incident. The police will conduct a full investigation of all bullying incident reported. The school administration will be kept apprised of all investigations.

These are a few potential crimes that could occur in a bullying incident.

- Assault mgl 265 s13a
- Assault and battery mgl 265 s13a
- Threat to commit a crime mgl 275 s32
- Stalking mgl 265 s43
- Criminal Harassment mgl 265 s43a
- Identity fraud mgl 266 s37e
- Hazing mgl 269517-19
- Possession of child pornography (sexting) mgl 272 s29

- Possession/Disseminating of obscene matter (sexting) mgl272 s28

VI. Items to include in new policy

We have collected and included in the addendum to this report sample policies from districts throughout Massachusetts. These include actual policies enacted in several districts throughout the Commonwealth, a sample policy drafted by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and some guidelines prepared by the District's law firm and the Massachusetts Association of school superintendents. These should provide sufficient guidance to the School Committee in formulating its anti-bullying policy.

VII. Costs associated with implementing programs

The school district already has in place a number of programs related to social and emotional learning, which includes anti-bullying lessons. These programs were highlighted earlier in this report. The administration is currently reviewing proposals for additional programs to enhance the current offerings. These programs include the following:

VIII. Grants and other sources of funding

The addendum to this report includes information on a number of grant programs that are available to supplement the anti-bullying curriculum in the Franklin public schools. In addition, the school committee is urged to review the Department of Education program on anti-bullying which took place in August, 2010 in Washington, DC. Links to that program can be found on the task force website at http://nomorebullies.wordpress.com/. Otherwise, you can link directly to the program by clicking on the image below.

Role of Corporations in Preventing Bullying
Forum

Representatives from Dairy Queen, the Cartoon Network, and Facebook talked about ways that corporate America can help form partnerships with local communities and schools to prevent bullying in .. Read More

IX. Implementing the policy

A. Bullying in the curriculum

The Franklin Public Schools has re-introduced a K-5 Health Education program, effective for the 2010-2011 school year. The health program will provide comprehensive instruction in social competency skills and will include bullying education as an integral component of the curriculum. In the middle school health program bullying is addressed through the curriculum in place for students in grade 6, 7 and 8. The Franklin High School health curriculum includes the topics of bullying, dating violence and tolerance education.

When the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) releases updated heath frameworks a team of administrators and teachers will revise our local curriculum documents to reflect the DESE requirements. While awaiting the release of these documents a team of health educators have been extensively researching and reviewing a wide range of curriculum materials and instructional tools to support the implementation of the standards in our K-12 program.

In addition to curriculum interventions and explicit classroom instruction, the Franklin Public Schools supports a variety of extracurricular initiatives to raise awareness and educate students, parents and community members on the impact of bullying. Programs Include:

- No Name Calling Week
- Teen Angels and Wired Kids Clubs at all three middle schools
- Best Buddies Clubs at MS and FHS
- Advisor-Advisee Program at all three middle schools
- Peer Mentors- FHS
- Peer Leaders-FHS
- Gay Straight Alliance-FHS

The detailed curriculum frameworks are included in the addendum to this report.

B. Procedures for handling bullying reports

Each of the schools has included in its handbooks a report procedure. The process is summarized below:

School Response to Reported Bullying/Cyberbullying

Administrative Steps:

- Take a complete statement from the student or parent/guardian reporting the incident
- Speak to other students involved
- Speak to other relevant adults – teachers, counselors, and/or bus drivers who may have information regarding the incident
- Make a determination regarding the incident
- Identify bully/cyberbully and bully/cyberbully-bystanders as appropriate
- Identify victim(s) as appropriate
- Include the School Resource Officer(SRO) as appropriate
- Notify Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and/or Director of Special Education as appropriate

Administrative Actions:

If it is determined to be a bullying incident the following administrative actions may take place but not necessarily in the order listed below.

Bully/Cyberbully and Bully/Cyberbully-bystanders:

- Inform student(s) about the consequences for bullying or cyberbullying in school
- Have an educational discussion with the student(s) and parents/guardians
- Inform all relevant adults – teachers, counselors, and/or bus drivers
- Student(s) may be required to engage in educational activities such as readings, written reflection and/or research about bullying/cyberbullying
- Students may be asked to give back to the community by being asked to participate in a community service project or activity
- Student(s) are informed about further consequences if any form of retaliation were to occur
- Student(s) may be referred to School Adjustment Counselor or School Psychologist
- Student(s) may be assigned a disciplinary consequence but not limited to:
    - Lunch Detention
    - Bus Suspension
    - Exclusion from extra-curricular activities and/or special events
    - After School Detention
    - Suspension

Victim(s):

- Have an educational discussion with the student(s) and parents/guardians
- Establish a safety and comfort plan with the student(s) and parents/guardians
- Inform all relevant adults – teachers, counselors, and bus drivers
- Future follow-up with student(s) and parents/guardians

The Task Force has also developed a flowchart and incident reporting forms that will be utilized in all schools in the district. The flowchart is included below:

Response to Bullying/ Cyberbullying Flow Chart

Report of an incident is received

Ensure safety of all students involved

Take a complete statement from the student, parent/guardian or staff member reporting the incident

Interview other students who are involved in the incident → Interview bystanders → Interview other adults-teachers, counselors and/or bus drivers who may have information regarding incident → Review student cumulative folder, discipline files, action plans and/or other relevant documents

Evaluate credibility of report

Make a determination regarding the reported incident

Is this bullying?

One time incidents may be deliberately mean, cruel or developmentally inappropriate but they may not be bullying. However, some other behaviors may violate other school rules so it should be reported to an adult as soon as possible. For behavior to be deemed bullying, it needs to include all of the following elements (MGL Chapter 92, Acts of 2010).

- Must be repeated action(s) by one or more students
- Must be a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture
- Must be directed at a victim so that it causes one or more of the following:
- Physical or emotional harm to the victim;
  Damage to the victim's property;
  Places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property;
  Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
  Infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
  Disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- **When should you report?**

In the event that a bullying incident has occurred get as much information as possible from your child and report it to a counselor, administrator, and/or teacher.

If it is determined that a bullying incident has occurred...

Identify bully/cyberbully → Identify bully/cyberbully and bully/cyberbully-bystanders as appropriate → Identify victim(s) as appropriate

Provide education and/or take disciplinary action as appropriate for bully/cyberbully

Notify and include School Resource Officer (SRO) as appropriate

Notify Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and/or Director of Special Education as appropriate

Notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of bully/cyberbully

Establish safety and comfort plan with victim and parent(s)/guardian(s)

Administrative Steps

If it is determined to be a bullying incident the following administrative actions may take place but not necessarily in the order listed below.

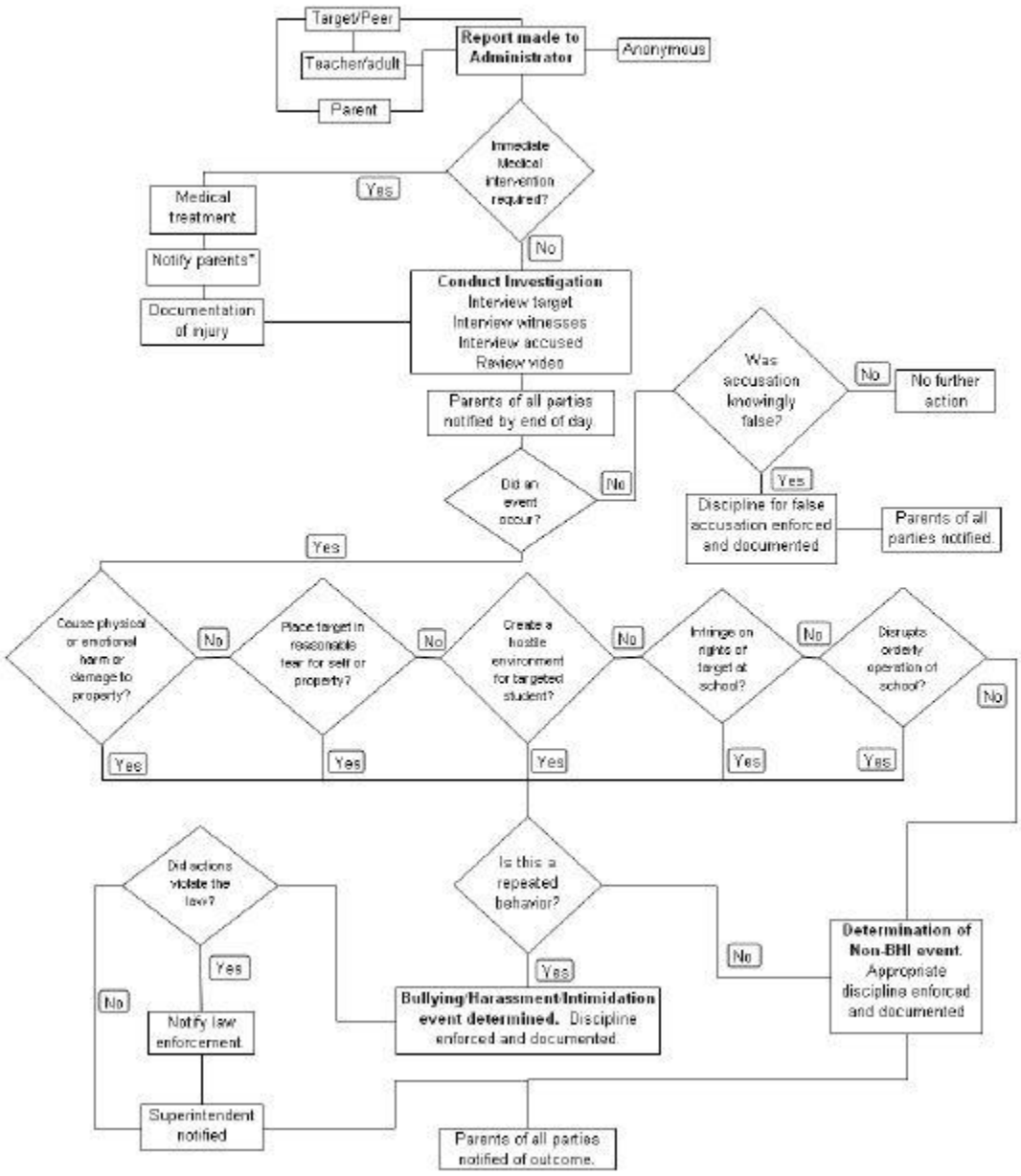
Bully/Cyberbully and Bully/Cyberbully-Bystanders:

- Inform student(s) about the consequences for bullying or cyberbullying in school
- Have an educational discussion with the student(s) and parents/guardians
- Inform all relevant adults – teachers, counselors, and/or bus drivers
- Student(s) may be required to engage in educational activities such as readings, written reflection and/or research about bullying/cyberbullying
- Students may be asked to give back to the community by being asked to participate in a community service project or activity
- Student(s) are informed about further consequences if any form of retaliation were to occur
- Student(s) may be referred to School Adjustment Counselor or School Psychologist
- Student(s) may be assigned a disciplinary consequence that is consistent with school handbooks as appropriate at each level

Victim(s):

- Have an educational discussion with the student(s) and parents/guardians
- Establish a safety and comfort plan with the student(s) and parents/guardians
- Inform all relevant adults – teachers, counselors, and bus drivers
- Future follow-up with student(s) and parents/guardians

The town of South Hadley included a more detailed flowchart which we have included below for your review and consideration:



In addition to these flowcharts, the task force has developed a incident reporting form for your review and consideration. In addition, in the addendum, we have included samples of forms in use in other districts, also for your review and consideration.

C. District Plan

The Task Force has drafted a proposed plan for implementation by the district. It is included in the addendum. It addresses each of the requirements of the anti-bullying statute.

X. Legal issues

Bullying presents a variety of challenging legal issues. The addendum includes a narrative with copies of actual legal cases which provide extensive samples of issues that have reached the courts. Some examples provided include the use of technology or electronic communication, written, verbal or physical acts of harm that have caused disruption in the educational environment.

The courts have been inconsistent in their handling of bullying cases. A perfect example of the indecisiveness of the courts is reflected within the cases of *Layshock v Hermitage School District* and *Snyder v Blue Mountain School District*.

In *Layshock*, a Pennsylvania high school student was suspended 10 days after he created a mock MySpace profile of his principal. The profile said the principal took drugs and kept beer at his desk. It also referred to the principal as a "big steroid freak," and a "big whore," among other things, and stated that he was "too drunk to remember" the date of his birthday. The appeals court and a federal judge overturned the suspension, ruling the fake profile was not created at school and did not create a "substantial disruption" at school. In the lower court decision, District Court Judge Terrence McVerry found that even though the profile was unquestionably "lewd, profane and sexually inappropriate," the school did not have the right to restrict the student's speech because school officials were not able to establish that the profile caused enough of a disruption on campus. "The mere fact that the Internet may be accessed at school does not authorize school officials to become censors of the world-wide web," he wrote.

The other case (*Snyder*), also decided by the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals the same day, went against a 14-year-old Pennsylvania junior high student. She also mocked her principal with a fake MySpace profile. The 2007 profile insinuated the principal was a sex addict and pedophile. J.S. and another student, identified as K.L., posted a profile on MySpace in March 2007 that showed a photo of principal James S. McGonigle they had taken from the district's Web site. The profile didn't use the principal's name, but identified the person pictured as a "principal," and described him as a 40-year-old married, bisexual man whose interests included "being a tight ***," "******* in my office" and "hitting on students and their parents." On appeal, the 3rd Circuit noted that teachers complained that, among other things, the profile disrupted the classroom because students were talking about the profile rather

than paying attention to class. “We decline to say that simply because the disruption to the learning environment originates from a computer located off campus, the school should be left powerless to discipline the student,” the three-judge circuit panel wrote.

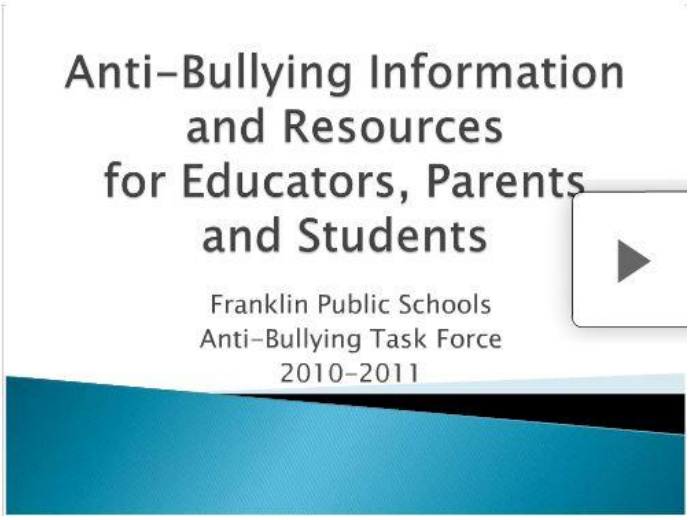
The lower court’s opinion distinguished the Supreme Court’s decision in Tinker v. Des Moines. Tossing Tinker aside, the court focused on other cases, including Bethel School District v. Fraser, in which the Court upheld a suspension imposed on a student who used “an elaborate, graphic, and explicit sexual metaphor” during a speech at a school assembly. In Fraser, the justices held that “it is a highly appropriate function of public school education to prohibit the use of vulgar and offensive terms in public discourse,” and that limits on sexually explicit, indecent or lewd speech can be appropriate where the audience includes children.

These differing opinions seemingly left everyone wondering what the standard really is. The decisions in both cases have been vacated and set for reconsideration by the full panel of Third Circuit judges. The cases may very well end up at the United States Supreme Court in the near future. But, as in all of these cases, it came down to whether or not the speech resulted in a substantial disruption at school.

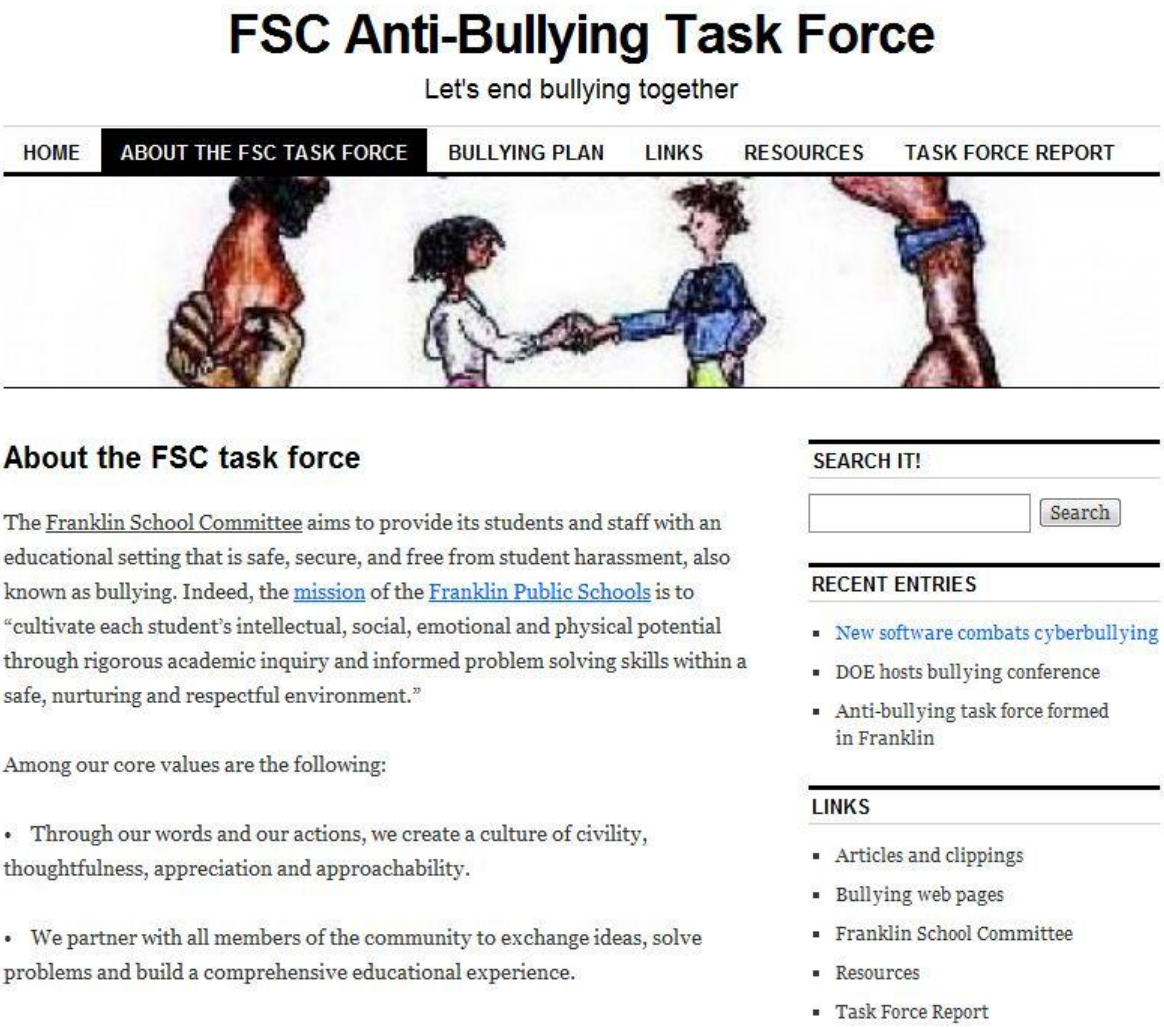
To date the courts have been divergent in their interpretation of disruption in the educational environment.

XI. Resource Manual

The Task Force has developed a resource manual which is included in the addendum to this report. You can view that manual by clicking on the image below:



The Task Force has also created a website at http://nomorebullies.wordpress.com/ which includes links to the resources, the task force report, the district plan, and the Task Force PowerPoint presentation. It also contains an area for blogging on bullying topics. You can view that website by clicking on the image below:



XII. Addendum to the Report

A. Articles on bullying

B. PowerPoint presentation of the Task Force

C. Resource Manual

D. Legal issues pertaining to bullying

E. Bullying manuals and reports

F. Sample policies

G. Programs and costs

H. Proposed plan to address bullying prevention and intervention

Respectfully submitted,

Franklin Anti-Bullying Task Force,

Jeffrey N. Roy, Co-Chair

Maureen Sabolinski, Co-Chair

October 26, 2010