



The Five R's



Creating a Bully-Free Environment: *A Prevention Plan for the Curley K-8 School*

A Proposed Plan Developed by the Curley Faculty Senate, Principal Jeffrey Slater, and the School Parent Council



** We are seeking to finalize this plan through a process of **co-authorship by School Principal, the Curley Faculty Senate and the School Parent Council**. The process begins with a presentation of the first draft to the School Site Council can be followed by a “public comment” period in which a collaborative revision process takes place across the school community. The plan may be submitted to a vote within the CFS and SPC and finalized next year by a vote in the School Site Council.*

Contributors

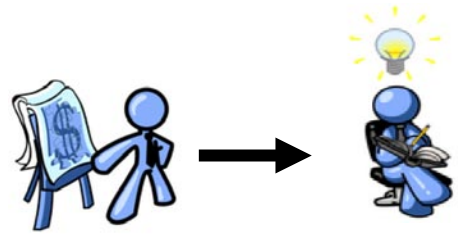
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Introduction

Recently, policies and laws have been created on the State and District levels requiring individual schools to create policies related to creating a bully-free environment. This proposal seeks to persuade the school community towards an approach that is comprehensive and holistic. The ideas in the proposal have been collected from *students, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, parents and administrators* across the school.

The overarching goal of this proposal reflects a goal shared by all in our school community: the goal to create a calm, safe and productive school culture that respects the dignity and personal rights of all. By viewing the issue of bullying against the backdrop of the overall culture and climate, we may be able to prevent the types of behaviors that can sometimes escalate into bullying.

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1. Re-direct Human Resources

Rationale: The impact of the budget windfall can be minimized by making creative decisions in the effort to create a calm, safe and bully-free environment. The Curley can adopt a creative approach to the management of human resources. For example, the administrative team can re-assign duties and place key personnel in visible places at key times during the school day (e.g. use extra planning/development time of teachers in grades 6-8 to assign co-teaching where most needed).

One strategy is to raise the profile and visibility of school administrators so that students can know in a serious way that someone from the top is watching and explicitly interested in their pursuit of academic excellence and their responsibility to act according to the highest behavioral standards. This will be easier if we can *free up administrators' time with some structural changes.*

Another strategy is to be creative with the use of the staff's time –allowing for as much *together time* as possible for staff to collaborate in ways that can lead to a more safe and focused environment. This can be accomplished by using teachers time in innovative ways in which *the needs of students can be best served.*

- Administrators and Teachers have Lunch Duty to free Pride Coordinators
- Administrators and teachers increase presence in hallways during transitions
- Meetings involving administrators and persons who are not BTU, can be held after school more often to free up time for increasing administrative presence during the school day
- Teachers (grades 6-8) serve as Pride Assistants and in other school safety-oriented functions during their 45-minute non-teaching time (sometimes referred to as “administrative duty”) in which they are not attending meetings.
- Teachers (grades 6-8) serve as co-teachers in specific classrooms and subjects that are determined by administrators, teachers and parents to need more support. This can be accomplished by using teachers' 45-minute Administrative Duties.
- Teachers (grades 6-8) use 45-minute Administrative Duty to assist the K-5 classes as needed.
- Teachers (grades 6-8) substitute for one another during 45-minute Administrative Duty to allow for more common planning time and a more integrative communication among all grade teams and departments
- Engage in-school volunteer programs in dialogue about best possible use of volunteer time in serving students
- Increase percentage of student teachers in the school. Perhaps begin whole-school dialogue around the possibility of being a BTR school (Boston Teachers Residency). This would give us a full-time coordinator for 4 day/week interns throughout the school year.
- Increase parent volunteers, especially in challenging classrooms
- Assign teachers to welcome substitutes into school building and to support them
- Create a “Substitute Teacher Resource Booklet” which lists expectations and provides information (such as discipline referral, bathroom location, and building policies).

2. Re-Define Behavioral Intervention Practices

Rationale: According to the results of the CFS School Climate Survey, 86% of the staff believes that discipline is not consistent at the Curley K-8 School. This data, coupled with similar concerns recently raised by parents, suggests that we need to “work smarter” by committing to the following five actions:

- Provide training in Restorative Justice practices for incoming teachers, cafeteria workers and other non-teaching staff each year
- *Revise, adopt* and *post* pilot model for progressive discipline (see appendix)
- Adopt “Safety Rules”
- Streamline *progressive* interventions in every classroom (verbal warning, time-outs, etc.)
- Streamline Reflection/Buddy Room practices (continually disruptive students *in all classrooms* are removed for remainder of period)

3. Re-shape Physical Spaces to Reduce Agitation

Rationale: With the reduction in the staff and the projected increase of student enrollment, we may need to be creative in our efforts to create both a trauma-free and a bully-free environment.

- Lunch monitors obtain key to turn down Cafeteria lights to help create calm environment
- Provide activities during lunch including board games, chess, outside recess
- Adopt SSC’s idea of a “Mix-it-up Program” allowing students to sit with friends during breakfast and lunch instead of being assigned to homerooms.
- Begin long-term plan to replace rectangular tables with round tables in cafeterias
- Ensure that every classroom has a space for “reflection”
- Encourage school-wide practice of turning lights off on hot, sunny days.
- Encourage staff to whisper in the hallways, even when re-directing student behaviors
- Encourage parents to refrain from standing in the hallways during breakfast and dismissal (allowing for a more focused environment)

4. Restructure Professional Development

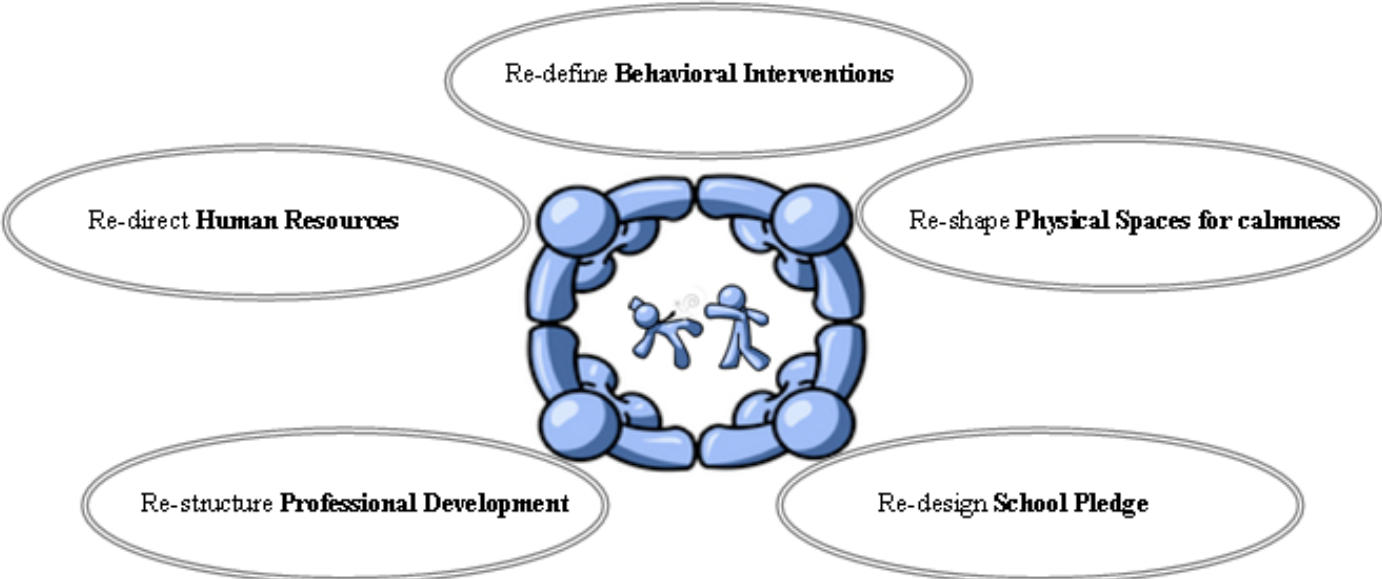
Rationale: Part of staff Professional Development can be set aside to accommodate the work that is needed to promote a bully-free/trauma-informed environment.

- Include “courageous conversations” about diversity and race in staff Professional Development (School Site Council’s recent initiative)
- Include teacher input through Curley Faculty Senate and teacher representatives of the School Site Council in determining professional development
- Allow shorter and more frequent school-wide meeting time to increase sense of community and cohesion. One option is to re-distribute the two Saturday PD’s (16 hours) across the 10 months of the year. Maybe some of these meetings could be followed with a brief time for the faculty to have time for questions with the administrative team, (modeled after British procedure of presenting questions to the Prime Minister).
- Provide “working time” for teams to design practices, curricula and policies that support the Curley K-8 Mission Statement and BPS mandates.

5. Re-Design School Pledge to include Bully Pledge and Student-related parts of the Curley K-8 Mission Statement

Rationale: Involving students in our efforts to create a bully-free environment could foster student ownership in the school and help create a mission-based culture. The newly-forming Curley Student Government could be the forum for student input for the new pledge.

Five R's Diagram



APPENDIX
Curley K-8 School
DISCIPLINE

Discipline at the Curley K-8 School is aimed at teaching students to be responsible for their actions and to work cooperatively with others. Behavior that is dangerous, illegal, disrespectful, or offensive will be not be tolerated.

In the area of student behavior, each faculty member is a teacher of every student in the school. Good manners, respect for others and responsibility are to be taught, modeled, and reinforced all through the day. It is very important that adults respond to all inappropriate behaviors and not ignore them.

The classroom teacher is the chief disciplinarian. As such, he/she will be expected to provide a positive classroom climate which promotes pro social behaviors, and, as necessary, to resolve the day-to-day discipline problems of the classroom. Teachers are responsible for setting clear expectations for behavior through posting, discussing, and modeling school-based rules within their classes. Faculty members are expected to use thinking/focus areas and problem-solving strategies to resolve discipline problems. We encourage the use of consistent, positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior. See *Classroom-Based Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviors* for an extensive list of gradually intensifying consequences that can used as a way to help students think through alternatives to unacceptable behaviors. The discipline process is as follows:

1. Redirection
2. Verbal Warning
3. Thinking/Focus Area
4. Buddy System
5. Contact Parents/Guardian
6. Pride Coordinator's Office (incident report is required)

If unacceptable behaviors continue, in spite of repeated use of classroom-based consequences, an *Incident Report Form* should be completed and signed by both the teacher and an administrator. The signed form will be mailed home by the administrator and will be kept on file by both the teacher and the administrator.

Should a student present an unusually difficult problem and behaviors that are illegal, physically harmful, or defiant, teachers should fill out a *Disciplinary Referral* to the office and escort the student, if possible, to the office.

No student should be sent to the office alone or without an *Incident Report Form* explaining why he/she has been sent out of the classroom. Teachers may use the intercom to buzz the office if they need assistance or send a child down with a pass to the Pride Coordinator's office to get help. This policy applies to the lunchroom, recess, and specialty classes. Teachers should insure that their students are aware of the rules and procedures pertaining to discipline.

CLASSROOM-BASED CONSEQUENCES FOR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

(most discipline problems should be resolved at this level)

- Provide positive practice (e.g. “This is the way we sit in this classroom.”)
- Reminder of rules
- Verbal reprimand
- Over-the-shoulder correction
- Record behavior (e.g. “I’m writing it down in my book.”)
- Assign time-out at thinking/focus area or buddy system (e.g. student completes Think Sheet)
- Assign time-out within the Team (e.g. use the buddy system)
- Loss of a privilege (e.g. field trip, choice time)
- Silent lunch
- Detention (grades 6-8)
- Have student fill out problem-solving form
- Order restitution (restore/repair damage done – e.g. wash desk, write apology, etc.)
- Contact parents
- Refer to Student Support Team

Disciplinary Referral

Use disciplinary referral to the Pride Coordinator’s office **only for:**

- Illegal acts – weapons, sexual harassment, stealing, vandalism, obscene language
- Physically dangerous behavior – fighting, bullying, threatening, extorting, hitting
- Defiance – overt and immediate refusal to comply with adult requests

School Wide Consequences after Disciplinary Referral

- Repeated offenses that repertoire of classroom-based consequences (above) fail to resolve
- Meeting with parent, teachers, student
- Behavior contract
- Loss of privileges
- Suspension hearing