

Delaware Department of Education

**2015-2016
Annual Report
Incidents of Bullying
in Delaware Public School
Districts and Charter Schools**

As required under 14 *Del. C.* § 4112D

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Background and Overview

Since the 2011-2012 school year, the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) has collected incident-level data on bullying to provide the State of Delaware with a comprehensive picture of the number and types of occurrences of bullying among students statewide. The *2015-2016 Annual Report on the Incidents of Bullying in Delaware Public School Districts and Charter Schools* presents detailed information regarding alleged and substantiated incidents of bullying. This includes the total number of substantiated offenses as well as the reported or determined reasons for the reported bullying incidents.

The data contained in this report reflects information provided by districts and charter schools relating to the number of incidents of bullying that occurred in public schools from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. Additionally, each year schools are audited randomly to evaluate district and charter adherence to Delaware's bullying prevention law and cyberbullying regulation. Audits on district and charter processes comply with the requirements outlined in 14 *Del. C.* § 4112D(b)(2). During the 2015-2016 school year, twelve (12) schools were audited. The combined results of these audits are contained herein.

The 2015-2016 school year marks the fifth year for this report and provides Delaware with the opportunity to assess trends over time and to further target solutions for districts and charters to mitigate possible areas of concern. DDOE examines the policies, procedures, and practices of districts and charters through random audit as well as those reporting low numbers of incidents (including no reports) of bullying and sudden changes in data. DDOE works with district superintendents and charter leaders directly. Further examination and analysis of these data also assists in informing the direction of DDOE's future guidance to districts and charters regarding best practices.

Currently, DDOE promotes the use of positive behavioral supports and interventions in schools, providing technical assistance and trainings to better prepare educators to

prevent and address incidents of bullying. Delaware also maintains adherence to nationally recognized models of bullying prevention training, provides training supports to districts and charters on reporting requirements, and reviews and analyzes trend data to target areas of concern.

Additionally, DDOE is in the process of completing a pilot program of the No Bully System of prevention and intervention in four schools including Dover H.S., Mariner M.S., Beacon M.S. and Milford Central Academy. This programming focuses on training key staff to become Solution Coaches to help resolve incidents of bullying that occur within the school. Independent studies show that schools trained in this evidenced-based program remedy bullying in over 90% of cases and that this remains true at a three-month follow up; however, results of the pilot will be available in the *2016-2017 Annual Report on the Incidents of Bullying in Delaware Public School Districts and Charter Schools*.

Definitions and Concepts

Bullying, as defined in 14 Del. C. § 4112D(a), means any intentional written, electronic, verbal or physical act or actions against another student, school volunteer or school employee that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

- (1) Placing a student, school volunteer or school employee in reasonable fear of substantial harm to his or her emotional or physical well-being or substantial damages to his or her property; or
- (2) Creating a hostile, threatening, humiliating or abusive educational environment due to the pervasiveness or persistence of actions or due to a power differential between the bully and the target; or
- (3) Interfering with a student having a safe school environment that is necessary to facilitate educational performance, opportunities or benefits; or

(4) Perpetuating bullying by inciting, soliciting or coercing an individual or group to demean, dehumanize, embarrass or cause emotional, psychological or physical harm to another student, school volunteer or school employee.

Alleged Bullying is defined as any report of an incident of perceived bullying to school administration regardless of whether or not the school could substantiate the incident as bullying.

Substantiated Bullying is defined as any alleged bullying incident or reported discipline incident in which the school administration investigated and concluded that bullying behaviors were exhibited as defined in 14 Del Code §4112D.

Bullying Offenses represents the total number of offenders involved in substantiated bullying incidents. A bullying incident may involve one or more offenders.

Bullying Reasons

When a school substantiates that an incidence of bullying as occurred, the school is required to include a determination of whether the bullying targeted or was reported being targeted for a specific reason. Schools must indicate the reason(s) in the substantiated bullying report. If applicable, multiple reasons can be cited.

Age - Targeting a person due to him being younger or older than the aggressor and the age deficit contributing to the power differential between the target and the aggressor.

Ancestry -Targeting a person due to that individual's ancestral background, lineage, or family origin.

Creed - Targeting a person due to that individual's set of fundamental beliefs, guiding principles, or philosophy.

Dating Violence - Targeting a person due to the offender trying to maintain control or power over another individual with whom the offender currently has or did have a dating relationship.

Disability - Targeting a person due to that individual's physical, mental, or learning disability.

Gang - Targeting a person due to the aggressor's affiliation with a gang and related activities that the gang membership promotes.

Gender/Identity Expression - Targeting a person due to that individual's recognition and internalization that he identifies with and openly expresses himself as a member of the opposite sex he was assigned at birth.

Hate Crime - Victimized a person with a crime(s) when motivated by hostility to the victim as a member of a group (as one based on color, creed, gender, or sexual orientation).

Marital Status - Targeting a person due to his marital status or that of his guardians, relatives, or acquaintances.

National Origin - Targeting a person due to his country of birth.

Other - Targeting a person due to a reason other than one listed in the "Incident Related To" field of the bullying report in eSchool Plus.

Peer Attention - Targeting a person due to the aggressor's motivation to gain approval of peers and elevate his social status within his peer group.

Physical Appearance - Targeting a person due to a physical attribute such as his height, weight, hair, teeth, eyes, etc., but not related to ancestry, disability, gender identity, national origin, race or socio-economic status.

Race/Color - Targeting a person due to their shared distinctive physical traits within a group (i.e. skin color) and/or shared common culture or history within that group.

Religion - Targeting a person due to his belief in or worship of a god, a group of gods, or a higher being.

Sexual-Orientation - Targeting a person due to their enduring (or perceived) sexual attraction to male partners, female partners, or both whether the attraction is to the same sex, opposite sex, or both sexes.

Socio-Economic Status - Targeting a person due to his relationship to a combination of social and economic factors such as poverty, wealth, housing/living arrangements, employment, and education.

Summary

This is the fifth year Delaware has collected data related to the incidence of bullying in schools. In total, 1,971 incidents of bullying were reported during the 2015-2016 school year to the DDOE. Of these alleged incidents, 514 incidents were substantiated to include 629 offenses*.

Note: A substantiated bullying **incident may involve one or more substantiated **offenses**.*

The greatest reason for bullying in Delaware schools continues to be Peer Attention with 230 substantiated incidents during the 2015-2016 school year. Peer Attention is defined as targeting a person due to the aggressor's motivation to gain approval of peers and elevate his social status within his peer group. Several bullying reasons reported zero (0) incidents during the 2015-2016 school year: creed, dating violence, gang(s), hate crime, marital status, and religion. Of reasons with reported numbers, the lowest bullying reasons during the 2015-2016 school year are Ancestry (2 incidents) and No Reason (2 incidents).

Twelve (12) schools were audited during the 2015-2016 school year:

- Caesar Rodney School District: McIlvaine Early Education Center
- Cape Henlopen School District: Rehoboth Elementary School
- Christina School District: Leisure Elementary School and the Christina Early Education Center
- Indian River School District: Southern Delaware School of the Arts
- Milford School District: Banneker Elementary School
- Newark Charter School
- New Castle County Vo-Tech School District: Delcastle High School
- Red Clay Consolidated School District: Cab Calloway School for the Arts
- Seaford School District: Blades Elementary
- Smyrna School District: Clayton Elementary School
- Sussex Technical School District: Sussex Technical High School

Of the audited schools, 100% complied with the criteria outlined in 14 *Del. C.* § 4112D(b)(2) with the exception of four requirements. From the schools audited:

- 77.8% reported alleged bullying incidents to the DDOE within five (5) working days;
- 78.3% reported substantiated bullying incidents to the DDOE within five (5) working days;
- 91.7% included in their bullying prevention policy a requirement to notify the parent, guardian and/or relative caregiver of any target of bullying or person who bullies another; and
- 77.8% reported that parents, guardians, relative caregivers, and/or legal guardians were contacted whenever notification was required.

Total Number of Bullying Incidents and Offenses

Chart 1. Bullying Incidents and Offenses, Statewide

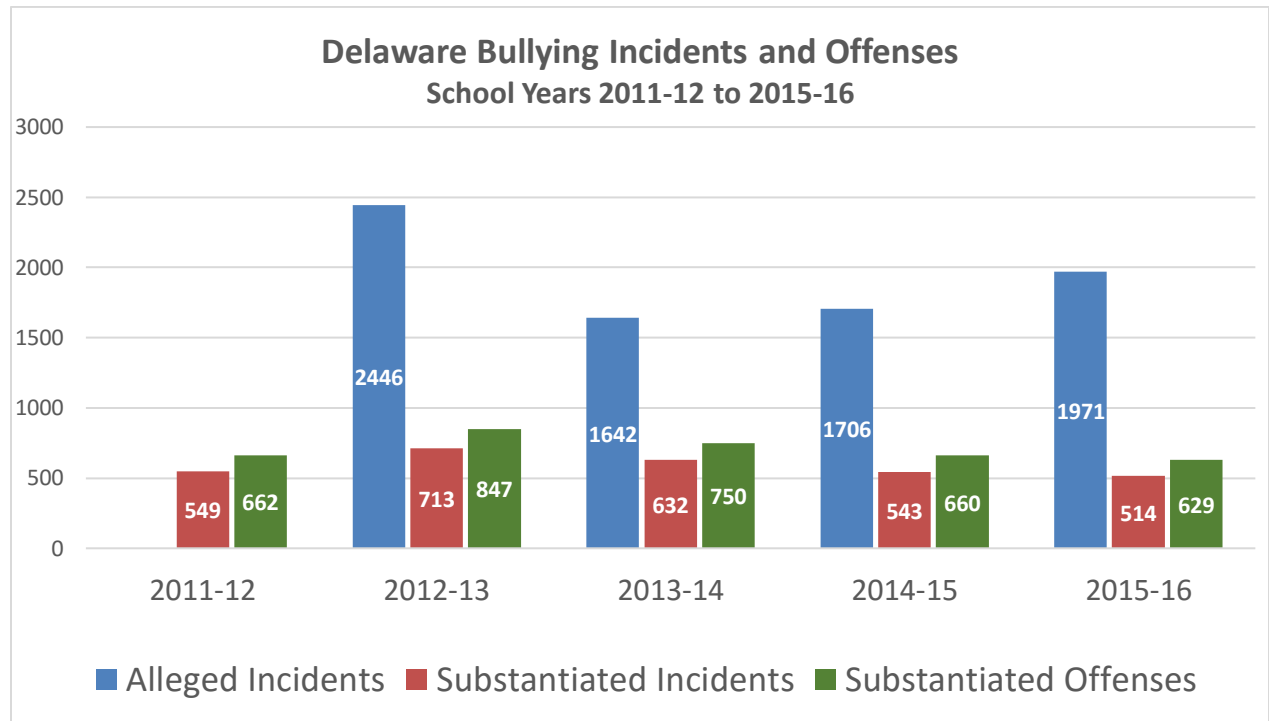


Chart 1 displays the reported number of alleged and substantiated incidents of bullying throughout Delaware and the reported number of offenses beginning school year 2011-2012 through school year 2015-2016. In total, 1,971 incidents of bullying were reported to the DDOE during the 2015-2016 school year, up 265 from the previous school year. Of these alleged incidents, 514 incidents were substantiated (down 29 from the prior school year) to include 629 offenses (down 31 from the prior school year). A substantiated bullying incident may involve one or more substantiated offenses because the incident could have involved multiple offenders.

Table 1. Alleged Bullying Incidents by Districts and Charters

	2011-2012	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Appoquinimink		233	164	237	304
Brandywine		108	63	37	49
Caesar Rodney		211	118	75	103
Cape Henlopen		42	39	77	53
Capital		80	58	51	28
Christina		130	114	183	134
Colonial		248	97	81	116
Delmar		90	0	58	25
Indian River		215	150	92	252
Lake Forest		49	30	34	58
Laurel		18	37	28	27
Milford		116	31	37	43
Red Clay		596	453	415	428
Seaford		28	17	34	40
Smyrna		69	47	57	55
Woodbridge		34	15	4	25
Technical Schools (6 Schools)		44	30	18	37
Charter Schools: New Castle County (23 Schools)		89	107	134	125
Charter Schools: Kent and Sussex counties (7 Schools)		46	72	54	69
		2446	1642	1706	1971

Table 1 displays the reported number of alleged incidents of bullying reported by Delaware districts and charter schools beginning school year 2011-2012 through school year 2015-2016. Gray areas indicate that there are no reports for a particular year.

Table 2. Substantiated Bullying Incidents by Districts and Charters

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Appoquinimink	62	73	24	32	35
Brandywine	75	93	79	37	21
Caesar Rodney	14	32	40	14	27
Cape Henlopen	10	19	13	26	18
Capital	47	28	25	18	15
Christina	123	65	38	65	55
Colonial	14	44	37	63	50
Delmar	4	10	6	3	2
Indian River	16	39	25	21	51
Lake Forest	20	37	12	1	12
Laurel	17	23	18	12	16
Milford	16	20	26	15	23
Red Clay	54	121	132	102	61
Seaford	18	16	18	8	21
Smyrna	3	13	18	20	19
Woodbridge	2	8	10	1	9
Technical Schools (6 Schools)	42	36	67	67	42
Charter Schools: New Castle County (23 Schools)	8	9	22	28	17
Charter Schools: Kent and Sussex counties (7 Schools)	4	27	22	10	20
	549	713	632	543	514

Table 2 displays the reported number of substantiated incidents of bullying reported by Delaware districts and charters school beginning school year 2011-2012 through school year 2015-2016. Gray areas indicate that there are no reports for a particular year.

Table 3. Substantiated Bullying Offenses by Districts and Charters

	2011- 12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Appoquinimink	70	87	28	39	40
Brandywine	92	105	86	44	34
Caesar Rodney	14	34	44	16	29
Cape Henlopen	10	20	15	35	20
Capital	59	36	32	23	17
Christina	163	71	44	74	61
Colonial	14	59	54	75	63
Delmar	5	10	6	5	2
Indian River	18	58	26	25	56
Lake Forest	26	40	12	11	13
Laurel	17	23	22	12	19
Milford	18	27	33	15	30
Red Clay	68	143	151	127	78
Seaford	23	19	18	8	23
Smyrna	3	14	20	27	22
Woodbridge	2	13	12	1	17
Technical Schools (6 Schools)	5	34	30	15	29
Charter Schools: New Castle County (23 Schools)	47	44	86	75	55
Charter Schools: Kent and Sussex counties (7 Schools)	8	10	31	33	21
	662	847	750	660	629

Table 3 displays the reported number of substantiated offenses of bullying reported by each Delaware district and charter school beginning school year 2011-2012 through school year 2015-2016. Gray areas indicate that there are no reports for a particular year.

Reasons Provided for Substantiated Incidents of Bullying

Table 4. Total Number of Substantiated Incidents of Bullying Statewide, by Reason

Bullying Reason	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Age		25	17	57	50
Ancestry		6	2	1	2
Creed		0	1	2	0
Dating Violence		8	3	2	0
Disability		32	13	20	15
Gang(s)		4	4	0	0
Gender Identity/Expression		29	9	8	6
Hate Crime		4	1	0	0
Marital Status		0	2	0	0
National Origin		6	0	3	4
Other		226	114	118	118
Peer Attention*			296	238	230
Physical Appearance		195	106	76	65
Race/Color		17	24	13	12
Religion		2	4	1	0
Sexual-Orientation		15	9	3	8
Socio-Economic Status*			24	4	5
No Reason		144	5	1	2
Total		713	634	547	517

Table 4 displays the reported reasons for substantiated offenses of bullying statewide beginning school year 2011-2012 through school year 2015-2016. Gray areas indicate that there are no reports for a particular year or that the school was not in existence.

*Peer Attention and Socio-Economic Status were not included as Bullying Reasons until the 2012-2013 school year.

Audit Findings

Twelve (12) schools were audited during the 2015-2016 school year:

- Caesar Rodney School District: McIlvaine Early Education Center
- Cape Henlopen School District: Rehoboth Elementary School
- Christina School District: Leisure Elementary School and the Christina Early Education Center
- Indian River School District: Southern Delaware School of the Arts
- Milford School District: Banneker Elementary School
- Newark Charter School
- New Castle County Vo-Tech School District: Delcastle High School
- Red Clay Consolidated School District: Cab Calloway School for the Arts
- Seaford School District: Blades Elementary
- Smyrna School District: Clayton Elementary School
- Sussex Technical School District: Sussex Technical High School

Table 5. Percentage of Schools Audited that Meet Requirements of 14 Del. C. § 4112D(b)(2)

AUDIT CRITERIA	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Schools Audited	<i>Random audits did not begin until the 2012-13 school year.</i>	North Dover ES, Shortlidge ES, Marbrook ES, Eisenberg ES, Star Hill ES, Milford MS, Middletown HS, Delcastle HS, Glasgow HS, Seaford HS, Sussex Academy Charter	Sunnyside ES, Dunbar ES, Dover HS, Bancroft ES, Family Foundations Charter, REACH Academy Charter, Bunker Hill ES, Milford HS, Postlethwait MS, Woodbridge HS, Smith ES	Fairview ES, Harlan ES, Selbyville MS, Marshall ES, Gunning Bedford MS, North Smyrna ES, Carrcroft ES, Pulaski ES, New Castle ES, DE Academy of Public Safety and Security, Booker T. Washington ES, Delmar HS	Leisure ES, Blades ES, Sussex Tech HS, Rehoboth ES, Clayton ES, Southern DE Arts, McIlvaine ECC, Christina ECC, Banneker ES, Delcastle HS, Cab Calloway School of the Arts, Newark Charter
Percentage of schools audited whose district or charter bullying prevention policy included a procedure for a student and parent, guardian, relative caregiver pursuant to § 202(f) of Title 14, or legal guardian to provide information on bullying activity.		100.0%	90.9%	100.0%	100.0%

AUDIT CRITERIA	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Percentage of schools audited whose district or charter bullying prevention policy included a requirement that all reported incidents of bullying, regardless of whether the school could substantiate the incident be reported to the Department of Education within 5 working days pursuant to Department of Education regulations.		100.0%	100.0%	91.7%	100.0%
Percentage of schools audited whose district or charter bullying prevention policy (or separate cyberbullying policy) prohibited cyberbullying by students directed at other students and included the definition of cyberbullying as defined in <u>14 Del. Admin. Code 624</u> .		<i>Was not required until 2013-2014 school year.</i>	100.0%	91.7%	100.0%
Percentage of alleged bullying incidents which were reported to the DOE within five working days.		94.2%	90.7%	59.5%	77.8%
Percentage of substantiated bullying incidents which were reported to the DOE within five working days.		75.9%	80.0%	86.5%	78.3%
Percentage of schools audited whose district or charter school bullying prevention policy included a requirement that a parent, guardian or relative caregiver pursuant to § 202(f) of Title 14, or legal guardian of any target of bullying or person who bullies another as defined herein, be notified.		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	91.7%

AUDIT CRITERIA	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Percentage of parents, guardians, relative caregivers, or legal guardians which were required to be notified regarding a substantiated incident of bullying and the school report indicated that contact was made.		73.0%	93.8%	73.5%	77.8%
Percentage of schools audited in which the School Ombudsman phone number was included on the school's website.		90.9%	90.9%	100.0%	91.7%
Percentage of schools audited who submitted a signed assurance statement that their bullying prevention policy was distributed to all students, parents, faculty, and staff.		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Percentage of schools audited who submitted a signed assurance statement that the School Ombudsman phone number was distributed to all students, parents, faculty, and staff and that the phone number was prominently displayed in the school.		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 5 displays the percentage of schools audited that met the requirements outlined in 14 *Del. C.* § 4112D(b)(2) beginning school year 2011-2012 through school year 2015-2016. Of the audited schools, 100% complied with the criteria outlined in 14 *Del. C.* § 4112D(b)(2) with the exception of four requirements. From the schools audited, 77.8% reported alleged bullying incidents to the DDOE within five (5) working days; 78.3% reported substantiated bullying incidents to the DDOE within five (5) working days; 91.7% included in their bullying prevention policy a requirement to notify the parent, guardian or relative caregiver of any target of bullying or person who bullies another; and 77.8% reported that parents, guardians, relative caregivers, and/or legal guardians were contacted whenever notification was required. Gray areas indicate that there are no reports for a particular year or that the school was not in existence.