



Student Support Team

**Bullying Allegations and Incidents
Reported in Delaware Public Schools
Annual Report
Combined Report 2018 & 2019 School Years**

Delaware Department of Education

Collette Building

35 Commerce Way

Dover, Delaware 19904

Executive Summary

Bullying is best defined as repetitive conduct designed to harm another individual either physically, mentally or emotionally as well as to create an imbalance of power between two individuals. The impacts of bullying can include long-term mental health issues as well as negative educational outcomes. Nationally, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) notes that close to 40 percent of secondary school students have been bullied on at least one occasion in the past 12 months. (Control, 2015, 2017) That number is close to what is reported from the 5,000 students who answered the YRBS in Delaware.

These students do not often share their victimization with staff members, other adults or their families, based upon the far fewer numbers of recorded allegations from district and charter schools. If we use the same data rule to compare the self-reporting from the YRBS and the statewide reported allegations that districts and charter schools must record in E-School, less than 1 percent of the students who self-reported in the YRBS survey that they were victims of bullying actually reported to their schools that they were allegedly victims of bullying, either physical or cyber.

As a state, we realize that this means students simply are not reporting that they are being victimized. In some cases, adults discover the bullying and correct it, even if the students fail to report it. Nationally nearly 70 percent of students stated that they witnessed bullying in some form but failed to notify anyone or take any action. Of the students who witnessed it and attempted to intervene, the bullying stopped within an estimated 53 seconds.

Yet another significant consequence of bullying is highlighted in the most recent US Secret Service Threat Assessment Study of school shootings, which notes that 60 percent of the school shootings between 2004 and 2017 had a nexus to bullying victimization (Center, 2019). Students who conducted physical attacks in schools had either been significantly victimized or felt as if they had been significantly victimized. In 34 percent of those cases, the school was aware of the alleged victimization prior to the attack.

When looking at the three-year trends within the First State, the number of allegations of bullying has decreased from 1,978 during the 2016-2017 school year to 637 during the 2018-2019 school year, 68 percent less than the reporting total three years ago. This is compared with the number of substantiated incidents that have reduced by only 26 percent or 146 fewer incidents. There was no significant reduction between 2015 and 2017 YRBS studies of the number of students stating that they were the victims of bullying, while the reduction in reported allegations was significant.

Responding to Bullying through School Climate Improvements

While there is no simple answer to solving the issue of bullying, schools that attempt to create a climate of inclusivity and civility can help students take ownership of their school “community” and reduce tolerance for bullying among their peers. The most telling statistic from the national surveys is the note regarding what happens when a bystander attempts to intercede. When a peer attempts to intervene, the act of bullying tends to end within about 53 seconds. The peer’s intervention tends to be successful and sets a positive example to other bystanders that intervention can lead to a positive outcome.

This form of supportive community would also increase the support that victims receive from not only staff and mental health workers, but from their own peer group. Leaders can help create a more universal community of caring by implementing trauma-informed practices and professional development for their staffs. Administrators should support trauma awareness and utilizing restorative disciplinary practices if they wish to develop a stronger sense of community within their schools.

While the data reflects a reduction in the number of allegations of bullying statewide, the number of substantiated bullying events remains about the same. And this trend has continued for the past three years with no significant statistical change. This should not be construed as a factual representation of the amount of bullying that occurs in our schools, simply as the number of times that a bullying offense is recorded with a disciplinary consequence. Based upon the number of unreported incidents that we see reflected in the national and statewide YRBS data, the number of actual bullying incidents would appear to be greater than what we can see reflected in reported disciplinary data.

Section 1 of this report includes charts that document the submitted number of allegations and substantiated incidents of bullying by all public districts and charter schools in Delaware for the previous two school years. In addition, Section 2 of this report highlights the annual desk audit of a random selection of schools, both district and charter, to ensure compliance with all applicable state regulations and laws in the area of bullying prevention, investigation, response and reporting.

Section 1. Statewide, District and Charter Data

Figure 1. Three-year Trend of Reported Alleged and Substantiated Bullying Incidents Statewide

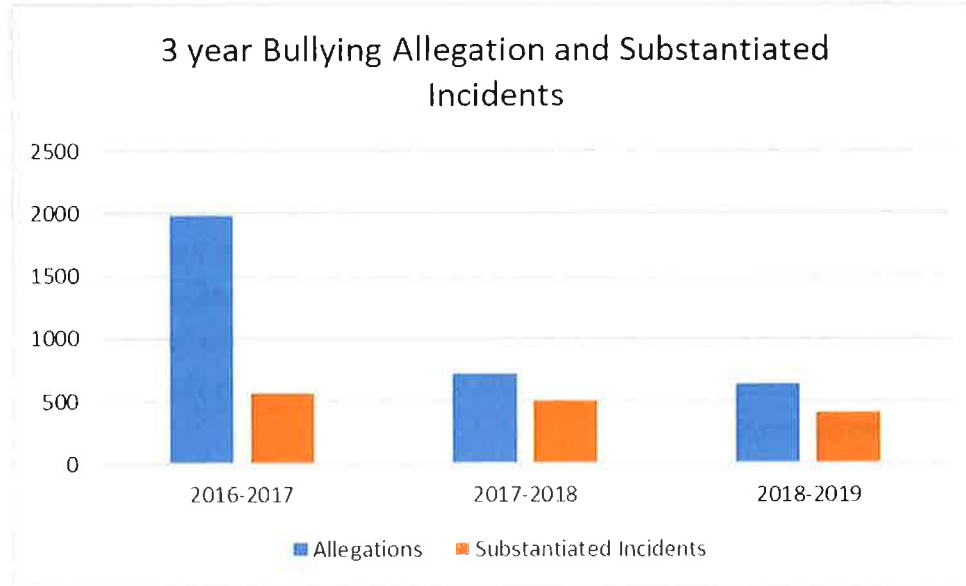


Figure 2. Recorded Allegations & Substantiated Bullying Incidents 2017 & 2018 School Years by Charter and District

District or Charter	SY 2018 Allegations	SY 2018 Substantiated	SY 2019 Allegations	2019 Substantiated
Academia Anotnio Alonso	6	0	11	0
Academy of Dover Charter School	3	2	2	2
Appoquinimink School District	121	28	97	20
Brandywine School District	62	44	66	60
Caesar Rodney School District	54	13	69	25
Campus Community	1	0	0	0
Cape Henlopen	49	20	46	19
Capital	27	19	24	12
Charter School of New Castle	0	3	0	1
Charter School of Wilmington	1	0	0	0
Christina	110	83	89	66
Colonial	61	25	50	17
Delaware Military Academy	0	0	0	0
Delmar School District	12	14	1	1
Early College High School at Delaware State Universi	2	3	2	1
East Side Charter School	0	0	0	0
Edison (Thomas A.) Charter School	1	1	1	1
First State Military Academy	2	2	0	0
First State Montessori Academy	1	1	0	0
Freire Charter School	3	3	3	3
Gateway Lab School	9	14	4	4
Great Oaks Charter School	2	0	3	3
Indian River	40	50	23	22
Kuumba Academy Charter School	4	1	2	1
Lake Forest	17	17	21	23
Las Americas Aspira Academy	2	2	1	0
Laurel	6	6	5	5
Milford	8	9	7	11

Figure 2. Continued.

Recorded Allegations & Substantiated Bullying Incidents 2017 & 2018 School Year by Charter and District

District or Charter	SY 2018 Allegations	SY 2018 Substantiated	SY 2019 Allegations	2019 Substantiated
MOT Charter School	6	12	1	0
New Castle County Vo-Tech	14	15	12	14
Newark Charter School	1	1	4	3
Odyssey Charter School	1	1	5	4
POLYTECH	2	1	0	0
Positive Outcomes Charter School	4	5	3	2
Prestige Academy	0	0	0	0
Providence Creek Academy Charter School	2	7	2	5
Red Clay	48	58	54	56
Seaford	16	17	10	9
Smyrna	9	13	9	11
Sussex Academy	4	4	0	0
Sussex Montessori School - NEW			0	0
Sussex Tech	0	0	0	0
Woodbridge	2	7	10	10
Totals:	713	501	637	411

Section 2. Random Desk Audit Compliance

Nine schools are randomly selected annually to review if they are in compliance with all regulatory and code language surrounding bullying prevention activities, mandatory recording and reporting and parental notification of alleged and substantiated bullying incidents. This includes the requirement to organize a bullying prevention committee for each school, inclusion of the Delaware Department of Justice bullying prevention anonymous reporting telephone line on family correspondence as well as on each school’s web site, inclusion of bullying and cyberbullying prevention policies in district and/or charter school codes of conduct and policies.

The following schools were selected for auditing for the 2018-2019 school year. Completed audits note a 0-100 point scale for compliance. In addition to areas for corrective action or improvement, best practices for several schools have been included for use as a reference tool by other schools within Delaware.

The staff at Star Hill Elementary, with the support of the Caesar Rodney District Office, developed anonymous reporting forms that are grade and age appropriate to allow students to comfortably report bullying behaviors. In addition, they did an excellent job of developing a comprehensive bullying investigation and response tool that includes not only guidance on how to effectively conduct an investigation but follow up steps that the school team should follow to support addressing the incidents and preventing future incidents between students. These forms are included here for easy reference and will be available on the DOE School Climate Bullying Prevention Tools web page.

Figure 3. School Bullying Compliance Audit Results and notes.

School	Audit Score	Notes
Star Hill ES	98	Well documented program with innovative grade and age appropriate anonymous reporting forms as well as a comprehensive investigation and bullying follow up form. Included at the end of section for reference as a best practice.
Maple Lane ES	94	Excellent use of school wide signage to support the program.
Cedar Lane ES	98	Intergrates Bullying supports in their school wide Pro Kind Plan.
Woodbridge Middle	98	Uses a Student Compact to support creating a sense of strong and supportive school community for all students.
Dover AFB Middle	98	DAFB Middle incorporates several bullying prevention strategies in lesson plans for students in health curriculums and other content areas.
Delmar HS	100	Delmar achieved a perfect score as all of their reporting and documentation reflected care in not only following the requirements of Regulation but also focused their efforts on addressing bullying and improved response to allegations.
McKean HS	98	McKean has a long standing strong Bullying Prevention Program which is student driven and run by an extremely dedicated staff member. Their Committee has become and integral part of their school climate.
Aspira Academy	100	While Aspira did not have a significant number of allegations or incidents, they did have a strong staff development process around how staff members could be aware of and respond to bullying incidents.
Sussex Academy	94	Sussex has incorporated Bullying Prevention activities in its policies and procedures as well as included it in several school wide climate initiatives.

References

Center, U. S. (2019). *Analysis of Targeted School Violence*. Washington DC: US Secret Service.

Control, C. f. (2015, 2017). *Youth Risk Behavior Survey*. Washington DC: CDC.gov.

Adult Alleged Bullying Reporting Form

Star Hill Elementary School

Caesar Rodney School District

2019-2020

This is a form to report alleged bullying. If you are the parent/guardian of a student victim, an adult community member or a school staff member and wish to report an incident of alleged bullying please complete this form. If you are a student please complete the grade level form. Please give all completed forms to the assistant principal. All alleged incidents of bullying will be reviewed by the bullying committee.

Today's Date _____ Name of Person Reporting Incident _____

Telephone No. _____ Email _____

I am a

___ Witness/Bystander ___ Parent/ Guardian ___ Adult Community Member ___ School Staff Member

Name of Alleged Student Victim(s)

Name of Alleged Offenders

On What Date Did the incident happen? (Month/Day/Year) _____

Where did the incident occur? _____

What happened? What did the alleged offender(s) say or do? (Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Is there any additional information you would to provide?

**Bullying Complaint Investigation Form
Star Hill Elementary: 2019-2020**

Part 1-General Information:

Staff Member Filing the Complaint: _____ **Date:** _____

Alleged Victim: _____ **Grade Level:** _____

Alleged Bully: _____ **Grade Level:** _____

Location where alleged bullying took place _____ **Date of alleged incident** _____

Part 2-Bully Complaint Information (Information taken from Alleged Bullying Form)

Summary of complaint: _____

Statement from Alleged Victim: _____

Statement from Alleged Bully: _____

Name(s) of Possible Witness (es): _____

Part 3-Summary of Investigation: _____

Part 4-Result of Investigation: _____

If bullying is substantiated, a follow-up form from the Department of Justice MUST be completed, as well as code entered in eSchool.

Part 5-Follow-Up Action and Contact:

Parent/Guardian of Alleged Victim contacted? Yes _____ No _____ Date of Contact: _____

Were parents informed of completion of Justice Form? Yes _____ No _____ Date _____

Follow-Up Action Needed? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what action is required _____

Summary of Follow-Up: _____

Parent/Guardian of Alleged Bully contacted? Yes _____ No _____ Date of Contact: _____

Follow-Up Action Needed? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what action is needed? _____

Were parents informed of completion of Justice Form? Yes _____ No _____ Date _____

Summary of Follow-Up: _____

2 WEEK FOLLOW UP:

Parent/Guardian of Alleged Victim : _____ Date of Contact: _____

Method of Contact: _____

Notes: _____

Parent/Guardian of Alleged Bully : _____ Date of Contact: _____

Method of Contact: _____

Notes: _____

4 WEEK FOLLOW UP:

Parent/Guardian of Alleged Victim : _____ Date of Contact: _____

Method of Contact: _____

Notes: _____

Parent/Guardian of Alleged Bully : _____ Date of Contact: _____

Method of Contact: _____

Notes: _____

Student First Grade Alleged Bullying Report Form
 Star Hill Elementary School 2019-2020

Today's Date: _____

Your Name: _____ (you do not have to write this)

Name of Person who was upset or hurt _____

Name of Person being mean _____

Circle where it happened



After School Program



School

Circle where at school or school it took place



Bathroom



Cafeteria



Recess



Bus



Classroom



Art



PE



Library



Music



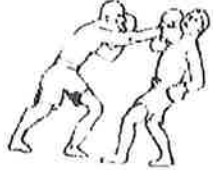





Hallway

Other _____

Student First Grade Alleged Bullying Report Form
Star Hill Elementary School 2019-2020

Circle what happened

 Broke Something	 Kicked	 Punched/Hit	 Wrote on the computer
 Said something untrue	 Said Mean Words	Other	

Dictation to Teacher/Adult

What happened:

Student Second and Third Grade Alleged Bullying Report Form
Star Hill Elementary School 2019-2020

Today's Date: _____

Your Name: _____ (you do not have to write this)

Name of Person who was upset or hurt _____

Name of Person being mean _____

Check where it happened:

_____ School

_____ After School Program

Put an X above where the incident took place

Bathroom	Cafeteria	Recess	Bus	Classroom
Art or LifeSkills <small>Circle One</small>	PE	Library	Music	Hallway

Other _____

Student Second and Third Grade Alleged Bullying Report Form

Star Hill Elementary School 2019-2020

Put an X above to what happened

Broke Something	Kicked	Punched/Hit	Typed on the computer
Said things that were untrue	Used Mean Words	Other	

What happened? (You may have an adult help you write this or you may write it yourself)

Did an adult see what happened? Did you tell an adult? If so, who?

Student Fourth and Fifth Grade Alleged Bullying Reporting Form
Star Hill Elementary School 2019-2020

Today's Date: _____

Your Name: _____ (you do not have to write this)

Name of Person who was hurt or upset _____

Name of Person acting inappropriate _____

1. Where did the incident happen (check all that apply)?

- On a school bus On the way to school On the way from school
 After School Program Bathroom Cafeteria Hallway Recess Classroom
 Library Art PE Music Life Skills Other _____

2. Place an X next to the statement(s) that best describes what happened (choose all that apply):

- Physical incident (hitting, punching, kicking, biting)
 Getting *another* person to hit or harm the student
 Teasing, name-calling, making negative remarks, or threatening, in person or by other means
 Demeaning and making the victim of jokes
 Excluding or rejecting the victim
 Spreading harmful rumors or gossip
 Electronic communications (Computer, Cell, etc.)
 Other (specify) _____



