

Superintendent and Staff Report

Bullying Awareness Month

October is Bullying Awareness Month, first declared in 2006, and is meant to highlight the need to show care and concern for every human being in our schools and in our community. As we all know, there are times when we are not as kind to one another as we should be. We allow peer pressure, or opposing views, to come before civility and citizenship. To be clear, we have had bullying cases in our schools this year, some surfacing for the first time, some have been on-going. As an administrative team, we have been active in addressing these cases, working with students to offer them tools, working with parents to meet expectations and be clear in providing information to them about specific cases, and...there is still work to be done to ensure there is a space for everyone in our classrooms, schools, District, and community. I would like to take a moment to thank our principals and our staff...who have stepped in to address observed behaviors, redirect, bring peace to our schools, and to thwart bullying when it surfaces.

This is not just an October issue, its one that needs a systematic approach, throughout our school system throughout the year, to offer a sense of acceptance and belonging for all who enter our doors. One of the best methods for ensuring school safety and avoiding violence in our schools, is to ensure our students feel welcomed and a part of our school community, regardless of who they are. And...we also know that when we lead with relationship...and students feel connected to their teachers and to their schools; this provides the best opportunity for academic, athletic, extracurricular, and social-emotional development. It's a team effort, it will take all of us, to make schools resemble the remarks above.

How can you, parents, 161 employees, and even our students get involved? When you hear or see something that isn't right...please report it. There are three groups in any bullying situation including the bully, the bullied, and the bystanders. This is a call to everyone, when you see something, say something. Get involved, stand up for your classmates, stand up for your schools...and help us make SHSD161 a peaceful, thoughtful, accepting school community

Each of our schools is offering varied experiences and activities throughout the month to highlight the importance of this topic. Please look forward to all that is offered. Thank you!