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Middle School Teachers' Perceptions of Bullying and Their Practices in Reporting Bullying Incidents

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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MA, Muskingum University, 2006

BS, Wright State University, 2000

Doctoral Study Submitted in Fulfillment

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Abstract

Student self-report surveys showed bullying behaviors were problematic among students in one Midwest middle school. Despite implementing a version of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, students continued to self-report bullying behaviors that occurred on school property during school hours. It is crucial that educators are proactive in intervening and preventing bullying to establish a safe environment for academic success. The purpose of this study was to describe teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. Bandura's social learning and Locke's social contract theories served as the study's framework. Teachers were asked to describe behaviors they perceived as bullying and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. A qualitative, bounded, descriptive case study was used to collect interview data from 12 purposefully selected classroom teachers who were tasked with bullying intervention and prevention. Thematic analysis using the lean, open coding strategy was used to analyze the data. Teachers reported observing physical, verbal, and cyber bullying behaviors, credited their bullying knowledge to schoolwide professional development (PD), and believed they recognized bullying behaviors when incidents occurred. Teachers also reported bullying incidents to the principal and to parents if they had a positive relationship with them. Based on these findings, a 4-day PD was designed for teachers to collaboratively develop uniform practices in reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. These endeavors may contribute to positive social change by equipping teachers with procedures in reporting bullying incidents; thus, reducing bullying, improving the learning environment, and creating a safer school culture for teachers and students.

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Dedication

I dedicate this research to Jesus, Mom, Dad, Kristi, Chris, Olivia, and Kyle - my greatest blessing of all; and to all bullies, victims, and bystanders. May this research improve lives.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to everyone who helped me reach this point in my life and in my academic career. Your support, encouragement, and guidance through this journey will never be forgotten.

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Section 1: The Problem

Bullying, with its detrimental consequences of school shootings, suicide, psychological and social confusion, physical disorders, and academic failure, draws the attention of researchers and educators world-wide. By exuding dominance over classmates and extracting their subservience, school bullies demonstrate a hostile form of aggression (Bandura, 1973) and prevent students from getting along with each other (Espelage, Green, & Wasserman, 2007; Harlacher & Merrell, 2010). The physical, psychological, and emotional effects of bullying diminish students' desire to attend school and their ability to pay attention while in school, leading to academic retention and failure (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, Goldweber, & Johnson, 2013; Hamarus & Kaikkomen, 2008; Kowalski & Limber, 2013; Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center, 2011; Sanchez & Cerezo, 2010). It is crucial, therefore, that educators are proactive in bullying intervention and establish a learning environment that supports positive social learning and academic success for all students, and as mandated by laws such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2002), the Student Success Act (2015), and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). To provide a culture in which learning is present and continuous for all students, teachers' perceptions about bullying behaviors need to align with the goal of maintaining a safe and inviting environment. As teachers' perceptions determine their actions, their actions determine the state of the learning culture (Anderson, 2011; Novic & Isaacs, 2010). Thus, recognizing, intervening in, and reporting bullying incidents is important because teachers have the opportunity to

influence students who in turn influence each other and their community, promoting a systemic positive social change.

The Local Problem

The administration of a local rural middle school found bullying behaviors problematic among students as evidenced by student self-report surveys. A former school principal (personal communication, April 16, 2010) revealed to the bullying prevention committee that cyber bullying, such as taking pictures of personal actions and inappropriate texting, occurred at any given time and place in the local middle school. Physical bullying, such as hitting, spitting, pinching, tripping, stealing, and assault occurred most on the school busses. Verbal bullying, such as name calling, threats, inappropriate sexual comments, and teasing occurred most on the school busses, in the school cafeteria, and on the school playground. The former principal's verbal report was supported by data from the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire administered to the student body in 2010, and the district's version of the questionnaire administered the following year (local middle school, raw data, 2011). A more recent bullying-related incident occurred when a parent entered the building, sought out four students who she believed were bullying her daughter, and verbally threatened them in front of teachers and other students. The parent was given a warning by the local police and escorted off school property (personal communication, March 10, 2013). The school district applied a restraining order against the parent. The school principal (personal communication, March 19, 2013) shared that unfortunate consequences of this event included the students involved in that incident missing one to two classes to consult with the school counselor.

Consequences to bullies and victims interrupted learning as students were removed from the classroom to deal with bullying behaviors. A former school principal (personal communication, April 16, 2010) reminded the bullying prevention committee that bullying incurred warnings, detentions, suspensions, alternative school, expulsion, interrogation from the local authorities, and arrest. Additionally, a former school counselor (personal communication, April 16, 2010), reported to the bullying prevention committee that the victims of bullying who she saw during school hours suffered social isolation, depression, anxiety, illness, and suicidal tendencies. Although the local middle school administration was proactive by implementing a version of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, bullying still existed, and the consequences contributed to social and academic losses on a systemic level.

Despite the implementation of the bullying prevention program, bullying continued to be self-reported on surveys by students at the local middle school. This situation may lead individuals to surmise that a gap in practice exists where teachers did not respond to bullying incidents or were not informed of bullying incidents by students. The School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) contains procedures for responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting bullying incidents. Based on the contents of the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act, a discrepancy exists between the higher rates of students' self-reported bullying on district surveys and the public posting by the district.

My study site is a rural district with a student population of about 411 fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh graders. The population consists of approximately 90% White,

5% Black, and 5% Hispanic students. Approximately 10% of the students are served with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and 10% are served in a gifted and talented program. Approximately 58% are on free or reduced lunches.

The staff consists of 26 teachers, along with a school counselor and a principal. All grades are departmentalized and 100% of the teachers are highly qualified in their specific content area as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act (2002). Forty-three percent of the certified staff have master's degrees in education. Seventeen percent are National Board Certified Teachers with master's degrees in education. Twenty-six percent have master's degrees in educational leadership and hold principal licenses.

Rationale

It was important to understand teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors because, as first responders, their views determine how they respond to bullying incidents (Anderson, 2011; Yoon & Bauman, 2014), of which there are few empirical studies (Marshall, Varjas, Meyers, Graybill, & Skoczylas, 2009; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). More specifically, my study of teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents offers the district an opportunity for a more complete understanding of the phenomenon in the local middle school where bullying rates are on par with the national average of approximately 30% student involvement in bullying, per the National Center for Education Statistics (Robers, Zhang, & Truman, 2012).

Bullying is prevalent everywhere. It is not bounded by gender, nationality, school size, setting, or socioeconomic status (Brown & Taylor, 2008; Craig et al., 2009; Due et al., 2009; Kljakovic, Hunt, & Jose, 2015; Tayli, 2013). The greatest rates of bullying

occur at the middle school level and in rural districts (Robers et al., 2012; Schultz, 2012), both of which are characteristics of my study site. The local site began to collect evidence of bullying in 2010. Additionally, the district's public posting showed evidence of bullying in 2012 as required by the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012; www.[redacted].k12.oh.us). Thirty percent of the students self-reported bullying involvement. The district reported four percent of the students being involved in bullying. An understanding of how bullying is addressed may lead to more informed decision-making about responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting bullying incidents as required by the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act. This understanding may lead to improved responses and investigations, and ultimately influence positive social and academic change in the learning environment.

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Evidence of bullying is present in the learning environment at my study site. Students identified bullying using the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. Student self-report surveys from 2010 showed 39% of the student body admitted bullying others; and in 2014, 30% admitted bullying others (local site, raw unpublished data, 2010, 2014; see Table 1). Data from Questions 4 and 24 of the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire indicated a possible decrease in bullying over the last five years. These data are still close to the national averages of approximately 30%, collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (Robers et al., 2012); and approximately 22%, collected by a Hazelden Foundation study that used the same Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (Limber, Olweus, & Luxenberg, 2013). This data indicates that bullying at my study site continues to be a

significant problem. The following table illustrates the percentage of students who claimed they were bullied, and the percentage of students who admitted to bullying others at the local middle school.

Table 1

The Students' Report: Percentage of Students Who Identified Bullying at the Local Middle School

	2010	**2011**	**2012**	**2013***	**2014**	**2015***
Q4: How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months?	51	49	39	45	28	-
Q24: How often have you taken part in bullying another student(s) at school in the past couple of months?	39	32	10	12	30	-

Note. N = 383 (2010), 435 (2011), 415 (2012), 411 (2013), 409 (2014). Adapted from the local middle school's bullying questionnaires. *Change in administration. -No data collected. Unpublished raw data.

In addition to student self-report surveys, the local school district's public posting of the Bullying and Aggressive Behavior Report mandated by the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) provided evidence of bullying (see Table 2). In May, 2012, the school reported 21 bullying infractions by 15 students. These data are lower than anticipated, considering the number of students who claimed bullying others or claimed being bullied by others. Data were not collected under the new administration in 2015; nor has data been reported on the district web site since 2012 (see Table 2 below).

Table 2

The Board of Education's Report: Percentage of Students Who Committed Aggressive Infractions as Reported by the Board of Education per the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) Mandate

	2012	**2013***	**2014**	**2015***
Infractions	21	-	-	-
Percentage of Students	3	-	-	-

Note. $N = 415$ (2012), 411 (2013). Adapted from the local middle school's *Bullying and Aggressive Behavior Report*. *Change in administration. -No data reported.

The evidence provided by students and the school district indicated that bullying exists in the local middle school. It was possible that bullying was not reported by teachers because students did not report bullying incidents to the teachers, the teachers did not recognize the behavior as bullying, no procedure was implemented for teachers to report the bullying, or teachers believed reporting bullying incidents reflected poorly on their classroom management. In any case, this gap in practice may be a reason for higher percentages reported at the student level and lower percentages reported at the district level. My intent in this study was to describe teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents at the local level.

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

Bullying is typical in American middle schools. In fact, bullying peaks in the middle school ages around the world (Letendre & Smith, 2011; Schultz, 2012; Schultz-Krumbholz, Jakel, Schultze, & Scheithauer, 2012). The lifecycle of bullying begins in the home (Bandura, 1973; Coloroso, 2008), and it spreads among students in elementary, middle, and high schools (Cornell, Huang, Gregory, & Fan, 2013; Sanchez & Cerezo,

2010). The behavior continues into college and even into the workforce (Adams & Lawrence, 2011; Bender & Kisek, 2011; Copeland, Wolke, Angold, & Costello, 2013).

Bullying is not bound by gender or nationality. A cross-national profile showed bullying involvement among 202,056 adolescents, ages 11, 13, and 15, in 40 countries (Craig et al., 2009). Approximately 16% of girls in the United States engage in bullying, ranking the United States 24th of 40 countries; 22% of boys in the United States engage in bullying, ranking the United States 20th of 40 countries. Interestingly, in this international study, more boys than girls reported bullying involvement in every country. This is corroborated in the 2012 status report for bullying in U.S. schools, which found more boys than girls reported bullying involvement (Limber et al., 2013). However, a separate international report showed more boys than girls report bullying involvement in only 30 out of 35 countries (Due et al., 2009).

Researchers also found that the size of the school is a predictor for students' future involvement in bullying. Tayli (2013) found that students who attended small elementary schools (approximately 400 students) self-reported the most bully/victim status once in middle school, and students who attended medium-sized elementary schools (near 1,000 students) self-reported the least, with 40.7% of the 1249 participants reporting bullying involvement once in middle school. However, studies in Germany, Finland, and Norway revealed no relationship between the size of school or class and the frequency of bullying. In fact, whether a one-room schoolhouse in Norway or a school with 1,000 students per grade in Germany, bullying existed in all and at roughly the same frequencies (Olweus, 1993). This is also true for the geographic settings of schools.

Bullying is prevalent in all rural, suburban, and urban school settings, regardless of socioeconomic status. The National Center for Education Statistics (Robers et al., 2012) reported 28%, 28%, and 30% of students in urban, suburban, and rural school settings respectively self-reported bullying involvement. Socioeconomic status does not hinder bullying either. In a comparative, cross-sectional study across 35 countries, Due et al. (2009) found that countries with a 10-percentage-point increase in income inequality relative to other countries had a 34% higher prevalence of bullying; but rich or poor, children in all countries were exposed to bullying.

On a lesser scale and from a different perspective, bullying affects the future socioeconomic status of individuals. Brown and Taylor (2008) found bullying to adversely affect educational attainment and therefore negatively affected wages received in adulthood. More specifically, children bullied at ages 7 and 11 accumulated less capital from age 16 and throughout adulthood than those children who did the bullying. Furthermore, children from families with a low socioeconomic status have the highest risk of bullying involvement (Jansen et al., 2012). Bullying is a human behavior prevalent everywhere with lifelong consequences. It is not bound by gender, nationality, setting, or socioeconomic status. The United States is no exception.

As in other countries, the greatest rates of bullying in the United States are reported among middle school students (Robers et al., 2012; Rose, Espelage, & Monda-Amaya, 2009). The National Center for Education Statistics (Robers et al.) indicated 39% of sixth grade students and 33% of seventh grade students reported being bullied in school. Approximately 13% admitted to physical bullying and 26% admitted to verbal

bullying. Cyber bullying is also increasing in the United States (National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], 2012), because parents increasingly providing cell phones to their children to keep tabs on them, but the students use them to make posts to social media (Coloroso, 2008).

Legislatures, courts, and school officials recognize and are working to address the systemic problem of bullying. The United States Secret Service Safe School Initiative (United States Secret Service & United States Department of Education, 2002) claimed bullying was a factor in school shootings. The National Crime Victimization Survey (Robers et al., 2012) reported that of the 6.2% of students who brought weapons to school, 4.1% were victims of bullying. Therefore, bullying may have been the motivation for over half of the weapons brought to school. Federal, state, and local levels of government enacted bullying legislation and implemented proactive and combative measures to maintain safe schools. In response to federal intervention, at least 45 states established laws that directed schools to adopt bullying prevention policies (United States Department of Education, 2011). Attempts have also been made to close the information gap between state laws, district policies, and families at home (United States Department of Education, 2011) through anti-bullying publications, the government web site www.stopbullying.gov, and sample bullying prevention programs for school districts. With the help of the federal, state, and local government initiatives, bullying may be reduced in schools, communities, and homes.

Definition of Terms

I use the following terms throughout my study.

Bully: A role in which a person engages in behavior that overpowers with the intent to aggressively and continuously harm another person (Colorosa, 2008; Compton, Campbell, & Mergler, 2014).

Bullying: An act in which someone repeatedly and purposefully says or perpetrates hurtful things to another person who has a difficult time defending himself or herself (Olweus et al., 2007a).

Bystander: A role in which anyone, including educational professionals, passively observes bullying and does not report it (Anderson, 2011; Pepler, Craig, Connolly, Yulie, McMaster, & Jiand, 2006).

Cyber bullying: The use of technology such as computers and cell phones to insult, threaten, or spread gossip, rumors, and secrets that facilitate exclusion (Raskauskas, 2010).

Continuum to action: A five-step continuum through which an educational professional examines his or her own beliefs about bullying, determines if bullying actually happened, determines if they have the responsibility to help, determines if they have the skills to help, intervenes in the bullying situation, and closes the continuum with clear communication (Anderson, 2011).

Observational learning: The theory that learning occurs when the learner watches others (Bandura, 1977).

Physical bullying: When someone repeatedly and on purpose spits, hits, trips, shoves or steals, damages, hides, or defaces belongings of another person who has a difficult time defending himself or herself (Olweus et al., 2007a).

Social support: Intervention from one's social network that thwarts bullying (Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vanderzee, Sink, & Birchmeier, 2009).

Social learning theory: The theory that learning occurs through interaction with, and observation of the environment (Bandura, 1977).

Verbal bullying: When someone repeatedly and on purpose says mean or hurtful things, either written or spoken, to another person who has a difficult time defending himself or herself (Olweus et al., 2007a).

Victim: A role in which a person engages in behavior that is receptive to bullying (Anderson, 2011).

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it addresses the problem behaviors of bullying, which negatively impacts students' learning environment. It is important to understand teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors because, as first responders, their beliefs may determine how they respond to bullying incidents (Anderson, 2011; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). There are few empirical studies on how teachers actually respond to bullying incidents (Marshall et al., 2009; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). The purpose of this study was to describe teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. This study may offer information to better facilitate teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents. An understanding of the reporting practices at the local middle school may facilitate best practices for responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting bullying instances, which in turn may lead to improved responses to and

investigation of bullying incidents, and significantly influence positive social and academic change in the learning environment.

Guiding Research Questions

Recognizing, intervening in, and reporting bullying incidents rose to the top of concern for teachers at my study site. A gap in practice existed because even though a bullying prevention program was in place, bullying behavior continued to be self-reported by students. Understanding what behaviors teachers perceived as bullying and how they responded to those behaviors provided a more complete overview of how bullying behaviors were addressed at the study site.

The specific research questions for this project study were as follows:

Research Question 1: What behaviors do middle school teachers perceive as bullying?

Research Question 2: What are middle school teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents?

Review of the Literature

I used the information presented in this section for insight into how teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors informed their actions. I organized my review of the literature into four main themes: (a) unique middle schools; (b) the characteristics commonly associated with the people, behaviors, and effects of bullying; (c) teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors, and (d) teachers practices in reporting bullying incidents. Using these themes, I developed an understanding of teachers' responses to and practices in reporting, or not reporting, bullying incidents. I obtained the literature for this

review through searches of Education Research Complete, Sage, ERIC, and PsychINFO databases that I accessed through Walden University Library and Google Scholar. Search terms included: *aggression, anti-bullying laws, bullying, bullying intervention, confidence, school culture, self-reflection, social learning theory, teachers' perceptions, reporting bullying,* and *middle schools*. I used the work of authors such as Bandura and Anderson to explore the theoretical base of the lifecycle of bullying, and Locke to explore human understanding and changing perceptions.

Unique Middle Schools: Grades 4-7

Unique middle schools consisting of grades 4, 5, 6, and 7 are becoming more common as districts downsize, buildings are merged, and traditional elementary, middle, and high schools are redefined by new ages (http://education.ohio.gov/). The uniqueness of grades 4-7 middle schools is attributable to the addition of fourth and fifth graders with less-developed social skills into an environment of sixth and seventh graders with more-developed social skills, which provides ripe grounds for bullying of the younger students by the older students. In K-4 and K-5 elementary buildings, fourth and fifth graders are no longer at the bottom ranks of the bullied, but rather at the top where opportunity for leadership, including leadership in bullying (Olweus et al., 2007b), exists. Similarly, in K-6, K-7, and K-8 elementary buildings, fourth and fifth graders are no longer at the bottom, but neither are they at the top. No studies to date compare the bullying behaviors of fourth and fifth graders who are at the bottom grades of their buildings (4-7 middle school) to those in the middle (K-6, K-7, or K-8) or to those in the top (K-4 or K-5). Likewise, no empirical studies compare similarities of sixth and seventh graders'

behaviors depending on their grade level placement within a building. Further research is needed to determine whether the position of the grade level within a building determines its position within the hierarchy of bullying, and if that in turn influences students' bullying behaviors, which ultimately influences the overall culture of the school.

In addition to the position of the student's grade level within a building, the position of the teachers' grade level within a building contributes to the effectiveness of teachers' responses to bullying behavior. There is a degree of blending elementary teachers' attitudes with middle school teachers' attitudes needed to create out-of-classroom environments conducive for social and academic success; this blending is affected by the teachers' grade level position within a building. A comparison of teachers' responses to bullying incidents in relation to their grade levels within a building is yet to be conducted.

Researchers just began to explore the vast attributions associated with bullying behavior in schools. Often literature showed one grade level or another as having the highest rates of bullying among the grade levels examined in a study (Anderson, 2011; Robers et al., 2012), but no studies to date consider the position of the grade level within the building and whether it makes a difference in the outcome. Similarly, studies of teachers' responses to bullying incidents were virtually nonexistent (Marshall et al., 2009; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). Although there is almost no literature on the unique cultures of 4-7 middle schools, the literature is rich on the characteristics of bullying cultures in general.

Characteristics of Bullying

Every bullying situation is different, but the characteristics are similar. Bullying occurs when a person repeatedly and intentionally exhibits aggressive behavior towards another person where a differential of power exists (Compton et al., 2014; Olweus et al., 2007a; Pepler et al., 2006). The bully is the person who repeatedly and intentionally exhibits the aggressive behavior (Colorosa, 2008). The victim is the recipient of that behavior (Anderson, 2011). The bystander watches and does nothing in response (Olweus et al., 2007a). Sometimes the bully, victim, and bystander roles are interchanged. Types of bullying behavior are categorized as overt (publicly displayed) and covert (secretive). Understanding the characteristics of the people and behavioral roles commonly associated with bullying can lead to recognition and invoke teacher intervention (Anderson, 2011).

Types of roles. Bullying is often considered dyadic, where the problem only includes bully and victim roles. However, more recent studies showed a tridactic relationship among bully, victim, and bystander roles (Anderson, 2011; Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009). Bullies, victims, and bystanders are terms mostly associated with roles in which children at school engage. Through observational learning, these children begin their role as bully, victim, and/or bystander in the home long before they ever start school (Bandura, 1977; Georgiou & Stavrinides, 2013; Menesini, Camodeca, & Nocentini, 2010). Once in school, students tend to move in and out of these roles, particularly in middle school (Swearer, Cary, & Frazier-Koontz, 2001). These roles are systemic, permeating every facet of their lives including what they think and how

they perform in school and later in the workforce (Bandura, 1977). Some children who experience these roles grow up to be teachers and are then tasked with the responsibility to stop the bullying (Anderson, 2011; NCLB, 2002).

Bullies. School bullies are usually perceived as socially unacceptable students. They intentionally and repeatedly hurt others where an imbalance of power is present (Compton et al., 2014; Olweus et al., 2007a; Swearer et al, 2009). Characteristically, they have low academic skills and a lack of empathy (Nauzoka, Ronning, & Handegard, 2009). In a study of parent perspectives of bullying of 205 fifth-grade students, Holt, Kantor, and Finkelhor (2009) found the homes of bullies were characterized by lack of supervision. Similarly, Swearer et al. (2009) developed a social-ecological framework for understanding bullying behaviors, and also found that a lack of supervision led to bullying characteristics. Swearer et al.'s framework showed bullies ranged from those noted in the social skills deficit model as "aggressive children [who] had a poor understanding of others' mental states, had poor self-control, and were deficient in judgments" (p. 29), and those noted in the theory of mind model to have average intelligence, were capable of deception and storytelling, and deliberately picked their victims based on a clear understanding of the victims' weaknesses. Weaknesses attracted the bullies for the purpose of promoting their own social status and for beneficial gain (Wong, Cheng, and Chen, 2013). Whether because of a skills deficit or intentional deception, bullies instill negative emotions in others and disrupt the learning environment by engaging in acts of aggression, intimidation, and coercion in order to protect or advance themselves socially or academically in the home or school (Bandura, 1973;

Olweus et al., 2007a). They create and foster a chaotic culture around them and are not generally well-received by their peers.

Victims. Victims are targets of bullies. They receive the bullying behavior (Anderson, 2011). Their homes are often characterized by a high degree of criticism, less regulation, and child abuse (Holt et al., 2009; Lopez, 2013). Victims lack the confidence to seek help and in turn assume the responsibility for the bullying (Olweus et al., 2007a). This is because they tend to have special needs or lack social or communication skills (Good, McIntosh, & Gietz, 2011; Wong et al., 2013). In a study of 6,933 middle school students in the general education and special education subgroups, Rose et al. (2009) found higher rates of bullying victimization among special education students. Within the special education subgroup, victimization of students in a self-contained setting is higher than that of those in an inclusive setting. Nonetheless, anyone from any group or setting is a victim and can experience harmful effects. Self-identified victims in general education settings can experience negative psychological, physical, and academic effects (Ciucci, Baroncelli, Franchi, Golmaryami, & Frick, 2014; Kowalski & Limber, 2013), depression, anxiety (Fitzpatrick & Bussey, 2011; Henrich & Shahar, 2014; Raskauskas, 2010), low-self-esteem, and lack of trust (Raskauskas, 2010). Such effects become personal characteristics of victims that further attract bullying (Olweus et al., 2007a). These characteristics, coupled with special needs, places victims at the lower end of the imbalance of power where they become prime targets for bullies.

Bystanders. Bystanders do nothing to assist the victims. They idly watch bullying occur (Pepler et al., 2006; Van Cleemput, Vandebosch, & Pabian, 2014). According to

Olweus et al. (2007A), some bystanders are passive supporters who like the bullying but do not show outward support; some dislike the bullying and secretly want to help; and some remain disengaged and do not want to get involved either way. Characteristically, bystanders are fearful that those involved in the act of bullying will turn on them if they intervene and thus feel helpless (Swearer et al., 2009). Conversely, in a study of 660 middle school students, some bystanders legitimized their moral disengagement by downplaying the harmful consequences of bullying (Obermann, 2011). Rock and Baird (2011) found that storytelling, which encourages bystanders to stand up against bullying, effectively boosts students' ability to generate intervention strategies. This suggests that bystanders choose to remain uninvolved because they lack the skills to intervene. In a study of 6,980 elementary students, bystanders moderated the effects of social anxiety and peer rejection in classrooms where instruction on defending the victim was offered (Karna, Voeten, Poskiparta, & Salmivalli, 2010). In a similar study, Salmivalli, Voeten, and Poskiparta (2011) uncovered a frequency pattern that showed defending the victim was negatively associated with bullying. Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center (2011) reported more than 55% of bullying incidents ceased upon peer intervention. These findings suggested bystanders are prime targets to whom successful intervention techniques are taught and that characteristics such as fearfulness and helplessness are due to lack of instruction in intervention and prevention of bullying behavior.

It is also plausible that the same idea applies to adults. If Obermann (2011) recognized bystanders as morally disengaged, and Anderson (2011) recognized idle teachers as bystanders, then it is reasonable to assume that some teachers are in need of

professional development based on morals and values revered by the school and community. In recognizing educational professionals as bystanders, Anderson developed a continuum to action designed to help teachers recognize their bystanderdism and become intervention agents. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Teacher Guide (Olweus et al., 2007b) also focused on preparing educational professionals for successful bullying intervention and prevention. Novic and Issacs (2010) indicated that a staff preparedness survey helped teachers understand their level of awareness and increased self-efficacy in bullying intervention. The development of self-efficacy, however, is most achievable through leaders who do not displace their moral responsibilities onto others, but embrace a shared leadership philosophy among both teachers and students (Hinrichs, Hinrichs, Wang, & Romero, 2012; Skinner, Babinski, & Gifford, 2013). Appropriate training for teachers and students can move them both from bystandarism to action.

Multi-roles. Students are not limited to just one role, and the consequences are severe for dual-role engagement. They exhibit behaviors of bullies, victims, and bystanders depending on situational dynamics (Fitzpatrick & Bussey, 2011). In a 3-year study of middle school students, researchers found that 87% of the participants moved back and forth between the roles of bully and victim (Swearer et al., 2001). Further research found students who engage in multiple roles are more likely to entertain thoughts of ending life than students who report being just a bully, just a victim, or just a bystander (Rivers & Noret, 2010b). Depending on circumstances, students take part in any of the bully, victim, and bystander roles, in any type of bullying behavior.

Types of behaviors. Bullying is categorized into overt and covert forms. Overt bullying includes behaviors that are easily seen or heard and identified, such as physical and verbal bullying (Smith et al, 2006). Covert bullying includes that which is hidden from plain sight, such as cyber bullying with the exception of social media (Weber, Ziegele, & Schnauber, 2013) and relational bullying (Hamarus & Kaikkonen, 2008; Pace, Lowery, & Lamme, 2004). A six-month longitudinal study (Terranova, Morris, & Boxer, 2008) found that overt bullying, more common in younger children, was thwarted by fear of punishment and control, but the covert relational bullying (including cyber bullying) often went unnoticed. This is why covert forms of bullying thrive into adolescence and adulthood.

Overt. Overt forms of bullying are typically face-to-face, real or virtual. Physical bullying is where the physical body inflicts harm to another physical body or its belongings (Terranova et al., 2008). Verbal bullying includes spoken words that are face-to-face or behind-the-back comments where name calling, threats, and teasing are intended to cause psychological distress (Olweus et al, 2007a). Both aggressive behaviors are learned through observation during the early years and grow from minor teasing to violent delinquency (Bandura, 1973). Although boys commit the majority of violent crimes, the transition to the middle school structure combined with the onset of adolescence triggers girl fighting, as well (Letendre & Smith, 2011). Social media users are virtually face-to-face. Those who overtly present themselves open themselves to cyber bullying and may experience blame for not being more cautious when cyber

bullying happens to them (Weber et al, 2013). After experiencing retribution for such overt behavior, the bullying often turns covert (Terranova et al., 2008).

Covert. Covert forms of bullying are sneaky occurrences. Cyber bullying is an anti-social behavior that includes the use of electronic technology devices such as cell phones, computers, and tablets to engage in acts of bullying which invaded the sanctuary of the home and defy the traditional, face-to-face aggression, thus covert (Raskauskas, 2010). The National Center for Education Statistics (Robers et al., 2012) reported cell phones as the most popular form of technology used for cyber bullying. Text bullying on cell phones is often an extension of traditional face-to-face bullying that occurs outside of school hours. A longitudinal study showed hate-related text messages and e-mails were common in and out of school (Rivers & Noret, 2010a). The anonymous nature of the Internet also creates opportunities for cyber bullying via social networks such as Facebook, twitter, e-mail, YouTube, and instant messaging which can utilize false identities to reach victims.

Relational bullying is just as underhanded as cyber bullying. It is less recognized by teachers than the overt physical and verbal forms of bullying (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006) and its perpetrators are less intimidated by retribution (Terranova et al., 2008). Relational bullying includes subtle behavior that manipulates others' social standing (Fitzpatrick & Bussey, 2011; Smith et al., 2006) and, although both genders engage in it, it occurs mostly among girls (James et al., 2010). Because both are covert and more likely to continue into adulthood, cyber and relational bullying have longer lasting effects

than the overt physical and verbal forms, which tend to fade as retribution becomes unpopular to the perpetrator and the obvious becomes unpopular to society.

Effects. Victims, bullies, and bystanders incur negative physical, psychological, and academic effects. Victims encounter greater negative effects than bullies or bystanders who are not victims (Ayenibiowo & Akinbode, 2011), but all participants experience effects that appear immediately or come on gradually, and are short-term or last into adulthood.

Physical. Some physical effects upon victims include immediate results such as bumps, bruises, scratches, broken bones, and broken teeth, as well as damages to property such as school books, bicycles, clothing, and stolen lunch money (Olweus et al., 2007a). Hay and Meldrum (2010) found a significantly positive association between victims of bullies and self-harm such as cutting and burning. More gradual or lingering results include problems such as sleep deficit, headache, fatigue, poor appetite, skin problems, and bed wetting (Kowalski & Limber, 2013). Some futuristic results include drug use/abuse (Copeland et al., 2013; Kamen et al., 2013), crime, and violence (Bender & Kisek, 2011; Robers et al., 2012).

Psychological. Participants of bullying, particularly victims, experience psychological effects that come on at an early age and last throughout adulthood. Raskauskas (2010) found depressive symptoms present in all middle school age students who were cyber bullied, and even greater symptoms in those who experienced cyber bullying and traditional face-to-face bullying. Schoffstall and Cohen (2011) found that students who did the cyber bullying experienced loneliness, low self-worth, few

friendships, and tended to be socially unaccepted by peers. Thoughts and attempts of suicide are also psychological effects of bullying in school (Hay & Meldrum, 2010; LeVasseur, Kelvin, & Grosskopf, 2013), as well as long-lasting obsessive-compulsive disorders, paranoia, and neuroticism, which are shown to significantly affect participants of bullying at an average early age of 11 (Ayenibiowo & Akinbode, 2011). Many of these psychological effects are reported to continue long after school age, well into adulthood (Adams & Lawrence, 2011; Copeland et al., 2013; Kamen et al., 2013; Kokko, Pulkkinen, Huesmann, Dubow, & Boxer, 2009).

Academic. Failure, retention, and dropout are academic effects of bullying brought about by various interruptions to students' learning. Researchers found participants of bullying changed schools, skipped classes, went home sick, were suspended, and were called into administrative offices to discuss bullying situations during class times (Kowalski & Limber, 2013; Salinas, Coan, Ansley, Barton, & McCaig, 2013). Sanchez and Cerezo (2010) not only found that students who participated in bullying repeated grades, but also that a significant number of grade-repeaters hence became involved in bullying. Beyond failure and retention, evidence suggests the prevalence of bullying is predictive of dropout rates (Cornell et al., 2013). To advance students academically, it is important for school administrators and teachers to be mindful of the relationship between these detrimental academic effects and how teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors play a role in student success.

Teachers' Perceptions of Bullying Behaviors

Perceptions of bullying are developed at an early age in the home, creating a behavior plan for the future (Bandura, 1977). Bandura's (1977) social learning theory identified this development as observational learning. As the behavior is ingrained in the personality, it becomes a social element in school and later in the workforce (Swearer et al., 2009). Students who grow up in hostile family environments developed perceptions of bullying that lead to the disregard of anti-social behavior when they become adults, particularly teachers (Bandura, 1973; Fritz, Slep, & O'Leary, 2012; Kokko et al., 2009). Whether adults choose to overlook transgressions on purpose or because of lack of knowledge, Kartal and Bilgin (2009) found in every instance of evaluating unsafe conditions at school, the school was safer from the perspective of teachers than from students. This is due to what teachers believe as the norm. Bandura (1973) and Anderson (2011) explained why those norms existed and together formed a hypothetical lifecycle of bullying from perception to action. When the action is no longer effective, change is necessary. Ayas and Horzum (2011) stated that teachers' perceptions could be changed, and that their knowledge of bullying behaviors could be measured by those perceptions. John Locke's (trans. 1990) theory concerning human understanding illustrated how reasoning and the introduction of new information made this possible. Interventions for overcoming barriers and changing teachers' perceptions include professional development methods such as reflection and bullying prevention programs.

What teachers believe. What teachers believe is happening and what really is happening is often different. Teachers' epistemological orientations are not always

reflected in their actions, as shown in Patchen and Crawford's (2011) comparison of teachers' perceptions with practice. This difference in orientation is likely to cause misconceptions. Curtis (2012) found a significant gap where teachers felt they knew their students, but students felt disconnected from their teachers. This supports the claim by Swearer et al. (2009) that teachers are not proficient at recognizing bullying situations or those involved in bullying. For example, if teachers viewed physical bullying as rough and tough play amongst students, and therefore do not intervene, then students feel their teachers do not really understand what is going on, thus a disconnect. Teachers also believe bullying occurs less in the classroom, playground, hallways, restrooms, and to and from school than their students do (Kartal & Bilgin, 2009), and they tend to overestimate students' willingness to report the bullying (Gan et al., 2013; Huang & Chou, 2013; Marshall et al, 2009; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). Such disconnects between teachers' and students' perspectives damages their relationships.

Teachers' misconceptions, however, are due to undeveloped relationships with students, but bonding strengthens teachers' awareness of students' circumstances. The American Psychology Association (APA; 2013) theorized that the bonds and relationships between students and teachers drew them closer because students were more willing to seek assistance from adults with whom they easily related. Bilgic and Yurtal (2009) found that bullies yearned for a loving relationship with their teachers and wanted to be punished when they were actually guilty. Such bonding minimizes the negative effects of bullying and enhances the quality of life for victims (Flaspohler et al., 2009; Wentzel, 2010). Relationships with students impacts what teachers believe. What

teachers believe is changed through experiences involving self-reflection and professional development (Patchen & Crawford, 2011, Boultom, Hardcastle, Down, Fowles, & Simmonds, 2014), and in turn, reflects positive social change in the learning environment.

Why teachers believe what they believe and do what they do. While teachers' believe that bullying is a normal part of growing up is counterproductive in the learning environment, the reasons for those beliefs are not entirely their fault. Albert Bandura's (1973) social learning theory demonstrates that because children learned from their environment, their view of the world is greatly influenced by their family. Intense conflict and low empathy considerably affects bullying and victimization amongst family members in the home and are linked to the same behaviors in schools (Georgiou & Stavrinides, 2013; Menesini et al., 2010; Van Cleemput et al., 2014). World views shaped at home accompany children to school and in turn shape the culture of their learning environment. Thus, why teachers choose to act or not to act in bullying situations stems from what they experienced as children. If teachers grew up in an aggressive environment, they perceived bullying as normal and, therefore, were not compelled to intervene or report a bullying situation. However, if they grew up in a non-aggressive environment, they viewed the behavior as abnormal and intervened or reported upon recognition of bullying (Anderson, 2011). Shona Anderson's (2011) continuum to action demonstrates the application of such world views as adults in the educational arena. Teachers linger in a stage of inaction, they make decisions, or they achieve a stage of perceptional understanding, at which point they are compelled to act on behalf of the

bullied. Why teachers believe what they do, and thus act or do not act in bullying situations is learned and reinforced in the home where behavior modeling most prominently exists (Bandura, 1977). The theoretical base for the progression of this behavior from childhood to educational professional is demonstrated in the combination of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory and Anderson's (2011) continuum to action.

Bandura's social learning theory. The theoretical base of the learning and reinforcement of behavior is represented in Bandura's (1977) social learning theory where observational learning is described as the "idea of how new behaviors were formed" (p. 22). Observational learning is composed of four processes: attentional (observe the behavior), retention (remember the behavior), motor reproduction (physically capable of doing the behavior), and motivation (want to do the behavior). All four processes are evident in Bandura's (1961) bobo doll experiment where children witnessed an adult physically and verbally attacking a plastic clown in an aggressive manner (attentional). Next, the children were invited into a room with attractive toys, but then were forbidden to play with them (retention). Finally, the children were taken into a room containing both toys of violence, such as mallets and dart guns, and nonviolent toys, such as crayons and tea sets (motivation). Results showed that children observing the aggressive condition imitated both the model's aggressive and non-aggressive behaviors (motor reproduction). The children in the nonaggressive and control conditions showed much less aggressive behavior. Findings showed the bobo doll experiment reflected the observational learning described in Bandura's (1977) social learning theory.

Observational learning illustrates origins of behavior in adulthood, too. If a person grows up in an aggressive environment and witnesses the behavior (attentional), retains the memory of the behavior (retention), desires to repeat the behavior (motivation), and is capable of doing the behavior (motor reproduction) on a continuous basis throughout childhood and adolescence, he or she continues the behavior into and throughout adulthood as well. A longitudinal study (Kokko et al., 2009) spanning 34-40 years significantly linked physical aggression and lack of self-control of anger from childhood to adulthood. Continuity of verbal aggression was also identified. In fact, numerous studies made these connections since the early 1960s (Kokko et al.). Bandura's (1973) analysis of social learning linked aggression between childhood and adulthood, placing familial transmissions at the heart of the connections. This was later supported in a family-of-origin analysis of aggression by Fritz et al., (2012).

It is plausible, therefore, that teachers who do not recognize bullying behaviors are exposed to, remember, and are motivated by an aggressive upbringing, thus exhibiting the processes of Bandura's (1977) observational learning. Growing up in an aggressive family environment, or in a family environment that promotes aggression regardless of income or privilege, likely leads to maintenance of anti-social behaviors in children by overlooking, dismissing, and even condoning transgressions as adults (Bandura, 1973; Fritz et al., 2012; Kokko et al., 2009). Such an upbringing negates the ability to recognize and decide that bullying is indeed happening, determine if the responsibility and skill for action exists, and decide to intervene or stand by, as outlined in Anderson's (2011) continuum to action.

Anderson's continuum to action. Whereas Bandura (1977) showed bullying behaviors originated during childhood, Anderson (2011) showed how adults applied those behaviors in education. Anderson referred to a continuum to action in which teachers' reactions to moments of thought compel action or inaction in bullying situations. The continuum to action moves the teacher from pre-bystanderism (inaction), through the decision-making process, to post-bystanderism (perceptions of understanding), at which point they are compelled to act on behalf of the bullied. The decision making process consists of five moments of thought, originally established by Huston, Ruggiero, Connor, and Geis (1981) in their research on bystanders in crime:

1. noticing that something unusual is going on,
2. deciding that something is indeed out of the ordinary,
3. determining the extent to which one is responsible for helping,
4. determining whether one has the skills to help, and
5. deciding whether or not to help the person in need.

Anderson (2011) expounded upon Huston's et al. (1981) research and created the continuum to action which included a pre-bystanderism component where teachers considered their beliefs about bullying in order to make adjustments in their perceptions. It is a two-fold addendum: (a) the teachers examine their own biases towards bullying, and (b) the teachers remove any barriers to action that those biases cause. Finally, Anderson added a post-bystanderism component that encompassed learning and understanding beyond the end of the incident. The continuum to action is now a seven-part concept for addressing bullying in schools:

Pre-bystanderism – to be able to notice that something unusual is going on

1. understand personal primed perceptions
2. remove altruistic blind spots

Decision making – the rapid decisions that need to occur in the moment

3. decide that something is indeed out of the ordinary
4. determine the extent to which one is responsible for helping
5. determine whether one has the skills to help
6. decide whether or not to help the person in need

Post-bystanderism – essential step for schools that followed helping the person in need

7. close the communication gap (Anderson, 2011, p. 6).

Together, the ideas of Huston et al. (1981) and Anderson (2011) complete the continuum to action, creating a holistic approach for addressing bullying situations. The pre-bystanderism stage is a vehicle for understanding self-perceptions. The decision-making stage motivates action. The post-bystanderism stage is a vehicle for communicating common understanding, turning negative situations into teachable moments. By understanding teachers' perceptions of bullying (pre-bystanderism), promoting action against bullying (decision-making), and broadening a communal awareness of bullying (post-bystanderism), the learning environment becomes a safer place for all.

Confidence to intervene and report bullying incidents. In effort to create a safer learning environment, teachers make decisions in rapid succession every day and

confidence is important when making the decision to intervene or report bullying incidents. Increasing the confidence to move forward through each decision in Anderson's (2011) continuum to action is achieved through knowledge, experience, and feedback. In a survey that explored 239 teachers' self-efficacy and expectations, Skinner et al (2013) demonstrated that teachers' confidence to intervene in bullying situations was linked to having a graduate degree (knowledge). When 1,062 teachers' perceptions were examined using the extended parallel process model, Duong and Bradshaw (2013) linked years of experience to intervention that most likely occurred when teachers viewed bullying as a threat (experience). Not only did feedback promote teachers' confidence levels in a longitudinal study across the state of Pennsylvania, (Deutschlander, 2010), but Eva et al. (2012) found that levels of confidence appeared to influence the reception of feedback, too. These studies support the philosophical underpinnings of Socrates, Plato, and Locke who reasoned that confidence stems from knowledge and experience, as well as current researchers who also found that feedback plays an important part in developing confidence (Falter Thomas & Sondergeld, 2015; McCarthy, 2015).

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Malpas, 2012) described how Plato's Meno answers Socrates question about "why knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief" in a parable about the road to Larissa. Knowledge of the winding road's ultimate destination averts doubt in which way to travel in spite of sections of the road leading opposite of Larissa's true direction. Without possession of this knowledge, mere true belief, however, wanes and confidence in how to get to Larissa dwindles. Here, Plato connected the possession of knowledge to growing confidence. Based on this premise,

teachers' perceptions of bullying intervention changes with knowledge of bullying intervention, and the confidence to intervene in bullying situations is consequential.

As Plato connected knowledge to confidence, Locke (trans. 1990) connected experience to confidence in an understanding of the assent of man's thinking. Locke concluded that beliefs rise to assurance through degrees of probability, one being that the observation of fixed events in nature plus personal experiences produces confidence. For example, observing the process of fire turning wood to ash (fixed event in nature), and then practicing extinguishing fires in a fireman's training course (experience) builds confidence to enter a burning building. Thus, it stands to reason that observing humans responding to other humans (fixed event in nature), and then practicing manipulating human behavior (experience) builds confidence to intervene in bullying situations.

Just as Socrates, Plato, and Locke rationalized that confidence can be developed through knowledge and experience, more recent researchers found feedback to be an effective developer of confidence. Working on What Works (WOWW) is a solutions-based feedback system that focuses only on language of successes. Originally developed for therapy, WOWW was implemented into the classroom as an alternative to removing disruptive students and was shown to improve teacher confidence. Lloyd, Bruce, and Mackintosh (2012) qualitatively evaluated WOWW in ten Scottish primary schools and one secondary school over a ten-week period. Teachers reported the use of only positive language during feedback made them feel "more in control in the classroom," "more confident in my abilities," "confirmed what I thought I was doing right," and "the remarks were good for my self-confidence" (Lloyd et al., p.250-251). The same study

was repeated by Brown, Powell, and Clark (2012) highlighting positive outcomes for both teachers and students. The evidence of solutions-based feedback suggests that reinforcing what teachers are doing right in terms of responding to student behavior boosts their levels of confidence to intervene in bullying situations.

As solutions-based feedback focuses on delivering feedback that is strictly limited to positive language, Eva et al., (2012) concluded that the providers of feedback must consider the condition of the receiver. Seventeen focus groups were conducted in eight health training programs across five countries to explore the analysis of external criticism. Lack of humility and lack of confidence were found to inhibit the reception of feedback. Although experience was directly connected to levels of confidence, if the feedback devalued experience or other traits that built the confidence, then reception of the feedback was negatively impacted (i.e., avoidance or discounting). In this light, prior to using critical feedback, administrators first want to consider positive reinforcement until confidence levels reach a point where bullying is effectively addressed.

Deciding to intervene or report bullying incidents is not as simple as yes or no, but rather requires making split-second decisions through a series of steps on a continuum to action: is it wrong, should I help, do I have to help, how do I help, and do I help or not (Anderson, 2011). Fear of not appearing knowledgeable or being wrong diminishes confidence (Eva et al., 2012). To intervene or report potential bullying incidents when appropriate behavior is mistaken for inappropriate behavior requires an apology or causes embarrassment for the teacher and the student. Therefore, knowledge of appropriate behavior and experience in responding to inappropriate behavior, along

with positive feedback, builds confidence levels. Knowing for certain that bullying is taking place forwards the decision-making process to the next step.

Theoretically, the combination of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory and Anderson's (2011) continuum to action shows the gamut of bullying behavior beginning in childhood and ending in adulthood, provided a change in teachers' perceptions is achieved somewhere along the continuum and bullying intervention occurs. Changing those perceptions so that those interventions occur is the key for positive social and academic change to take place in school and at home.

How teachers believe. An understanding of the Bandura/Anderson lifecycle of bullying places administrators in a position to understand *what* teachers believe about bullying; although, it is through John Locke's (trans. 1990) theory of understanding that *how* teachers believe is realized. Locke was a 17th century philosopher who challenged monarchies with the belief that people are not born with royal knowledge, but rather obtain knowledge through reasoning. Locke asserted that humans, having an innate ability to reason, develop an understanding by being introduced to new information, and therefore develop a belief, thus cause for action; and upon reflection through said reasoning, develop a new understanding, therefore developing a new belief, and thus cause for a new action. This philosophy is supported by bodies of research about bullying intervention that show (a) reflections (reasoning) and (b) bullying prevention programs (new information) are useful tools for improving practice.

Reflection. Teachers change their beliefs and perceptions when (a) given an opportunity to reflect on their actions (Patchen & Crawford, 2011), and/or (b) driven by a

moral responsibility to reflect on their actions (Boody, 2008). Much of the literature that speaks to reflection as professional development focuses on pre-service teachers who are required to reflect as part of their curriculum. Such reflections reveal that student teachers recognize limited knowledge as a source of fear and frustration (Doody & Connor, 2012). More experienced teachers in the field, however, reflect because of an intrinsic desire to do so. Zhao (2012) conducted a longitudinal study of experienced teachers who engaged in critical reflecting throughout a 4-year period. The teachers who reflected the most and whose efforts were guided by every student meeting every objective exhibited transcending inner growth, which resulted in changing perceptions, accepting reform, and improving practice. The efforts of other teachers in Zhao's study were not reflecting at the critical level, and thereby were not expected to achieve lasting reform. Although the literature typically classifies teacher reflection as retrospective, problem-solving, or critical, Boody (2008) demonstrated that the act of self-reflection is moral because the change being brought about is primarily due to an obligation to another human being, the student. This obligation is supported by Locke's (trans. 1990) theory that morality is the foundation of all social virtue, whereby the concept of bullying intervention for the sake of all is based on the adage "do unto others as you would want them to do unto you." Further, Locke believed that the human mind compares new ideas with old ideas and through reasoning determines if the ideas agree. To help teachers change their perceptions of bullying, reflecting on current beliefs and practices causes a realization for change as they learn whether or not their own practices are in line with proven successful strategies.

Bullying prevention programs. Staff professional development is often a component in many bullying prevention programs. Research-based bullying prevention programs have common professional development components that establish need, provide training, and allow reflection, all of which introduce new information to teachers' current bank of knowledge (Davis & Davis, 2007). Based on personalized bullying data from their own buildings, teachers perceive bullying as a threat and through professional development, gained confidence to intervene (Duong & Bradshaw, 2013; O'Brennan, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2014). Of the following components, the first two are examples of Locke's (trans. 1990) ideology of the presentation of new information, and the third represents the reasoning necessary to come to a new efficacious understanding:

1. student/teacher survey that provides evidence of anti-social behavior and the need for positive behavioral change within the school (Olweus, 1993),
2. teacher training for immediate intervention and long-term prevention (Coloroso, 2008), and
3. a reflection process, typically in the form of surveys, for students and teachers to evaluate successes and failures and drive future responses (Davis & Davis, 2007).

Table 3

Research-Based Bullying Prevention Programs that Change Teachers' Perceptions of Bullying Behaviors

Bullying Prevention Programs	Peer Reviewers
Incredible Years (www.incredibleyears.com)	Axberg, & Broberg, 2012; Fergusson, Horwood, & Stanley, 2013; Ford et al., 2012
Olweus Bulling Prevention Program (www.clemson.edu/olweus)	Coyle, 2008; Hong, 2009; Olweus et al., 2007a
Steps to Respect (www.cfchildren.org)	Brown, Low, Smith, & Haggerty, 2011; Frey et al., 2005; Hirschstein et al., 2007
School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (http://www.resa.net/curriculum/positivebehavior/)	Curtis, Van Horne, Robertson, & Karvonen, 2010; Good et al., 2011

The Incredible Years (IY) program has a teacher training component. Certified IY group leaders/mentors provide training workshops, ongoing training, supervision, and consultation services on recognition, intervention, and reporting through a teacher classroom management program (www.incredibleyears.com). Administrators purchase the professional development coaching to help teachers strengthen their classroom management skills and teach children pro-social behavioral skills. Researchers found professional development administered by IY coaches was positively received by teachers as demonstrated by the implementation of suggested classroom management

practices that resulted in less disruptive student behavior (Fergusson, Horwood, & Stanley, 2013; Reinke, Herman, Stormont, Newcomer, & David, 2013). The teacher training also helps teachers to work with parents and develop a stable link between school and home (www.incredibleyears.com). This link is also present in Steps to Respect and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (used at my study site) has a professional development module called the schoolwide guide. The schoolwide guide uses a system-wide approach that offers training on recognition, intervention, and reporting for all adults who interface with students, including bus drivers, cooks, and custodians (Olweus et al., 2007a). Safran (2007) evaluated the OBPP as a model bullying prevention program positively highlighting its 20-40 minute weekly discussions that focused teachers on its core principle of staff involvement. The OBPP recommends one fixed hour every two weeks for staff members to engage in discussion groups. Such professional development transforms the cultural norm and becomes a way of practice instead of mere training (Safran, 2007).

Like the OBPP, the Steps to Respect (StR) program has a schoolwide implementation support kit that provides all adults with training on recognition, intervention, and reporting, plus coaching services. Hirschstein, Edstrom, Frey, Snell, and MacKenzie (2007) found teachers who maintained program fidelity created a less aggressive learning environment and by demonstration were able to nearly zero out bystander behavior (70% reduction). An improvement such as this brought on by teachers may have optimized the cultural conditions for StR to reduce bullying attitudes and

behaviors among students in a similar study of 33 elementary buildings (Low & Van Ryzin, 2014). The StR program hinges on a mutual effort between children and adults where professional development helps teachers set the example for students to "walk the talk" when it comes to bullying intervention and prevention, and in turn students respond to teachers' examples (http://www.cfchildren.org).

Unlike the Incredible Years program, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, and the Steps to Respect program, School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (SWPBIS) is not a program but a systems change process that implements the Response-to-Intervention (RtI) framework (universal screening, continuous progress monitoring, continuum of evidence-based practices, team-driven data-based decision making, and implementation fidelity evaluation) that incorporates teacher-proposed positive behaviors into the climate (http://www.resa.net). The SWPBIS process was originally established by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs for only students with behavioral disorders, but was expanded as a school-wide process for all students (http://www.pbis.org). A district-wide leadership team coordinates staff training, coaching support, and evaluative feedback to teachers for driving future responses to behavioral interventions school wide. Good et al., (2011) examined the implementation of a bullying prevention program combined with a pre-existing school wide positive behavior intervention support process in a rural middle school of 500 students. The results of combining the program with the process showed a decrease in office discipline referrals for bullying by 41%, and that success hinged on fidelity and participation of all, primarily teachers. The same combination in a similar

study promoted success in reducing aggressions when interventions were implemented with fidelity (Nese, Horner, Dickey, Stiller, & Tomlanovich, 2014). The SWPBIS process works well in conjunction with or as a foundation for bullying prevention programs.

The Incredible Years program, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, and the Steps to Respect program are only a few existing research-based programs available to schools. The School Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support process works in conjunction with bullying prevention programs or stand alone. All four call for data-based evidence of need, teacher training for immediate intervention and long-term prevention, and a reflection process that evaluates progress and drives future responses. These components of professional development changes teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and helps teachers gain confidence to recognize, intervene, and report bullying incidents.

Teachers' Practices in Reporting Bullying Incidents

Bullying prevention programs adequately prepare teachers for responding to bullying incidents as evidenced by the volume of research on various programs that show success in bullying reduction (Good et al., 2011; Hirschstein et al., 2007; Olweus et al, 2007; Reinke et al., 2013); however, the literature is scant specifically on teachers' practices in reporting the bullying incidents (Marshall et al., 2009; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). In response to the call for further research, Marshall et al. (2009), conducted in-depth interviews with 30 fourth through eighth grade teachers. The study explored teachers' personal perceptions about and experiences with bullying, and revealed that

teachers reported incidents to the parents and/or administrators immediately or delayed based on severity, an indirect-punitive response used solely with bullies (see Table 4 below). Similar responses, though not reported as immediate or delayed, were shown in studies with 735 U.S. teachers and counselors (Bauman et al., 2008), and 82 undergraduate students (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006), both which only indicated that teachers did report bullying incidents.

Table 4

Teachers' Immediate and Delayed Reporting Practices of Bullying Incidents

Immediate Report	**Delayed Report**
used the teacher's personal cell phone to call the parents and have the student tell the parents what they did	called the parents
wrote up the incident and sent the report with the student to the school counselor	wrote up the incident and sent the report to the school counselor
wrote up the incident and sent the report with the student to the principal	wrote up the incident and sent the report to the principal
sent/took the student to the school counselor	verbally reported the incident to the school counselor
sent/took the student to the principal	verbally reported the incident to the principal

Most studies that explored teachers' responses to bullying incidents focus on what encourages or hinders teachers to take action rather than their actual responses (Grumm & Hein, 2012; Kahn, Jones, & Weiland, 2012; Boulton, Hardcastle, Down, Fowles, & Simmonds, 2014). Although it is suggested that teachers' responses to bullying are

successful in its reduction (Good et al., 2011; Hirschstein et al., 2007; Olweus et al, 2007; Reinke et al., 2013), researchers express the need for further inquiry and documentation of definitive actions taken by teachers who respond to or report bullying incidents, rather than just to hypothetical responses of hypothetical situations.

Summary of the Review of the Literature

Unique middle schools, characteristics commonly associated with bullying, teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors, and teachers' responses to bullying incidents and their reporting practices framed this literature review. Unique middle schools with non-typical grouping of grade levels, such as grades 4-7, are becoming more common as districts downsize and buildings merge. Often the literature showed one grade level or another had the highest rates of bullying among the groupings examined in a study (Anderson, 2011; Robers et al., 2012), but none to date considered the position of the grade level within the building structure and whether that made a difference in results. The literature was thick with research examining the characteristics of bullying in general, however. Understanding the characteristics of the people and behaviors commonly associated with bullying may lead to its recognition and motivate teacher intervention and reporting (Anderson, 2011). Bandura (1973) explained why norms in perceptions of bullying behaviors came into existence. Anderson explained teachers' thought processes from the moment of recognizing bullying behavior to intervention. Together, Bandura and Anderson formed a hypothetical lifecycle of bullying from the beginning to a possible ending. Locke's (trans. 1990) theory concerning human understanding illustrated how teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors changed in

order to invoke action against bullying in schools, thus reaching an end in the bullying lifecycle. Interventions included professional development methods such as reflection (reasoning) and bullying prevention training programs (introduction to new information). To overcome barriers to change in perceptions, teachers reasoned with new information presented by administrators (Locke, trans. 1990). If teachers determined that something threatening or inappropriate was happening, gained confidence to intervene through knowledge, experience, and feedback, the likelihood of intervention increased (Deutschlander, 2010; Duong & Bradshaw, 2013; Lloyd et al., 2012). Studies showed that teachers' responses to hypothetical scenarios mimicked professional development (Good et al., 2011; Hirschstein et al., 2007; Olweus et al, 2007a; Reinke et al., 2013), but there was a gap in the literature on teachers' actual responses to bullying experiences, which included reporting practices. Hence, understanding teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents may assist the local district by directing awareness of responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting as required by law by leading to improved responses and investigation of bullying incidents, ultimately influencing positive social and academic change in the learning environment.

Implications

An understanding of teachers' practices of reporting bullying incidents at the local middle school may direct awareness of responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting, and lead to improved responses and investigation of bullying incidents required by the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012), and thus significantly

influence positive social and academic change in the learning environment. The literature review showed that an understanding of teachers' belief systems explained why they did or did not act in bullying situations (Bandura, 1973). Teachers' responses to bullying are important because their responses significantly alter the school's social and academic culture by reducing bulling behavior and improving academics (Anderson, 2011). As districts merge buildings in response to economic declines, academic and social learning environments in 4-7 middle schools are worthy of further research (http://education.ohio.gov/). There is also a call for further investigations of teachers' actual responses to bullying experiences, which include reporting practices. My study offers direction that may facilitate reporting practices and impact policy writing for the implementation of state and federally mandated laws. The project for my study involves policy writing in accordance with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act for the purpose of positively influencing teachers' bullying reporting practices.

Conclusion

Bullying is an anti-social behavior that has negative social and academic effects in the learning environment. It was identified as a problem at the local middle school. It is important to understand teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors to better understand teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents. Section 1 discussed the local problem as well as the characteristics of bullying behaviors, teachers' perceptions about bullying behaviors, the theoretical underpinnings behind those perceptions that determine teachers' responses to bullying behaviors, changing those perceptions, and teachers'

levels of confidence to intervene in and report bullying incidents. Gaps in the literature on 4-7 middle schools and teachers' responses to bullying were identified.

Section 2 introduces the methodology for understanding teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. This study is significant to the educational arena because it offers direction that better facilitates reporting practices and may impact policy writing for the implementation of state and federal mandates. The understandings gleaned from this study may direct awareness of responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting, which may lead to improved responses and investigation of bullying incidents per the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012), and can significantly influence positive social and academic change in the learning environment.

Section 2: The Methodology

Bullying behaviors are anti-social behaviors that have negative social and academic effects in the learning environment. Student surveys showed bullying was a problem at the study site. I conducted this study to describe middle school teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents in order to facilitate awareness of best practices for responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting these incidents as required by law (School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act, 2012). Ultimately, this study may lead to improved responses and investigation of bullying incidents, which can influence positive social and academic change in the learning environment.

In Section 2, I describe the research design and approach, participants, data collection process, and methods of data analysis. I used a qualitative, descriptive case study design which used face-to-face interviews with open-ended, semi-structured questions to gather data regarding staff attitudes and behaviors toward reporting bullying incidents. Such questioning techniques produced the kind of rich data that I sought, and that could only be generated in a qualitative context (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Quantitative surveys like the Likert scale and the semantic differential scale are less effective because numbers do not adequately measure the infinite scope of attitudes and behaviors (see subsection on Justification for the Design). I purposefully chose participants based on their job assignment and length of participation in the local middle school's bullying prevention program. I collected interview data via notes and audio recordings, documented the data in Word, and analyzed the data using lean, open coding

procedures that allowed themes to evolve until saturation was reached where no new information was added to the data set. Stakeholders and the university will have equal access to a narrative review of the data. With the district's permission, I will publish the descriptive narrative on my district teacher web page.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

I chose a qualitative, descriptive case study design with an interview approach for this project study because I determined that a collection of quotations acquired through personal contact would best capture teachers' heartfelt attitudes while allowing me to also interpret non-verbal cues like body language while discussing an emotional topic like bullying. As case study data, these attitudes and opinions were derived from a non-random, homogeneous, purposefully selected number of middle school teacher participants (see Participants subsection; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

Research Questions

The specific research questions for this project study were as follows (see Appendix D):

Research Question 1: What behaviors do middle school teachers perceive as bullying?

Research Question 2: What are middle school teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents?

It is logical to elicit data from classroom teachers through research questions such as these by conducting a sociological case study. A sociological case study enabled me to examine the social relationships and behaviors of students and teachers, the middle

school structure, and the impact of issues like bullying on students and teachers alike (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

Research Design

In the qualitative tradition, case studies typically take one of three designs: exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). For this case study, I applied a descriptive design to present a comprehensive description of teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents at my study site.

Justification for the Design

There are a variety of platforms from which to conduct research. Some are less effective for collecting data in this study than others. Quantitative traditions use numerical data which do not provide the rich descriptions that characterize qualitative research (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). However, even some qualitative methods, such as a longitudinal survey, would have been less effective for this study because of the urgency for social change at the study site. Likewise, I chose not to use a grounded theory approach because my purpose was not to develop new theories (Thomson, 2010). As I researched case study designs, I found that explanatory and exploratory designs would have been less effective than a descriptive design for my study because they are often meant to explore situations to make decisions or to establish cause-and-effect relationships (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). A qualitative, descriptive case study design with an interview approach provided the best method for understanding middle school teachers' responses to bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

Participants

This study took place in a low-income, rural, middle school comprised of approximately 400 students, 40 staff members, and two administrators. I invited a non-random, homogeneous, purposeful sample of 12 staff members, three from each grade (grades 4, 5, 6, and 7) via email to participate in this study because they met the criteria of being tasked with bullying intervention and prevention, had first-hand knowledge of the district's bullying prevention program, were highly-qualified (per the State of Ohio) classroom teachers who serviced an entire grade level through departmentalization, and were all located in the local middle school building. By selecting participants according to the same criteria, as recommended by Gergen (2014) and Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007), I was less likely to produce discrepant data in the study (Creswell, 2012; Osborne & Overbay, 2004).

Justification for the Number of Participants

In this study, I intended to collect deep, rich interview responses from 12 classroom teachers because they are first responders to student bullying conduct and offered what I considered the most valid responses about the negative behavior (Anderson, 2011; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). A relatively limited number of participants is acceptable for descriptive case studies intended to provide deep inquiry of the behavior. Marshall et al. (2013) recommended a minimum of 15 interviewees to reach saturation in the data set, and Thomson (2010) recommended a minimum of 10 participants. I split the difference and used 12 participants. This sample was 46% of the population available at

the local middle school and provided an adequate representation of teachers' perceptions of bullying and their practices in reporting bullying incidents.

Access to the Participants

Access to participants was contingent upon district and building principal approval. I sent a letter to the administrators requesting permission to interview the participants. I non-randomly, homogeneously, and purposefully chose 12 middle school teacher participants. There were four to five classroom teachers in each grade level (grades 4, 5, 6, and 7) at the study site. I invited three classroom teachers from each grade level to participate in this study, beginning with those who committed the most time to serving in the bullying prevention program. When teachers opted out, I selected the next teacher with seniority. I found information about seniority via bullying prevention committee meeting minutes located on the middle school's computer share-drive (unrestricted access for all school employees) in the file titled *Bullying Prevention Program*. The district-wide mailing list provided me access to participants' email addresses for sending invitations and scheduling interviews.

Researcher-Participant Working Relationship

I fostered a working relationship with participants through comradely associations in grade-level and departmental meetings over a span of 13 years. The relationship evolved through conversations about student behavior and academics, and I identified potential participants who showed interest in contributing to research that positively impacted the learning environment. I expected that those who took part in this study

would speak confidently of their experience and continue the positive researcher-participant working relationship afterwards.

Ethical Protection of Participants

The nature of this study required special measures for ethical protection of participants' rights and wellbeing (Alavi, Roberts, Sutton, Axas, & Repetti, 2015; Ellis, 2011). In the consent form, I addressed confidentiality, informed consent, protection from harm, voluntary participation, and the duty to report criminal activity (see Appendix C). Additionally, I stored conversations about confidentiality and informed consent, and all interviews on a password-protected audio device and a password-protected laptop computer. I stored interview notes in a locked file cabinet and transcriptions of data sets on a password-protected personal computer, both located at my home during and after the time of collection and analysis. I will destroy data five years after my degree is granted.

The audio-recorded conversations regarding participant rights included my verbal agreement to not publicly connect the teachers' names with the information provided for this study. My agreement to this was important to this study, because it offered participants a safer feeling for contributing sensitive details about bullying behaviors during the interview, and mitigated the general lack of trust participants may have towards perceived experts such as a doctoral candidate (Fisher, 2012). Should any criminal activity have been revealed that necessitated reporting, I had a plan in place for informing the participant as well as the appropriate authorities.

The right to be protected from harm includes an interview experience that fosters participants' advantageous realization of a personal self-understanding or an

understanding to help others in the learning environment. By observing facial expressions and body language, I limited prompting for deeper information to minimize hurtful emotions of bullying suffered by the participants in the past. I made it clear to participants that they could choose not to answer any questions they felt were too personal. Possible risks associated with triggering questions may have included loss of focus or minor depression for a certain period of time. However, the consequences of this study leading to systemic, lasting change, outweighed minor depression which could have been curbed relatively soon with counseling (Copeland et al., 2013). The school counselor was made aware of the study's risks and agreed to be available for any participants' needing such services (personal communication, October 8, 2014). The participants were adults of a non-protected population and presumably of a steady mindset given their educational levels and relatively stable careers. I informed participants that their participation in this study may result in directing awareness of responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting as required by law, leading to improved responses to and investigation of bullying incidents and ultimately influencing positive social and academic change. Participants were self-governing and participated in this study voluntarily, and there were no ramifications to participants if they chose not to participate, or if they withdrew.

Data Collection

In the interviews, I asked 15 questions with prompts to guide the conversations for collecting data about middle school teachers' responses to bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. I sought to collect data from this

population because teachers are first responders to bullying behavior in schools (Anderson, 2011; Yoon & Bauman, 2014). Their beliefs determine their actions when responding to and reporting bullying incidents (Anderson, 2011). My population sample was further justified by the significant difference between the data reported by students (see Table 1) and that which was reported by the district in the Bullying and Aggressive Behavior Report, mandated by the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012; see Table 2). I found that a possible gap in practice existed, and data not reported by teachers was an important link for continuity and accuracy in district reporting.

Appropriate Data to the Qualitative Tradition

The data I collected were in keeping with the qualitative tradition. Participants' opinions and attitudes were reflective of their perceptions (Anderson, 2011). The most appropriate way to gain a deep understanding of those perceptions was to conduct a qualitative, case study with a descriptive design using a face-to-face, one-on-one interview approach (Glesne, 2011; Lodico et al., 2010). Personal interviews generated profound and multi-layered descriptions supporting participants' reasoning for their actions or inactions, and their comments provided evidence for analysis (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

Research Question 1 was, "What behaviors do middle school teachers perceive as bullying?" To answer this question, I developed three related interview questions. First, I asked the participants to describe bullying behaviors in their physical, verbal, and cyber forms. Second, I asked the participants to describe bullying behaviors using the researched-based definitions *aggressive, imbalanced,* and *continuous* (Olweus, 1993).

Finally, I asked the participants to describe their level of confidence in recognizing bullying behaviors as high, medium, or low. The key word in all three of these interview questions was *describe*.

Research Question 2 was "What are middle school teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents?" This question addressed three factions to whom the teachers reported the bullying incidents: the student, the parents or guardians, and the principal. First, I asked participants to describe the bullying incidents that they reported (such as physical, verbal, and cyber) and when they talked to all three factions about the bullying incidents (such as immediately, at recess or free time, later that day, or the next day or longer). Second, I asked participants to describe how they responded to the student (such as in a verbal manner, a look or glance, or taking away recess or free time) and to the parents or guardians and principal (such as face-to-face conversations, phone conferences, or emails/texts). Finally, I asked participants to describe their level of confidence in reporting the bullying behaviors as high, medium, or low. The key word in these interview questions was also *describe* (see Appendix D).

A qualitative, case study with a descriptive design and an interview approach was appropriate for collecting data in this study because all of the interview questions asked the participants to describe a perception or practice. The comments from teachers' descriptions of their own beliefs and experiences provided rich data to analyze and create a narrative that best described teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents.

Interview Plan and Data Collection

I used a specific plan to guide the interviewing process. I invited each teacher to participate in my study through the school email program two weeks prior to the anticipated start date of data collection. When no response was provided by three teachers within the first week of the invitation, I invited them a second time via phone, at which time I reviewed the opt-out option and confidentiality clause again. All three teachers declined the second invitation. When 12 teachers finally agreed to participate, the interviews were scheduled to last approximately 45-60 minutes and took place in the teacher's classrooms.

At the beginning of the interview, I set up an audio device to record greetings, a description of the interview process, and participants' agreement to take part in the study. I used cards to present individual interview questions for the teacher to read along with me as I read the question or to reread as necessary while the interview proceeded. Using the prompts, I guided the conversation in the direction necessary to acquire similar data from each participant if they began to speak off topic (see Appendix E). The prompts helped me anticipate potential gaps in gathering data (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006) and ensured depth of the topic across grade levels to get conforming data from each participant. This procedure was a semi-structured interview process where I used the prompts to probe for openly personal expressions while keeping the conversation situational.

I read question number one out loud as they read along from the card. It was important to link the participant's name with the interview in case I needed to clarify

answers later. During data collection, I identified participants on the audio device and on the computer as their grade level with their first and last initials (i.e. 4KB). While writing the study however, I identified the participants as the grade level and A, B, C, or D (i.e. 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 5A, 5B, 5C, 5D, 6A, 6B, 6C, 6D, 7A, 7B, 7C, and 7D), as an extra precaution against any possible further identification. This method of identification allowed patterns, relationships, and themes to emerge within the grade-level data. I continued this procedure for all 15 questions.

After the interview was complete, the audio device and the laptop were turned off. The teacher was thanked and we departed. Within two days of each interview, I sent a note thanking the teacher for his or her participation. No follow-up interviews were necessary to clarify information. Member checks were coordinated to verify interpretations after data collection and analysis.

Keeping Track of Data

I tracked data on a Kindle Fire and a laptop computer. I recorded interviews on a password-protected Kindle Fire Easy Voice recording application. Immediately after each interview, I emailed the file to a password-protected laptop computer. Within 72 hours after the interviews concluded, I transcribed data from the laptop into a chart in a Word document.

Microsoft Word was the key system for keeping track of the transcriptions. I created a table listing the teachers by grade level in the first row and the interview questions in the first column. Then, I transcribed verbatim data into a Word document. Next, I printed the transcriptions and began to hand-copy the data onto poster chart paper,

creating diagrams of codes as they emerged. I used the codes to identify categories which were used to form themes. I stored the Word document on a password-protected laptop, and the handwritten data and poster charts in a locked file cabinet.

Access to the Participants

Access to participants was contingent upon district and building principal approval. I sent a letter to the administrators requesting permission to interview the participants after receiving Walden Internal Review Board approval (04-14-15-0184509). I non-randomly, homogeneously, and purposefully chose 12 middle school teachers. There were four to five classroom teachers in each grade level (grades 4, 5, 6, and 7) at the study site. I invited three classroom teachers from each grade level to participate, beginning with those who committed the most time to serving in the bullying prevention program. When teachers opted out, I selected the next teacher with seniority. I found information about seniority via bullying prevention committee meeting minutes located on the middle school's computer share-drive (unrestricted access for all school employees) in the file titled *Bullying Prevention Program*. The district-wide mailing list provided me access to participants' email addresses for sending invitations and scheduling interviews.

The Role of the Researcher

My past professional role in the local setting was that of a classroom teacher and a bullying prevention committee member. Three years ago, I resigned from the local middle school's bullying prevention committee. This role may have affected data collection in that participants may have remembered my position and felt pressured to

provide answers that they thought I would have wanted to hear (McDermid, Jackson, & Daly, 2014). I lessened such possible pressure by reminding teachers that their participation in this study would not affect our relationship or their access to any services.

My current professional role in the local setting is that of a fellow teacher, having returned from a one-year sabbatical leave. My presence was removed from the local site for the 2014-2015 school year. My relationship with participants is that of a shared identity of teacher, a common educational language, and a similar experience base in the local middle school. I hold no advisory position over any of the participants. This type of insider relationship as co-worker provides the advantage of having intimate knowledge of the research setting and rapport with the participants (McDermid et al., 2014).

Data Analysis

Analyzing the generated data included interpreting participant responses and summarizing the information to better understand teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. The Kindle Fire Easy Voice recording application contained audio recordings of the interviews. I emailed the recordings to a password-protected laptop computer. I typed verbatim transcriptions into a Microsoft Word document. Interpreting the data required open coding of common information, organizing the data in codes, categories, and themes; then condensing or expanding the themes. I developed themes to answer the guiding research questions. Finally, a descriptive narrative correlated the themes with the guiding research questions.

Coding Procedure

Once the transcriptions were complete, I coded the data and categorized the codes. First, I applied a lean, open coding strategy where 20-30 codes per interview were assigned during the first read (Creswell, 2012). Reading subsequent interviews produced fewer and fewer new codes and added to the enumeration of data until eventually I added hardly any new codes to the last interview (Marshall et al., 2013; Thomson, 2010). At this point of data reduction, I reached saturation. To apply the codes, I looked for common words or phrases, in vivo codes, which represented causes, consequences, attitudes, strategies, characters, problems, solutions, gender, race, socioeconomic status, academic success, academic failure, as well as outliers and things not said. I applied new codes, combined codes, and divided codes at subsequent readings. Next, I aggregated the codes to form categories and subcategories and created a framework of related themes. This framework was represented in a comparison table in a Word document and was used to show the progression of data from codes to themes and their interrelatedness. Finally, I compared the themes to the extant literature and developed a descriptive narrative that answered the guiding research questions for this study. Due to only 12 participants from a population of 46 teachers at my study site, I decided to generalize the narrative rather than identify specific comments with specific grade levels to further protect the identity of the participants.

Accuracy and Credibility of Findings

True to the qualitative tradition, findings of this study were interpretative (Thomson, 2010). However, there were means to determine the accuracy and credibility

of the findings. Before I conducted interviews, I reviewed the questions with the middle school principal, the district curriculum director, and the teachers' union president. They requested to review the questions prior to the interviews. The purpose of this field test was to identify questions that could reveal findings contrary to what was expected by the principal, curriculum director, or the union president, as well as for the purpose of this study. The field test concluded that no adjustments were necessary.

After themes were developed, but prior to writing the final descriptive narrative, I conducted member checks with willing participants (Glesne, 2011). I sent an email containing descriptions of the themes to six participants asking for feedback on the accuracy and fairness of my interpretations. Participants' responses were in agreement with the findings and no further clarification was necessary. Accessing the participants was in the same manner as recruiting them for the study. I restated participants' rights to opt out and ensured confidentiality in the email. I collected interview data from 12 participants; no other source of information contributed to the study. I adhered to the analysis procedures unique to the qualitative tradition.

Discrepant Cases

Discrepant cases in my study were interviews with answers inconsistent with the literature or with the majority of participant responses. A discrepancy with the literature occurred in all of the interviews. It was necessary to clarify participants' answers about their recognition of bullying behaviors. Originally, teachers were asked to describe bullying behaviors that they reported. No teacher said they reported cyber bullying.

Because I interpreted this as unusual according to the current research in the literature, I contacted the participants by phone to clarify their answer.

Clarification calls revealed that three teachers changed their answers: they did see and report cyber bullying at my study site. Following up with a single prompt specifically asking about cyber bullying may have reminded these teachers of a past incident(s), causing them to change their answers. Whereas having originally been asked a broader question about bullying may not have immediately brought forth specific memories of cyber bullying. These changes were made accordingly in the analysis below.

Clarification calls also revealed that nine participants maintained their answer. They did not see cyber bullying at the local middle school. The clarification calls did not affect the classification of data.

There were two discrepant cases where answers were inconsistent with the majority of participants' responses. A teacher claimed he/she did not see physical bullying at the study site, reporting only seeing a "verbal altercation" once. (See *Reporting to the Principal*.) Another teacher had no "compassion" for victims and no interest in dealing with bullying behavior. (See *Responding to the Student.*)

Another discrepancy surfaced in the analysis process but was not directly reported in the findings due to the general descriptive nature of the narrative. The findings showed 25% of the participants did not report bullying incidents to parents or guardians. What was not presented in the findings was that all of these participants were in the same grade level. Two of the four participants stated that this was a grade-level choice and gave reasons for their collective decision. (See *Reporting to the Parents or Guardians.*)

Data Analysis Results

I generated, gathered, and recorded data to better understand teachers' perceptions of bullying and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. Data were generated from teacher interviews, gathered using the Kindle Fire Easy Voice recording application, and then emailed to a password-protected laptop. During transcription, data were further recorded in Microsoft Word and hand-analyzed. I categorized participants' answers into two themes: teachers' bullying perceptions and teachers' bullying reporting practices. I took steps to ensure evidence of quality of the results by reflexive journaling, member checking, and requesting an expert review. Finally a rich, thick narrative describes my interpretations. The findings may lead to the implementation of a professional development project designed to influence teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents in accordance with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012).

Findings

Students' self-reported bullying surveys identified bullying as a problem at the local middle school. Two research questions were posed:

Research Question 1: What behaviors do middle school teachers perceive as bullying?

Research Question 2: What are middle school teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents?

Two themes emerged from the data: a) teachers' bullying perceptions, and b) reporting bullying practices.

Theme 1: Teachers' bullying perceptions. Participants described their perceptions of bullying behaviors (see Table 5), how they knew the behaviors were bullying, and their level of confidence in recognizing those bullying behaviors (see Table 6). They also contributed reasons for their levels of confidence in recognizing bullying behaviors (see Table 7).

Descriptions of bullying behaviors. Participants described bullying behaviors as physical, verbal, and cyber, having covert (easily hidden) and overt (easily recognized) characteristics. Physical bullying included shoving, pushing, touching, and hitting including the use of objects, per participants' descriptions: It was "not necessarily body part to body part." Some bullying behaviors included "poking other students with pencils," pushing books out of students' arms, punching lockers, "slamming restroom doors," and "peeking under [restroom] stalls."

Verbal bullying included gossip, mean-spirited talk, intimidating talk, and coercive talk. A mean-spirited behavior occurred when a student "had a lot of odor issues [and] some girls spread a lot of nasty stuff around about him." Coercive talk occurred when students persuaded "all their friends to agree with them to leave somebody else out." Participants described cyber bullying as similar to verbal bullying where the only difference was the use of devices such as cell phones and computers, and that it was usually covert.

The participants of my study recognized physical and verbal bullying as being just as sly as cyber bullying, "…too many times [the students] keep it quiet." The unwanted

advancements were delivered in hurtful and "intimidating" manners; and when continuous, were described as harassment (see Table 5 below).

Table 5

Teachers' Descriptions of Bullying Behaviors

Types of Bullying Behaviors	Teachers' Descriptions
Physical	shoving, pushing, touching, and hitting, poking other students with pencils, pushing books out of students' arms, punching lockers, slamming restroom doors, peeking under restroom stalls
Verbal	gossip mean-spirited talk intimidating talk coercive talk
Cyber	verbal bullying with technology devices covert

How teachers know. Participants credited their knowledge of bullying behaviors to staff development. "We've had a lot of training." They described students' physical, verbal, and cyber bullying behaviors as continuous, aggressive, intentional, and/or overpowering (see Table 6 below).

Table 6

Examples of Teachers' Descriptions of Bullying Behaviors that were Aligned with Their Training

Bullying Prevention Training	Teachers' Descriptions
Continuous	"it has to be repeated over and over again"
Aggressive	"intimidation" "looking for some kind of fear"
Intentional	picking on someone for a "different hair color" or a "bad tooth" "on purpose"
Overpowering	"the bigger kid [was] after the little one" older students were after "younger" students

Knowing the behaviors were bullying increased teachers' levels of confidence in recognizing bullying behaviors.

Levels of confidence. Participants self-assessed their levels of confidence in recognizing bullying behaviors as high, medium, or low. No participants described themselves as having low levels of confidence; 75% had medium levels of confidence; and 25% had high levels of confidence in recognizing bullying behaviors. (See Table 7 below.)

Table 7

Percentage of Teachers Who Described Their Levels of Confidence as Low, Medium, or High

Levels of Confidence	Percentage of Teachers
Low	0
Medium	75
High	25

Participants explained why they self-assessed at medium and high levels of confidence (see Table 8). Some who described their level of confidence as medium said that they did not always catch bullying behaviors. For example, the building had "hot spots" or crowded areas like the "cafeteria" and playground where bullying behaviors went unnoticed. Other times, participants overlooked bullying behaviors because "it was hard to tell the difference between [conflict]" and a bullying situation. Some participants ignored bullying behaviors when it was difficult to tell the difference between bullying and conflict.

Participants who described their levels of confidence as high stated ongoing "training and seminars" and "many years of experience" helped them recognize bullying behaviors versus conflicting behaviors, and thus reported accordingly. "I was part of the bullying committee" and "…we've talked with the students about it a lot" are some examples given by highly confident teachers. Highly confident teachers attributed their success in recognizing bullying behaviors to experience and professional development.

Table 8

Teachers' Reasons for Low, Medium, and High Levels of Confidence in Recognizing Bullying Behaviors

Low	Medium	High
*	"…maybe I'm not attuned to it as well as I should be, but I try. It is a process."	"experience serving on the bullying prevention committee"
*	"When…there's a lot of activity, sometimes I'm focused on my day and can walk right by."	"staff training and practice"
*	"I'm not seeing [it] when I'm running my classroom."	"frequent talks with students"
*	"It is hard to tell when it's going on; too many times they keep it quiet."	"looking at the behavior objectively"
*	"Stuff can really get past you and you won't even know what's going on."	"…always being able to recognize the bullying behaviors, but knowing there was always more to learn."

Note: *indicates no reason given.

Patterns and relationships. One pattern emerged among participants concerning levels of confidence. They all assessed themselves at a medium or high level; none assessed themselves as low in confidence.

Salient and Discrepant Data. There were salient data in participants' levels of confidence. No participant assessed him/herself as having a low level of confidence. No discrepant data surfaced in this theme.

Literature Connection. Findings in the theme *teachers' bullying perceptions* were aligned with extant literature. Participants perceived bullying as physical, verbal, and cyber (see Table 5) as described by Olweus et al. (1993) and Weber et al. (2013), among others. Physical and verbal forms were categorized as overt, or easily seen, heard, or identified (Smith et al, 2006). Results from my study that were in the overt category included pushing, shoving, punching, gossip, and intimidating talk. Although results showed participants identified cyber bullying as a form of bullying in the theme *teachers' bullying perceptions*, results in the theme *teachers' bullying reporting practices* showed 75% of the participants did not respond to cyber bullying behavior, perhaps because it was categorized as a covert form of bullying, i.e. anonymous or hidden from plain sight (Weber et al.).

Participants described students' physical, verbal, and cyber bullying behaviors as continuous, aggressive, intentional, and/or overpowering (see Table 6). These are typical bullying characteristics taught in staff development programs for bullying prevention (Adams & Lawrence, 2011; Bender & Kisek, 2011; Compton et al., 2014; Copeland et al., 2013; Wolke, Angold, & Costello, 2013). The participants in my study attributed their high levels of confidence to the bullying prevention professional development administered at the study site. This supported Locke's (trans.1990) theory of human understanding on how reasoning and introduction to new information can formulate perceptions.

Theme 2: Bullying reporting practices. After participants described their perceptions of bullying behaviors, they described their practices in responding to

students. Then, they described their bullying reporting practices to parents or guardians. Finally, they described their bullying reporting practices to the principal.

Responding to the student. In the interviews, participants described types of bullying behaviors to which they responded, when they responded, how they responded, and their levels of confidence in responding with students. They also contributed reasons why.

Types of bullying behaviors. Participants described multiple types of bullying behaviors to which they responded with the students. Seventy-five percent of the participants responded to physical bullying behaviors. One hundred percent of the participants responded to verbal bullying behaviors. Twenty-five percent of the participants responded to cyber bullying behaviors (see Table 9 below).

Table 9

Percentage of Teachers who Responded to Physical, Verbal, and Cyber Bullying Behaviors with the Students

Bullying Behaviors	Percentage of Teachers
Physical	75
Verbal	100
Cyber	25

Teachers responded to students' physical and verbal bullying behaviors in general, but not all teachers responded to the same specific behaviors. Some teachers only responded to physical bullying behaviors that were more proximal and exclusionary; such as squeezing another student in line, towering over another student, and excluding

students at the lunch table forcing them to sit alone. Other teachers felt confident enough to handle more aggressive physical bullying behaviors such as touching and destruction of property. Some teachers did not respond to physical bullying with the students. However, all teachers responded to verbal behaviors such as name calling, spreading rumors, "profanity" and "sex talk," and believed that they adequately handled these bullying behaviors themselves. More teachers gave attention to the students concerning verbal bullying, particularly sex talk and profanity, than physical bullying. Teachers who believed cyber bullying was taking place responded to the student by "[taking] their device away" and relinquishing the device to the principal, letting the principal report it to the parents or guardians.

When teachers responded. Participants described when they responded to bullying behaviors with the student. Seventy-five percent of the participants responded to bullying behaviors immediately. No participants responded to bullying behaviors during their free time. Thirty-four percent of the participants responded to bullying behaviors later that day. Sixteen percent of the participants responded to bullying behaviors with the student the next day or longer (see Table 10 below).

Table 10

Percentage of Teachers Who Responded to Bullying Behaviors with the Student Immediately, During Free Time, Later that Day, or the Next Day or Longer

Frequencies	Percentage of Teachers
Immediately	75
Free Time	0
Later that Day	34
Next Day or Longer	16

Teachers responded to bullying behaviors with the students immediately, later that day, and/or the next day. Most participants responded immediately before the behavior "escalated." A few teachers waited to respond, and for various reasons. For example, they were "too busy to record" it; so "if [they] remembered" to record it, then they would respond later. They wanted to "get their facts straight first;" their "schedules did not allow" for time; they did not have "access to the student;" or they wanted to "meet with the team" to discuss the bullying behavior first. Some also responded later if the students needed time to cool down or were suspended from school. Other reasons for delayed responses included: students were not available before or after school if they rode busses, were car-riders, or were involved in after-school clubs. The only consistent category was no participants used their free time to talk with the students. Teachers considered recess an important time for students to socialize, so some preferred not to respond to bullying behaviors with the students during that time either.

How teachers responded. Participants described multiple methods of responding to bullying behaviors with the students. Seventy-five percent of the participants responded verbally. Fifty-eight percent of the participants responded with a look or glance. Forty-two percent of the participants responded to bullying behaviors by reducing recess or free time (see Table 11 below).

Table 11

Percentage of Techers Who Responded to Bullying Behaviors with the Students Verbally, with a Look or Glance, and/or by Taking Away Recess or Free Time

Methods of Responding	Percentage of Teachers
verbally	75
a look or glance	58
reduce recess or free time	42

Teachers responded to bullying behaviors with the students verbally, with a look or glance, or by reducing recess or free time. Conversations were the preferred method for most of the teachers. Teachers believed nonthreatening talks with the students helped the students to more freely discuss the bullying behavior. Teachers preferred to "talk privately" with the bully and the victim separately; "I wouldn't have both kids together." Few felt it was "OK" to use the behavior as an example to other students in the classroom.

When time did not allow for verbal conversations, some teachers used nonverbal communications such as a look or glance. The look was particularly effective when the student knew the teacher was aware of his/her negative behaviors; "I know they know I

am watching them, so I can just give them a look and they…shape up for me." However when the look did not work, teachers took the time for "one-on-one" conversations again.

When the verbal or look/glance methods did not work, some teachers reduced recess, which was often sufficient in "preventing further escalation." When conversation, a look/glance, or reducing recess/free time failed to redirect, the bullying behaviors were reported to the parents or guardians and/or the principal.

Levels of confidence. Participants described their levels of confidence in responding to bullying behaviors with the students. Eight percent of the participants had low levels of confidence in responding to bullying behaviors with the students. Fifty percent of the participants had medium levels of confidence, and forty-two percent had high levels of confidence in responding to bullying behaviors with the students (see Table 12 below).

Table 12

Percentage of Teachers Who Described Their Levels of Confidence in Responding to Bullying Behaviors with Students as Low, Medium, or High

Levels of Confidence	Percentage of Teachers
Low	8
Medium	50
High	42

Teachers who viewed themselves as having low levels of confidence in responding to bullying behaviors with students felt that they did not "have a lot of experience" dealing with bullying or did not "bond" or personally connect with students

well. They believed their limited daily contact (one academic hour) with the students prevented them from seeing bulling behaviors "during unstructured times," such as at lunch, recess, and before and after school.

Teachers who had medium levels of confidence had a difficult time distinguishing between conflict and bullying, and preferred to send the students "to the office or the guidance counselor" despite of their regular bullying training. An outlying response was having little "compassion" and "just wanted it to stop" because the teacher "did not have much of an ear for it." However, most teachers felt that they had good relationships with students and "enough experience talking with [them]" that they wanted to "at least figure out what was going on."

There was an overlap of reasons between teachers who described their level of confidence as medium and those who described their level of confidence as high. Teachers who had high levels of confidence in responding to bullying behaviors with students believed that they had strong relationships and "had a good handle in talking with students," too. They also recognized "lots of training;" but unlike those who described themselves as having medium levels of confidence, high confidence teachers believed that the training assisted them in effectively handling bullying behaviors "before they escalated."

Reporting to the parents or guardians. Participants described multiple types of bullying incidents that they reported to parents or guardians, when they reported, how they reported, and their levels of confidence in reporting. They also contributed reasons why.

Types of bullying behaviors. Participants described multiple types of bullying behaviors that they reported to the parents or guardians. Forty-three percent of the participants reported physical bullying behaviors. Seventeen percent of the participants reported verbal bullying behaviors. No participants reported cyber bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians (see Table 13 below).

Table 13

Percentage of Teachers who Reported Physical, Verbal, and Cyber Bullying Behaviors to the Parents or Guardians

Bullying Behaviors	Percentage of Teachers
Physical	43
Verbal	17
Cyber	0

More teachers reported physical bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians than verbal bullying behaviors. Some teachers in the current study addressed bullying behaviors that led to "much bigger problems or issues…such as depression" with the students, and reported these types of behaviors to the parents or guardians. Several teachers referred those bullying behaviors only to the school counselor because "the guidance counselor has more background information" on students' bullying behaviors, and expected him/her to follow up with the parents or guardians. Bullying behaviors that resulted in broken bones, bleeding, and "a potential legal issue" were reported to the parents or guardians by most teachers. On rare occasions, teachers reported profanity and sex talk to parents or guardians, but on no occasion did teachers report cyber bullying to

the parents or guardians. Several teachers stated that they would omit the communication with the parents or guardians all together, because too often "no email or phone number" was available, or "the parents didn't want to hear about it anyway."

When teachers reported. Participants described when they reported bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians. Sixty-seven percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors immediately. Thirty-four percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors during free time. Seventy-five percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors later that day. Thirty-four percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians the next day or longer. Twenty-five percent of the participants said they did not report to the parents or guardians (see Table 14 below).

Table 14

Percentage of Teachers Who Reported Bullying Behaviors to the Parents or Guardians Immediately, During Free Time, Later that Day, or the Next Day or Longer

Frequencies	Percentage of Teachers
Immediately	67
Free Time	34
Later that Day	75
Next Day or Longer	34
Never	25

Teachers reported bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians in every category: immediately, later that day, during free time, or the next day. When several teachers indicated that they did not report bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians

at all, the *Never* category was added. Their reasons included: because too often "no email or phone number" was available, or "the parents didn't want to hear about it anyway." Most teachers reported "during the evening" or during their "planning" time. Less than half of the teachers reported bulling behaviors to the parents or guardians later that day or the next day. Most teachers who reported bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians also reported to the principal.

How teachers reported. Participants described multiple methods of reporting bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians. Ninety-two percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors via phone conferences. Sixty-seven percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors face-to-face. Thirty-four percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors via email/text (see Table 15 below).

Table 15

Percentage of Techers Who Reported Bullying Behaviors to the Parents or Guardians via Phone Conferences, Face-to-face, Email/texts

Methods of Reporting	Percentage of Teachers
Phone Conferences	92
Face-to-face	67
Email/texts	34

Teachers reported bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians via phone conferences, face-to-face meetings, and email/text messages. Although some teachers said they did not report to the parents or guardians, the ones who did use the phone, and a majority of them preferred to use the phone before any other method. For some teachers,

the face-to-face method was the next choice for contacting the parents or guardians, even outside of school hours; "…if I saw them at a sports event, I'd say 'Hey, by the way…'." Some teachers sent emails or text messages to the parents or guardians and kept in weekly contact via email. Other teachers found parents or guardians did not have an "email on file" for this type of communication, nor the technology for texting.

Levels of confidence. Participants described their levels of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians. Thirty-three percent of the participants had low levels of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors. Seventeen percent of the participants had medium levels of confidence, and 50% of the participants had high levels of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians (see Table 16 below).

Table 16

Percentage of Teachers Who Described Their Levels of Confidence in Reporting Bullying Behaviors to the Parents or Guardians as Low, Medium, or High

Levels of Confidence	Percentage of Teachers
Low	33
Medium	17
High	50

Teachers who viewed themselves as having low levels of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the parents or guardians believed that the parents or guardians of the bullies were "defensive of their children," not "receptive" of criticism, and had no interest in hearing "what their child was supposed to be doing." Teachers with medium

levels of confidence "just didn't want to talk to parents" because the parents or guardians did not want to hear that their "child was bullying." Teachers who had high levels of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to parents or guardians felt that they had "a good relationship" with the parents or guardians and thought "for the most part our parents want to know when their kids are involved in something like that." These teachers claimed to have "good report" with parents or guardians because they frequently communicated with them, and because of professional development training. Some of these teachers with high levels of confidence believed they were "obligated…as educators to inform the parents" in case "anything illegal happens."

Reporting to the principal. Participants described multiple types of bullying incidents that they reported to the principal, when they reported, how they reported, and their levels of confidence in reporting. They also contributed reasons why.

Types of bullying behaviors. Participants described multiple types of bullying behaviors they reported to the principal. Sixty-seven percent of the participants reported physical bullying behaviors. Seventeen percent of the participants reported verbal bullying behaviors. Twenty-five percent of the participants reported cyber bullying behaviors to the principal (see Table 17 below).

Table 17

Percentage of Teachers who Reported Physical, Verbal, and Cyber Bullying Behaviors to the Principal

Bullying Behaviors	Percentage of Teachers
Physical	67
Verbal	17
Cyber	25

Some teachers chose not to report any bullying behaviors to the principal. Reasons included the "fast pace of academics" in their classrooms, reporting to the school counselor was preferred because he/she "handle[d] the behaviors best," and because he/she decided if it was "necessary to involve the principal." Other reasons for not reporting to the principal included high confidence in "settling the bullying behavior with the student," and good report with the parents or guardians believing that they satisfactorily settled the bullying behaviors at home.

The majority of the teachers reported physical bullying behaviors to the principal such as the aggressive touching, "punching or shoving" as well as the bigger issues leading to psychological or legal issues. Several teachers agreed that the principal "liked to handle the behaviors." One outlying response surfaced: one teacher described his/her reporting practices as minimal: "I've never seen a physical [bullying behavior]. I've only ever reported a verbal altercation [to the principal]."

When teachers reported. Participants described multiple occasions that they reported bullying behaviors to the principal. One hundred percent of the participants

sometimes reported bullying behaviors immediately. Seventeen percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors during free time. Thirty-four percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors later that day. Seventeen percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors to the principal the next day or longer (see Table 18 below).

Table 18

Percentage of Teachers Who Reported Bullying Behaviors to the Principal Immediately, During Free Time, Later that Day, or the Next Day or Longer

Frequencies	Percentage of Teachers
Immediately	100
Free Time	17
Later that Day	34
Next Day or Longer	17

Bullying behaviors were reported to the principal in every category. The only consistent category was when teachers reported bullying behaviors to the principal immediately. Reasons included: if the behaviors were "severe enough," "escalated beyond control," or "needed to be dealt with right away." Bullying behaviors were reported later depending on accessibility to the principal, "sometimes [he/she was] out of the building or in a meeting." Most teachers believed it was important for the principal to stay "in the loop" because he/she could get results "a lot quicker" than the teacher.

How teachers reported. Participants described their methods of reporting bullying behaviors to the principal. Seventeen percent of the participants reported bullying

behaviors via phone conferences. One hundred percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors face-to-face. Seventeen percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors via email/text. Twenty-five percent of the participants reported bullying behaviors to the principal via a handwritten note (see Table 19 below).

Table 19

Percentage of Techers Who Reported Bullying Behaviors to the Principal via Phone Conferences, Face-to-face, Email/texts, Hand-written Notes

Methods of Reporting	Percentage of Teachers
Phone Conferences	17
Face-to-face	100
Email/text	17
Handwritten Note	25

All teachers used the face-to-face method to report bullying behaviors to the principal. It was a "small building and he/she [the principal] was easily found," he/she "could take care of it immediately," and it provided an "opportunity to answer questions" quickly. The local middle school installed phones in the classrooms so teachers were able to "call the office" when necessary. Few teachers used email to report to the principal in case he/she was "out of the building," but many believed email was important for "documentation purposes." Teachers who made a note to themselves, such as using a post-it note, found it was easier to report incidents to the principal at a later date. One teacher emphasized that "documentation needs to happen with every [bullying] behavior." To some teachers, email was considered the best form of documentation

available, because no consistent method was established for reporting bullying behaviors to the principal; “at least there is a written record of correspondence” in the event of possible “legal issues.” Reasons for not using email to report bullying behaviors to the principal included: he/she “doesn’t get it in the amount of time [that] I want,” “it’s not immediate,” and it is “only half the information” (one-sided) for the conversation that needed to take place.

Levels of confidence. Participants described their levels of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the principal. None had low levels of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the principal. Seventeen percent of the participants had medium levels of confidence, and eighty-three percent had high levels of confidence (see Table 20 below).

Table 20

Percentage of Teachers Who Described Their Levels of Confidence in Reporting Bullying Behaviors to the Principal as Low, Medium, or High

Levels of Confidence	Percentage of Teachers
Low	0
Medium	17
High	83

All teachers felt that they had medium or high levels of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the principal. Those with medium confidence expressed concern when the principal requested suggestions from them. Others felt that the administration was “somewhat supportive and open.” Similarly, the teachers with high levels of

confidence in reporting bullying behaviors believed the principal was "supportive," and worked well with the guidance counselor. The principal had a responsibility "to be aware" in order to successfully "pick up where I left off." Most teachers felt that their levels of confidence were due to the local middle school's culture of "participation in the building's bullying prevention program."

Patterns and relationships. Several patterns emerged in the data where all participants were in agreement. First, all teachers verbally responded to bullying behaviors with the students. All teachers reported bullying behaviors to the principal immediately. All teachers used the face-to-face method to report bullying behaviors to the principal. Next, no teachers responded to bullying behaviors with the student during their free time. No participants described their level of confidence as low in reporting bullying behaviors to the principal.

The data revealed relationships were associated with high levels of confidence, which participants credited to staff training. Participants who reported high levels of confidence also reported having better teacher-parents or guardians relationships, and better teacher-student relationships. In the case of participants who reported having better teacher-parent or -guardian relationships, which was exactly half of the participants, those with good relationships had high confidence, and those without good relationships did not have high confidence.

Salient and Discrepant Data. Salient data emerged in this theme. An entire grade level of participants collectively decided not to report bullying incidents to parents or

guardians at all, because of insufficient methods of communication, and/or limited participation by either party in conversations.

Discrepant data emerged also. A participants claimed he/she did not see physical bullying at the local middle school. The participants reported only seeing a "verbal altercation" once. Other participants had no "compassion" for victims and no interest in dealing with bullying behavior.

Literature Connection. Bandura (1977) contended that aggressive childhood environments led to maintaining anti-social behaviors as adults; and Anderson (2011) showed how educators applied those behaviors in schools. Anderson's continuum to action demonstrated how teachers moved through seven steps that compelled action or inaction. First, teachers must understand their own perceptions, as noted in the theme *teachers' bullying perceptions*; then remove any altruistic blind spots. Next, teachers must notice something unusual was actually going on, as noted in the theme *teachers' reporting practices*. In the case of cyber bullying, participants reported recognizing it as it was described in the extant literature, but not as it occurred in school. Originally, no participants reported cyber bullying, but after clarification calls, one-fourth of the participants changed their answers concerning addressing cyber bullying with the student and the principal, but not about reporting it to the parents or guardians. The second step in Anderson's (2011) continuum to action was deciding that something was indeed out of the ordinary. It is possible that if teachers were not actually seeing cyber bullying occur on students' devices at school, then they would not know if something was out of the ordinary.

The next four steps in Anderson's (2011) continuum to action needed to happen in rapid succession for immediate intervention to occur: a) decide if something indeed was out of the ordinary, b) determine the extent of responsibility, c) determine their skill level to help, and d) decide to help or not. In the case of reporting any bullying incidents, participants had to achieve all four steps. One-fourth of the participants did not report any bullying incidents to parents or guardians; but because they did respond to students and report to the principal, they completed the continuum to action thus far.

The final step of Anderson's continuum to action was closing the communication gap through professional development. John Locke's (trans. 1990) theory concerning human understanding and Plato's answer to Socrates's question about why knowledge was more valuable than belief (Malpas, 2012) supported the participants' high levels of confidence in reporting bullying incidents. Results in my study showed the participants attributed their high levels of confidence to the bullying prevention training administered at the study site.

Evidence of Quality

Experts on qualitative research suggest multiple strategies for interpreting evidence and ensuring confidence in the results. Glesne (2011) recommended keeping a reflexive journal for recording thoughts and actions along the way. Merriam (2009) referred to the same process as maintaining an audit trail, or a "detailed account of how the study was conducted and how the data were analyzed" (p.223). Creswell (2012) recommended member checking data with participants for accuracy and fairness. Other

strategies for demonstrating evidence of quality in qualitative research include external audits, thick descriptions, articulating biases, and triangulation.

True to these qualitative traditions, the findings of my study were interpretative. First, I used reflexive journaling, or journaling as a reflex, to record my experiences along the way (Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 2009; Wyatt, 2015). All journal entries were recorded electronically on a password-protected computer. This strategy helped me to anticipate possible problems in the future. Prior to data collection, I decided to acquire feedback on the questions from the middle school principal, the district curriculum director, and the teachers' union president. They reviewed the questions prior to the interviews to identify any that might reveal findings contrary to what was expected. This field test concluded that no adjustments were necessary.

After the interviews, I analyzed the data and checked my interpretations in three ways. First, I conducted clarification calls and emails. Originally, all participants said that they did not report cyber bullying. Because I interpreted this as unusual according to the current research in the literature, I contacted the participants by phone to clarify their answers. Three teachers changed their answers and the data were adjusted accordingly. Next, I used member checks. I sent an email containing descriptions of the themes to six participants asking for feedback on the accuracy and fairness of my interpretations. Participants' responses were in agreement with my findings.

Second, I requested the advice of an external auditor. In addition to Creswell, (2012), Glesne (2011), and Merriam (2009), Hancock and Algozzine (2006) recognized the value of outside support for credibility of research efforts. A retired colleague who

was detached from my study site and the participants reviewed the findings from six participant interviews to help identify possible discrepancies in my transcriptions. Later, she reviewed the data tables for alignment with their narrative descriptions.

Finally, I used rich, thick descriptions in the narrative. Glesne (2011) credited sensible social interpretations to delivering "direct lived experience(s)" (p. 35) to the reader. Based on the descriptions of the experiences lived by participants, the reader should determine transferability to an alternate setting as suggested by Harwell (2016).

Outcome of Findings

In theme 1, teachers' bullying perceptions, findings showed that participants had similar perceptions of bullying behaviors (see Table 5) when they described the behaviors and how they knew the behaviors were bullying. Their reasons for their levels of confidence in recognizing bullying behaviors were similar as well: training. There were no outlying responses in any of these categories.

However, participants' practices in reporting bullying incidents varied in theme 2, bullying reporting practices. Two reporting practices stood out from the rest. First, 25% of the participants did not report bullying incidents to parents or guardians, and all of those participants were members of the same grade level. Second, originally, 100% of the participants did not report cyber bullying, but after clarification calls, 25% changed their answers concerning the student and the principal, but not the parents or guardians. In conclusion, 75% of the participants did not report cyber bullying. Such reporting practices could use improvement.

To positively influence teachers' bullying reporting practices, a professional development project may help teachers:

1. examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors and compare them to the results of the current study,
2. collaboratively make connections between the results of the current study, current literature, and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012), the law that governs bullying reporting practices, and
3. collaboratively make connections between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act and writing a school policy, then practice writing a school policy.

The logic is that if teachers write their own policy specific to their needs and aligned with the law, they may implement the policy with fidelity and improve their bullying reporting practices, ultimately improving students' lives.

The professional development plan will cover three full days. Day 1 will assist teachers in developing an understanding of current practices of addressing bullying incidents in the local middle school, results of this study, and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). Day 2 will assist teachers in making connections between the Act and the results of the study. Day 3 will be a culmination of Days 1 and 2 to collectively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying school policy that will help teachers improve their bullying reporting practices; currently the study site has no consistent procedures in place for reporting bullying incidents.

Conclusion

In this section, I discussed the process for gathering evidence that illustrated 12 purposefully selected teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. I conducted a qualitative, descriptive, case study design with an interview approach to collect data for the purpose of describing that evidence. I hand-analyzed evidence for themes and presented data in a general narrative summary. Findings showed teachers had similar perceptions of bullying behaviors, but varied bullying reporting practices in regard to cyber bullying and parents or guardians. As an outcome of my findings, a professional development project may help to positively influence teachers' bullying reporting practices.

Section 3 includes a professional development project designed to develop criteria for more uniform practices among teachers in responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. The School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act is a state law, and any policy written regarding school bullying must comply. Teachers will produce an artifact for teacher evaluation evidence at the distinguished level of the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession while creating an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy as a solution for needed improvements. In the Ohio Standards, the distinguished level outlines behaviors of competent professional practices, of which policy-writing is incorporated.

Section 3: The Project

The results of my study showed teachers had similar perceptions of bullying behaviors, but varied bullying reporting practices in regard to cyber bullying and parents or guardians. I designed a profession development project intended to help teachers develop criteria for more uniform practices in their responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. My overall goal is to have teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. The School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act was enacted by the 129th Ohio General Assembly to promote a "positive school day for each student and a school environment where every student feels safe" (School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act, 2012, Section 3). Districts are required to have procedures in place for responding to and reporting bullying incidents. Currently, there are no set procedures at my study site. This project will provide teachers the opportunity to create their own procedures through policy writing as a solution for the needed improvements in responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians.

Participants reported varied bullying reporting practices at my study site. In response, this professional development project will specifically address the following objectives to help teachers develop criteria for more uniform practices:

1. teachers will examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors and compare them to the results of my study;

2. teachers will collaboratively make connections between the results of my study, current literature, and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012);
3. teachers will collaboratively make connections between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) and writing a school policy, then practice writing a school policy.

Motivators

Three motivators may encourage teachers to meet these objectives. The first motivator is the state law about responding to and reporting bullying incidents because teachers will understand the need to be in compliance with the law. The second motivator is that this professional development project will provide an opportunity for teachers to earn continuing education units (CEU) toward the renewal of licensure. The third motivator is that this project will provide teachers an opportunity to meet Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication), and Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth) of the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession (Ohio Department of Education, 2007). Motivators increase the probability that objectives will be met (Kongnyuy, 2015; Luo & Mkandawire, 2015; Onjoro, Arogo, & Embeywa, 2015), and may lead to teachers' more uniform practices in responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians.

In Section 3, I introduce this professional development project, include descriptions of its overall goal and objectives, and provide a rationale for why I chose the professional development genre. Next, I offer a literature review that provides an overview of (a) policy writing, (b) the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, and

(c) the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). In the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession subsection I discuss characteristics of professional development in education. Following the literature review, I offer a description of the professional development project and present a plan for its evaluation. Finally, I conclude by discussing implications for social change in local and larger contexts.

Overall Goal

The overall goal of this professional development project is to have teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. The overall goal and its motivators are further discussed in the Project Evaluation subsection. Learning objectives for the overall goal are further discussed in the Project Description subsection.

Rationale

In my study, findings showed teachers had similar perceptions of bullying behaviors, but varied bullying reporting practices in regard to cyber bullying and parents or guardians. Because of the need for more uniform practices, I determined that professional development is the most appropriate genre for this project. Teachers will be provided the opportunity to collaboratively develop criteria for bullying reporting practices in the form writing of an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy. The logic behind this decision is that if the teachers set the criteria themselves, they will be more likely to implement it. In doing so, teachers will also create a personal artifact for

evaluation evidence that meets the distinguished level of the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession.

This professional development project will also help teachers meet their legal responsibilities. The School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) is an Ohio law that governs districts' anti-bullying procedures including teachers' and administrators' responsibilities for responding to and reporting bullying incidents. My study site presently has no set procedures for these responsibilities.

This professional development project is about more than creating an end product to address a problem; it is about developing people to address a problem. It will help teachers develop the solutions they need to improve their school's learning environment and make it safer for teachers and students.

Review of the Literature

This professional development project will engage middle school teachers in a collaborative effort to write an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy addressing variable responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. Teachers' crafting of school policy fits within the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession under Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication), and Standard 7 (Professional Growth and Responsibility). The school policy will be aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act's mandate to respond to cyber bullying and report bullying incidents to parents or guardians. In this literature review, I will address (a) policy writing, (b) the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, and (c) the School

Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act. In the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession subsection I will also discuss characteristics of professional development in education.

I gathered the literature in this review using Education Research Complete, ERIC, PsychINFO, Sage, and Thoreau databases. I conducted searches using the Walden University Library, Google Scholar, and the Ohio Department of Education web site. Search terms included *andragogy, anti-bullying laws, educational policy, Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, Ohio Standards for Professional Development, professional development, School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act,* and *school law.*

Policy Writing: A Principle-Based Model

When bullying incidents disrupt the social order of the learning environment, policy dictates the next action; however, no one policy will work. Depending on the culture and the issue, choosing between a rule-based model and a principle-based model will determine the success of the policy (Kyriakides, Creemers, Papastylianou, & Papadatou-Pastou, 2014; Vardiman, Shepherd, & Jinkerson, 2014). An effective school policy reflects the district's core values and will be implemented with fidelity (Good et al., 2011; Kyriakides et al., 2014; Reinke et al., 2013). Values are subjective, and trusting in teachers' abilities to address bullying incidents endorsed by a district's philosophy and/or aligned with a law is foundational to creating an anti-bullying school policy (Compton et al., 2014; Kyriakides et al., 2014; Penuel, Fishman, Gallagher, Korbak, & Lopez-Prado, 2008; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Gilat, 2015). Hostins and Jordao (2015) found that policies written with broad guidelines, such as those found in principle-based models, failed to an extent. Yet, a principle-based model best fits an anti-bullying, school

policy because interpretations of and responses to bullying incidents vary with individual principles and core values.

The flexible nature of a principle-based policy offers guidelines that allow choice in teachers' responses to unpredictable situations. Vardiman et al. (2015) proposed a principal-based model similar to that of the Association of College and University Policy Administrators (ACUPA). The ACUPA model offers a traditional, linear progression, forcing components and limiting outcomes. Vardiman et al.'s version offers a more flexible policy development process, supporting components and guiding outcomes. Vardiman et al.'s policy development model is comprised four stages that I used when designing my project.

Stage 1: Developmental path. Stage 1 identifies the issue and its needs. At this stage in the project, teachers will develop principle guidelines that address a variety of bullying incidents. This stage encompasses teachers' engagement and alignment to the issue, district philosophy, and state law.

Stage 2: Policy design and structure. Teachers' buy-in begins to emerge in Stage 2. Teachers' will collaboratively design a principle-based policy that boasts uniform guidelines flexible enough to address interpretations of various bullying incidents. Shapira-Lishchinsky and Gilat (2015) encouraged teacher collaboration in structuring principle guidelines to support a variety of ethical responses. The researchers found that even though a policy existed, some teachers did not know how to respond to ethical dilemmas. Discussing personal experiences and moral development about bullying will shape a principle-based policy and allow teachers to apply the principle

guidelines with ease (Boody, 2008; Flashpohler et al, 2009; Hinricks et al., 2012; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Gilat, 2015; Vardiman et al., 2015). Thus, teachers' judgments reflect the culture. In this stage, teachers will acquire ownership for and commitment toward successful implementation of the policy.

Filter: Acceptance. At this point in the policy development process, Vardiman et al. (2015) deviated from ACUPA's traditional policy development. ACUPA required acceptance of a policy, typically based on a single event (Vardiman et al., 2015). Vardiman et al.'s model supported acceptance of a policy based on a variety of events similar in nature, such as bullying incidents. For Stage 3, the main difference is *requiring* versus *supporting* teachers' acceptance of a policy.

Stage 3: Implementation and alignment. This stage hinges on communication. Teachers who create a school policy together will share their ideas for implementing each principle guideline for different bullying incidents (Kyriakides et al., 2014). An important part of this stage is for teachers to decide on consistent ways to administer the principle guidelines, rather than to determine specific outcomes. Teachers creating the method for implementation will significantly support the success of a principle-based school policy. Alignment with the issue, philosophy, and governing law relays expected responses for implementation accordingly (Hough, 2011; Penuel et al., 2008; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Gilat, 2015).

Filter: Guidance. At this point in the policy development process, Vardiman et al. (2015) deviated from ACUPA's process again. ACUPA limited the outcomes, where

Vardiman et al. guided the outcomes. For Stage 4, the main difference is *limiting* versus *guiding* policy outcomes.

Stage 4: Outcomes and Assessment. The accommodating nature of a principle-based policy guides the outcomes by focusing on developing principle guidelines rather than developing rigid rules. The outcomes of implementing a policy's principle guidelines are assessed by the cultural acceptance of teachers' responses to ethical situations they encounter (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Gilat, 2015). Desimone (2011) suggested being flexible in professional development assessment. Because principle guidelines are broad in nature, resulting student behaviors should be evaluated generally rather than specifically due to varying situations in unique cultures.

The flexible design of a principle-based policy allows choice in teachers' responses to bullying incidents, yet still within the confines of a policy. The flexible characteristics of principle guidelines gain teachers' buy-in and maintain lasting success. A principle-based policy employs collaborative bottom-up leadership, which often takes longer to be accepted by the administration (DeFour et al, 2008; Vardiman et al., 2015). However, teachers' continuous collaboration in assessment and revision of a principle-based anti-bullying policy potentially secures its support, from the teachers themselves to the administration (Ismail, 2015). Offering teachers the opportunity to create principle guidelines for a principle-based school policy, a best practice in education according to Vardiman et al., will help teachers meet Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication) and Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth) in the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession (Alibakhshi & Dehvari, 2015).

Ohio Standards for Educators

The Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, the Ohio Standards for Principals, and the Ohio Standards for Professional Development, together known as the Ohio Standards for Educators, were created in 1997 in a joint effort between the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Board of Regents (Ohio Department of Education, 2007). This was the beginning of a movement by the Joint Council for a standards-based education system comparable to other first-world countries. In 2004, the Governor's Commission on Teaching Success influenced the passage of Senate Bill SB2 which required the Education Standards Board to combine the three sets of standards. The end result was a document titled Standards for Ohio's Educators which establishes expectations for student learning, teaching instruction, and principal support with aligned assessments in Ohio's K-12 public schools (Ohio Department of Education, 2007).

Using the standards. The Education Standards Board's goal is that the Standards for Ohio's Educators are helpful tools for engaging in professional learning. The professional development process is intended to be cyclical throughout an educator's career. The process is a five-step plan:

- Step 1: Examine Data
- Step 2: Determine Learning Priorities
- Step 3: Align Initiatives
- Step 4: Develop Implementation Strategies, and
- Step 5: Monitor, Assess, and Reflect (Ohio Department of Education, 2007).

These steps are termed a process because there is no end in moving from one step to the next. It provides for continuous professional development in implementing the Ohio Standards for Educators, an important part of keeping up to date with and revitalizing the teaching profession (Alibakhshi & Dehvari, 2015).

Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession

The Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession include Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication) and Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth). Each standard consists of elements. Each element consists of indicators and will be described at the distinguished or proficient level for the purpose of this project. Both standards will specifically address the needs of the current study. They will serve as guidelines for teachers' understanding of their own knowledge of the teaching practice, communication skills, level of responsibility, potential growth, and ability to collaborate with colleagues (Ohio Department of Education, 2007).

Standard 6: Collaboration and communication. The Ohio Department of Education (2007) recognizes Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication) as a guideline for cooperative collaboration and clear and effective communication. Researchers agreed that collaboration and communication are best practices in education, including the policy development process (Kyriakides et al., 2014; Penuel et al, 2008; Struder & Mynatt, 2015). Table 24 in Appendix D describes four elements of this standard at the distinguished level.

Teachers will meet all four elements of this standard when writing a school policy. Teachers will meet Element 6.1 by communicating with each other in grade-level

groups about age/grade appropriate principles for a principle-based school policy. Then, when teachers work in a whole group session, grade-level groups will need to clearly communicate their age/grade appropriate verbiage to other grade-level groups for inclusion in a school policy (Anderson, 2011; Desimone, 2009).

Teachers will meet Element 6.2 by including parents or guardians. Recognizing the parents or guardians opinions increases the validity of creating a school policy (Lofdahl, 2014; Mustafa, 2014; Smith & Rowland, 2014). Developing partnerships between teachers and parents or guardians contributes to a learning environment that supports positive emotional and mental health at school and at home (Brown et al, 2012; Olweus, 1993; Wentzel, 2010).

Teachers will meet Element 6.3 by including other teachers, as in Element 6.1. Jao and McDougall (2015) found teachers enjoyed collaborative models of professional development where their opinions were contributing factors for successful implementation of challenging initiatives. Teachers are more likely to support initiatives when their beliefs and suggestions are valued (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005; O'Brennan et al., 2014). Also, recognizing the value of input from the principal, curriculum director, and support staff increases buy-in for developing and implementing a school policy (O'Brennan et al.; Sanders, 2014).

Teachers will meet Element 6.4 by including community members and serving as advocates for the district and its philosophy. Public forums serve as a way for teachers to show their support and collect public opinions about the learning environment. A socially and emotionally improved learning environment at school extends into the community

and promotes happiness in students, their parents, and the community members (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008).

Standard 7: Professional responsibility and growth. The Ohio Department of Education (2007) recognized Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth) as a guideline for demonstrating responsibility for professional growth. This standard expects teachers to collaborate with colleagues and initiate positive change at local and/or state levels. Knowles et al. (2005) contended that growing districts that develop policy based on members at all levels foster ownership of shared organizational goals. Thus, developing an age-appropriate, school policy aligned with districts' philosophy and mandating laws will motivate the policy's acceptance and its implementation (Kyriakides et al., 2014; Vardiman et al., 2014). Table 25 in Appendix D describes three elements of this standard at the distinguished and the proficient levels.

Professional development that engages teachers in writing a school policy meets all three elements of this standard. Teachers will meet Element 7.1 by working in collaboration with other educators, developing a capacity for cooperation and professional growth (Desimone, 2011; Jao & McDougall, 2015; O'Brennan et al., 2014). Knowles et al. (2005) recognized that growth is mostly a result of independent learning. However, in modern education systems, growth is mostly a result of collaboration with colleagues and is key to successful implementation of programs and processes (Defour et al., 2008; Ohio Department of Education, 2007). Teachers collaboratively writing a principle-based, anti-bullying, school policy will create a cohesive team for implementing the school policy and effecting positive social change as a more unified group.

Teachers will meet Element 7.2 at the Proficient level, which indicates "Teachers know and use Ohio Standards for Professional Development" (Ohio Department of Education, 2007; p. 38). Creating a school policy aligned with standards will add value to and direct the implementation process (Penuel et al., 2008; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Gilat, 2015). Thus, teachers will meet Element 7.2 by using the Ohio Standards for Professional Development to create and implement a school policy.

Teachers will meet Element 7.3 by designing a school policy. Mandated initiatives like No Child Left Behind (2002) threatened sanctions in education and schools were directed to change, elsewise risk failure (DeFour et al., 2008; Knowles et al., 2005). When teachers create school policy in response to such warnings, they become agents of change (Kyriakides et al., 2014; Vardiman et al, 2014).

Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication) describes *how* teachers will write a school policy. Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth) *directs* teachers to write a school policy. Both standards will be met when teachers write an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned to the law.

School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012)

In response to the call to take action against bullying, the Ohio General Assembly enacted the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). The purpose of the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act is "to provide a positive school day for each student and a school environment where every student feels safe" (School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act, Section 3). An anti-bullying, school policy is required in every school district across Ohio. School employees, volunteers, community members, parents,

and students are expected to collaboratively develop the school policy (Ohio Revised Code [ORC] 3313.666B), and is appropriate and important for individual communities (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Gilat, 2015; Vardiman et al., 2015). Further, the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) requires every district's policy to define bullying, otherwise referred to as harassment or intimidation. It also directs districts on responsibilities for implementation.

Definition. The School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) defines bullying as:

1) any intentional written, verbal, or physical act that a student exhibits toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both:

a) causes mental or physical harm to the other student;

b) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student; and

2) violence within a dating relationship (ORC 3313.666A).

Responsibilities. The School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) holds Ohio school districts responsible for implementing procedures for responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting bullying incidents (ORC 3313.666B). The law allows districts to create their own procedures to meet their unique needs.

The law requires procedures to be in place for teachers to respond to and investigate bullying incidents. Teachers' required responses include protecting victims from additional bullying and retaliation following a report, and disciplining bullies within

the student's constitutional rights. Response training is required given available state or federal funding. Any response training must be applied towards CEUs (ORC 3313.667B).

The law requires procedures to be in place for teachers to report bullying incidents. Teachers must report bullying incidents to the principal or someone designated by the principal. The law requires procedures for providing parents or guardians notification of and access to written reports, which may also be done by teachers if it is directed in the school's policy as a teacher's responsibility (ORC 3313.666B). Teachers will be safe from liability in civil actions when they report bullying incidents immediately, in good faith, and in accordance with procedures outlined in the school policy (ORC 3313.666E).

The law requires procedures to be in place for documenting reported bullying incidents, but does not indicate who must document (ORC 3313.666B). Districts can help protect teachers from liability when reporting bullying incidents by having documentation procedures in place (DeFour et al., 2008).

The law requires Ohio school districts to semi-annually, publicly post a summary of bullying incidents on its existing web site (ORC 3313.66B). The summaries become a tool for accountability to the stakeholders and provide the stakeholders with a better understanding of the district's progress in bullying prevention. It is important that the districts' public summaries of bullying incidents reflect what parents or guardians may already know about their children's experiences because the parents or guardians are stakeholders, too.

The Board of Education is responsible for requiring:

1) publication of its anti-bullying policy in student and teacher handbooks (ORC 3313.666C);
2) age-appropriate instruction on its policy, including consequence for violations, at the beginning of the school year and again after January (ORC 3313.666C);
3) written description of its policy sent to parents or guardians and a written acknowledgment of receipt (ORC 3313.666D).

Conclusion

Districts need social order for a safe learning environment to exist. A learning environment aligned with a written anti-bullying policy directed toward implementing the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) contributes to that social order (Penuel et al., 2008; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Gilat, 2015). The Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession (Ohio Department of Education, 2007) is part of Ohio's aligned standards-based education system that will guide the collaborative effort among teachers at the local middle school to write an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy.

Project Description

The purpose of this project is to develop criteria for more uniform practices in teachers' responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians through professional development. The overall goal is to have teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. There are resources to support the project, but there are potential barriers to the project's success as well. Three

consecutive days are necessary to conduct the professional development project, because policy writing is unique within the teaching practice and teachers' momentum may be lost if professional development days are divided. Conducting the workshop in early summer will allow sufficient time for an adjustment/approval process by the administration and Board of Education prior to implementation the following year (Hewitt, 2015). The principal, curriculum director, facilitator, and teachers will play important roles for the professional development project to be successful.

Resources

Professional development for improving teachers' responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians will require personnel support and material resources. The curriculum director will oversee the professional development at the study site. He/she will approve the content, and schedule the professional development for a three-day summer workshop with follow-up training and/or evaluation in the future (Hewitt, 2015). A grant may be necessary to fund the workshop. I will facilitate the training, and request continuing education units from the district curriculum director towards licensure for myself and for participating teachers. The Board of Education, superintendent, and the local middle school principal will need to approve the professional development with the intent to support implementation with fidelity. Once the professional development is approved, the teachers should participate with the intent to conduct the learned practices with fidelity (Good et al, 2011; McLaren & Kenny, 2015). The principal and curriculum director will also be invited to participate in the training sessions. Material resources include paper, pencils, use of the copy machine,

Smart Board, computers, and a venue. The hardest barrier to overcome may be the acquisition of state and federal grant money.

Potential Barriers

There may be potential barriers that could interfere with this professional development project. As other researchers found, grants may not be approved to fund the workshop (Ismail, 2015). The principal or curriculum director might not approve the professional development or support my interpretation of the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). The curriculum director might not be able to secure training days or a venue on campus. Building administrators might not participate. Teachers might conduct learned practices with little or no fidelity (McLaren & Kenny, 2015). Presentation materials might not be available. Solutions include applying for multiple grants, using a venue off campus, and conducting the workshop in another year.

Implementation

For best results and due to the urgency of bullying prevention at the local middle school, this professional development project will be conducted in three consecutive days. Then, at mid-year, a fourth day will offer an opportunity for follow-up training/evaluation once teachers had time to implement the school policy, an important practice in quality professional development (Shabbir, Khalid, Bakhsh, Mohsin, Rasool, & Mohsin, 2016). Success will require the completion of three learning objectives that meet the overall goal.

Learning objectives. The learning objectives are as follows:

1. teachers will examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors and compare them to the results of the current study;
2. teachers will collaboratively make connections between the results of the current study, current literature, and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012); and
3. teachers will collaboratively make connections between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) and writing a school policy, then practice writing a school policy.

Meeting these learning objectives will lead teachers toward meeting the overall goal: teachers will collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians.

Timetable. The professional development project will cover three full days. On Day 1, teachers will meet Objective 1 (see Table 21 below). On Day 2, teachers will meet Objectives 2 and 3 (see Table 22 below). On Day 3, teachers will meet the Overall Goal (see Table 23 below).

Day 1. Objective 1: Teachers will examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors and compare them to the results of the current study.

Table 21

Day 1: Meeting Objective 1

Time	Activity
8:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Welcome: Agenda (30 min)
8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Survey: Individuals will log into Survey Monkey to complete a pre-evaluation for expectations of the professional development project (15 min)
8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Self-Assessment #1: Individuals will examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors (15 min)
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Current Study: Present the results of the current study (1 hour)
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Break (15 min)
10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Self-Assessment #2: Individuals will compare their perceptions of bullying behaviors with the results of the current study (30 min)
10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	YouTube: Bullying/Anti-Bullying video, discussion (45 min)
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch (1 hr)
12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Literature: Introduce literature on responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians (15 min)
12:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Jigsaw: Grade-level groups will explore and jigsaw the literature on responding to cyber bullying (1 hr 15 min)
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Break (15 min)
2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Jigsaw: Grade-level groups will explore and jigsaw the literature on reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians (1 hr 15 min)
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Wrap-up: Individuals will log into Survey Monkey to complete a formative evaluation for Day 1 (30 min)

On the morning of Day 1, I will introduce the professional development project. Then teachers will log into Survey Monkey and complete a pre-evaluation on their expectations for the professional development project. Individually, teachers will examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors. Next, I will show a Power Point presentation the results of my study, and individuals will compare their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors to those results. In the afternoon, I will share the results of the pre-evaluation survey with the participants, principal, and curriculum director. Then, I will introduce literature on responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians, and grade-level groups will explore corresponding literature. Finally, teachers will log into Survey Monkey and complete a formative evaluation for Day 1. Survey Monkey will analyze the evaluations and I will share the results with the principal and the curriculum director via email that evening. The participants, the principal, and the curriculum director will be invited to respond to the results of all surveys. The results may necessitate changes to the presentation for the following day.

Day 2. Objective 2: Teachers will collaboratively make connections between the results of the current study and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). Objective 3: Teachers will collaboratively make connections between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) and writing a school policy, then practice writing a policy.

Table 22

Day 2: Meeting Objective 2 and Objective 3

Time	Activity
8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	Welcome: Agenda (15 min)
8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Survey: Review the formative evaluations from Day 1 (15 min)
8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Current Study: Recall the results of the current study (15 min)
8:45 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Literature: Introduce the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) (15 min)
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.	Literature: Grade-level groups will make connections between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) and the results of the current study (1 hr)
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Break (15 min)
10:15 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.	Literature: Introduce literature on policy writing (15 min)
10:30 p.m. – 11:15 p.m.	Jigsaw: Grade-level groups will explore and jigsaw the literature on policy writing (1 hr)
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	You Tube: Bullying/Anti-Bullying video, discussion (45 min)
11:30 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch (1 hr)
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Practice: Grade-level groups write a school policy particular to their grade level (1 hr 30 min)
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Break
2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Practice: Grade-level groups jigsaw their grade-level policy to other grade-level groups (1 hr 15 min)
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Wrap-up: Individuals will log into Survey Monkey to complete a formative evaluation for Day 2 (30 min)

On the morning of Day 2, I will share the results of the Day 1 formative evaluations with the participants. Next, via Power Point, I will briefly recall the results of my study, then introduce the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). Grade-level groups will make connections between the results of my study and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act. Then, I will introduce literature on policy writing. In the afternoon, grade-level groups will brainstorm and write a school policy particular to their grade level, aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). Then, they will present their grade-level policy to other grade-level groups. Finally, teachers will log into Survey Monkey and complete a formative evaluation on Day 2. Survey Monkey will analyze the evaluations and I will share the results with the principal and curriculum director via email that evening. The results may necessitate changes to the presentation for the following day.

Day 3. Overall Goal: Teachers will collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians.

Table 23

Day 3: Meeting the Overall Goal

Time	Activity
8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	Welcome: Agenda (15 min)
8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Survey: Review the formative evaluations from Day 2 (15 min)
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Policy Writing: Whole group writes the school policy (1 hr 30 min)
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Break (15 min)
10:15 p.m. – 11:15 p.m.	Policy Writing: Whole group writes the school policy (1 hr)
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	You Tube: Bullying/Anti-Bullying video, discussion (45 min)
11:30 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch (1 hr)
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Culmination: Individuals will complete artifact templates (1 hr 30 min)
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Break (15 min)
2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Culmination: Individuals will upload their artifact to Ohio's electronic Teachers Principal Evaluation System (eTPES) and submit the policy to the administration (1 hr 15 min)
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Wrap-up: Individuals will log into Survey Monkey to complete a summative evaluation for the professional development project (30 min)

On the morning of Day 3, I will share the results of the Day 2 formative evaluations with the participants. Next, all grade-level groups will collaborate to write the school policy. In the afternoon, grade-level groups will continue to write the school

policy, reaching consensus on the final policy. Then teachers will have time to complete paperwork and upload their final product to Ohio's electronic Teacher and Principal Evaluation System (eTPES). Finally, teachers will log into Survey Monkey and complete a summative evaluation for the professional development project. Survey Monkey will analyze the evaluations and I will share them with the principal and curriculum director via email that evening. The results may necessitate changes to future presentations.

Before, during, and after the professional development project, participants will evaluate the presentation. (See Appendix A.) Project evaluations will be further discussed in the Project Evaluation subsection.

Roles and Responsibilities of Those Involved

The principal, the curriculum director, the facilitator, and the teachers will assume roles and responsibilities in this professional development project. The administration will have the responsibility of providing time, and supporting the project and its implementation with full fidelity to ensure successful outcomes. In particular, the curriculum director will have the responsibility to convert contact hours to continuing education units and apply them towards licensure for myself and the teachers, and secure the venue. I will have the responsibility to design and facilitate the professional development project. Teachers will have the responsibility to participate in the project, becoming learners and doers of bullying prevention best practices in accordance with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). They will be responsible for submitting the end product of the project to the administration upon completion of the workshop. Finally, the teachers will also have the responsibility to complete one pre-

evaluation, two ongoing evaluations, and one post evaluation. By assuming these roles and responsibilities, those involved take ownership of this professional development project.

Project Evaluation Plan

The overall goal of this professional development project is to have teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. Given teachers' tendencies to resist professional development, motivators play an important part in their participation (Ismail, 2015; Kongnyuy, 2015; McLaren & Kenney, 2015; Onjoro et al., 2015). Formative goal-based evaluations will provide a means to monitor teachers' progress in developing the school policy. A summative goal-based evaluation will predict implementation of the policy. Project evaluations will provide trajectory for meeting the overall goal and its implementation, of which students will be the ultimate benefactor.

Justification for Using Goal-Based Evaluations

Goal-based evaluations inform behaviors necessary for achieving the overall goal. Stijn and Van Osselaer (2011) proposed goal-based evaluations for weighing multiple attributes within set parameters, whether formatively or summatively. Likert (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010) scale surveys are the preferred tool to collect goal-based evaluations that gauge teachers' opinions on the presentation of the professional development project and provide feedback to the facilitator for changing or maintaining

the course of the presentation (Baxter, Ruzicka, Beghetto, & Livelybrooks, 2014). (See Appendix A.)

Project Goal

There is one overall goal of this professional development project and three motivators for teachers' participation in meeting that goal. The overall goal is to have teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. The three motivators include the law, the acquisition of continuing education units, and the opportunity to meet state-wide standards.

The motivators. The first motivator for participation will draw an awareness of and places an emphasis on adhering to the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). The fact that a governing law exists about responding to, reporting, documenting, and publicly posting bullying incidents may increase teachers' willingness to participate in this professional development project. They may be driven to follow the law due to potential consequences of not following the law (Onjoro et al., 2015). Although the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) did not describe those consequences directly, the aftermath of irreconcilable bullying due to teachers' disregard may rouse local, state, and/or federal investigation.

The second motivator for participation will be an opportunity to earn continuing education units toward licensure renewal. Eighteen continuing education units is required for licensure renewal every five years. Ten professional development contact hours

convert to one continuing education unit. This professional development project will offer eighteen contact hours. Eighteen contact hours converts to 1.8 continuing education units.

The third motivator for participation will be an opportunity to meet Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication) and Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth), which may increase teachers' willingness to participate in this professional development project if doing so will help them meet teaching standards that count towards their evaluation ratings (Kongnyuy, 2015; Onjoro et al., 2015). These standards measure teachers' relationships with colleagues and stakeholders rather than with students. The standards are difficult to demonstrate in the classroom and often require time outside of school hours. This motivator will be necessary to encourage participation in this professional development project because teachers can be resistant to (a) giving up their time for professional development and (b) implementing change, often suggested or required by professional development (Ismail, 2015; Kongnyuy, 2015; McLaren & Kenny, 2015). This professional development project will do both, but can be viewed as an incentive for helping teachers meet Standards 6 (Collaboration and Communication) and Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth). Participating in this professional development project may become more meaningful and worthy of teachers' time given this opportunity.

Improving teachers' practices in responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians will ultimately improve the lives of the students

by reducing bullying incidents. Although this should be the most essential motivator for participating in this professional development project, it may be the most overlooked. Looking at motivators through a personal lens, such as staying out of trouble with the law, renewing licensures, and meeting professional standards, may be more effective for encouraging participants to meet the overall goal of this professional development project.

Evaluation of Project Goals

In an effort to determine the on-going trajectory of the professional development project, formative and summative goal-based surveys will show strengths and weaknesses of the presentation. One formative evaluation at the beginning of the professional development project, two formative ongoing evaluations, and one summative evaluation will collect feedback from participants via Survey Monkey. Besides feedback from teachers, the principal and the curriculum director may also provide feedback on the professional development being conducted in his/her building.

Each evaluation will offer a Likert (Lin, 2014; Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010) scale for collecting multiple choice responses and offer an open-response comment box after each question. Likert scale answers will be numerical, where a one (1) will indicate the least and a four (4) will indicate the most. To gain perspective of the effectiveness of the project, a one (1) or a two (2) will indicate necessary revisions, and a three (3) or a four (4) will indicate a positive reception by participants. To determine if the teachers learned from the presentation, a collaborative effort to develop the school policy must be recognized by the end of Day 3.

The formative evaluations collected at the beginning and at the end of Day 1 will be analyzed and synthesized overnight, emailed to the principal and the curriculum director, and presented back out to the teachers for brief discussion at the beginning of Day 2. The formative evaluation at the end of Day 2 will be analyzed and synthesized overnight, emailed to the principal and the curriculum director, and presented back out to the teachers for brief discussion at the beginning of Day 3. The summative evaluation at the end of Day 3 will be analyzed and synthesized overnight, emailed to the principal and the curriculum director, and presented back to the teachers via email. The administration's input will help determine whether or not to implement the school policy at the local middle school.

Ideally, the most valid evaluation of the professional development project will be a longitudinal study reassessing teachers' responses to cyber bullying and their practices in reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians (Kingsley & Romine, 2014). The fidelity of responding to and reporting bullying incidents according to the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) may be recognized as a relative cause for successful implementation of the school policy over a long period of time (Good et al., 2011), establishing the professional development project as an integral supplement to any bullying prevention program.

Description of Stakeholders

Stakeholders of this professional development project will include the local school district, administrators, teachers, students, parents, community members, and community partners. The local school district and its teachers will experience

cohesiveness from unity in creating the school policy. Community members and partners will feel pride in their local school system and be encouraged by the prospect of future productive and dependable employees and leaders. Parents will be happy when their children feel good about their social experiences at school. Students will be the ultimate stakeholders though, because they will experience uninhibited potential for a learning environment rich in social support. All stakeholders will benefit from teachers' making better decisions when addressing bullying incidents.

Project Implications

The purpose of this project is to develop criteria for more uniform practices in teachers' responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians through professional development. The overall goal is to have teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. The potential impact of this professional development project will positively affect the social climate at the local level, and assist in similar situations needing to address uniform practices among teachers in the larger educational arena.

Social Change in Local Context

This professional development project has the potential to change the social climate in the local community. Teachers' collaborative development of a school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians may create unity

among them at the local middle school. Unity in practice will demonstrate the local middle school's commitment to bullying prevention and the law that governs it. Commitment to bullying prevention in school inspires commitment to bullying prevention in the community (DuFour at al., 2008). Stakeholders in the community feel pride in their local school system. Parent or guardians and teachers have better associations; and students feel supported in their social relationships in school and at home (Anderson, 2011; Olweus et al. 2007b). The social climate in the local community may change from one of indifference for bullying prevention best practice to one of commitment for promoting peace among members. This professional development project will be publicly available to the local school district through publication.

Social Change in Larger Context

In the larger context of education, this professional development project provides an example to address comparable situations in other schools. It can be of value to all districts needing to check/improve their adherence to the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012), and serve as a template for applying the law to bullying prevention practices. It provides teachers an opportunity to meet state standards difficult to demonstrate in the classroom. It can serve as an integral supplement to any bullying prevention program, and is not be limited by the size or socioeconomic status of any district. This professional development project will be publicly available at the state and national levels through publication and possible seminars.

Conclusion

Section 3 presented a professional development project appropriate for addressing the findings of my study. Findings showed teachers had similar perceptions of bullying behaviors, but varied bullying reporting practices in regard to cyber bullying and parents or guardians. Outcomes of the findings called for a professional development project that will develop criteria for more uniform bullying reporting practices. Literature supporting the project expounded on (a) policy writing, (b) Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, and (c) the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012). There are three motivators for participating in this professional development project: (a) the law, (b) the acquisition of continuing education units, and (c) the opportunity to meet Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. Goal-based evaluations will measure the success of the project and will be used to predict possible future implementation. Implications for social change in the local and larger contexts suggest the need for this project.

Section 4 will provide an opportunity for me to express reflective thoughts on the professional development project designed to address teachers' varied responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. I will present the strengths and limitations of the professional development project along with recommendations for alternative approaches to finding solutions. Section 4 will also cover a self-analysis of personal growth in scholarship, project development, and leadership (Hall & Simeral, 2015; Knowles et al., 2005). Finally, I will discuss the project's possible impact on social change, the implications, the applications, and

directions for future research on improving teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

In previous sections I expounded on the study I conducted to explore teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents. Findings showed teachers had similar perceptions of bullying behaviors, but varied bullying reporting practices in regard to cyber bullying and parents or guardians. I designed a professional development workshop to help teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012), which addresses teachers' and administrators' responsibilities for responding to and reporting bullying incidents. The purpose of the professional development project is to develop criteria for more uniform practices in teachers' responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. The logic is that if the teachers design the policy themselves, they will be more likely to implement it.

It was pleasant to reflect on my journey, from choosing the problem to designing the solution. Describing the strengths of my project and recommending alternative approaches to solve the problem, analyzing my own growth as a scholar throughout the process of project development, and contemplating the potential impact of my study on social change was inspirational. Finally, reflecting on the implications and applications for future research, particularly potential uses of my professional development project, Professional Development 5 (PD5), gave me hope.

Project Strengths and Limitations

My project, PD5, is an original product that I created in response to teachers' frustration about meeting the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication) and Standard 7 (Professional Growth and Responsibility). My project offers a flexible tool with which to conduct professional development and can be used on a variety of topics; hence, its relation to my project study.

PD5 has two important strengths: (a) the production of an artifact for teacher evaluation evidence, and (b) the production of an end product for which the professional development is designed. PD5's limitations vary with topics and situations; but for this project, limitations will include those encountered in organizing the professional development project as well as those met during the implementation of the end product.

Strengths

The biggest strengths of this project are the PD5 artifact and the end product. The PD5 artifact is a compilation of five completed artifact templates: (a) the professional development plan, (b) the presentation, (c) self-reflection, (d) peer-reflection, and (e) recommendation. Together, the completed artifact templates lead to an end product, which in this case will be an anti-bullying school policy. The PD5 artifact will meet the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication), and Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth), at the distinguished levels and can be uploaded to Ohio's electronic Teacher and Principal Evaluation System (eTPES) as evidence of distinguished practice.

Distinguished practice in Standard 6 requires cooperative collaboration and clear and effective communication among teachers. During the PD5 workshop, teachers will demonstrate cooperative collaboration by providing feedback to peers, documented on Artifact Template 4: Peer Reflection; and by creating a unified recommendation for the final product, documented on Artifact Template 5: Recommendation. Clear and effective communication will be demonstrated in planning and implementing the professional development plan, documented on Artifact Template 1: The Professional Development Plan; in planning and delivering a presentation, documented on Artifact Template 2: Presentation; and again in providing feedback to peers, documented on Artifact Template 4: Peer Reflection.

For distinguished practice in Standard 7, the state expects teachers to take responsibility for their professional growth. During the PD5 workshop, teachers will be offered the opportunity to meet this standard by creating an end product that will initiate positive change at the local level which could also extend to the state level. The distinguished level of Standard 7 also requires collaboration which, as in Standard 6, will be demonstrated by providing feedback to peers, documented on Artifact Template 4: Peer Reflection; and by creating a unified recommendation for the end product, documented on Artifact Template 5: Recommendation. Together, these templates will create the PD5 artifact, the first strength.

The second strength is the end product of this professional development project: the age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the law. Strengths of an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy written by the teachers themselves include

improved responses to bullying incidents and building unity among the teachers. Unity in teachers' practices demonstrates joint commitments to implementing the school policy. Other strengths include better associations between teachers and parents, student support in social relationships at school and at home, the reduction of intimidating/threatening behavior and physical/mental harm, an increase in age-appropriate anti-bullying instruction, and administrative accountability. Together, the strengths of PD5's end product may improve the learning environment for students.

Limitations

There will be possible limitations during both the planning and implementation stages. During the planning stage, it is possible that grant money will not be approved for the workshop, limiting resources for successful completion. A venue may not be available at the ideal time, or the ideal time may not coincide with the school calendar. During the implementation stage, teachers and administrators might conduct learned practices with little or no fidelity. This may limit the effectiveness of the school policy. However, limitations during the implementation stage will still render an artifact for teachers' evaluation evidence because teachers will have already participated in the professional development project.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

I chose to explore explanations for bullying at the local middle school by interviewing teachers. I found that teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents varied in regard to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. I designed a professional development

workshop to help teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the law, reasoning that if they had a hand in the solution, then the problem would decrease. Through PD5, I can administer that professional development. However, my project study could have taken a different route altogether. I could have investigated the bullying issues from a different perspective rather than those of the teachers', I could have defined terms associated with the problem and the solution differently, and I could have explored alternatives to using PD5 for administering professional development.

Addressing the Problem Differently

The bullying issues at the local middle school could have been addressed by studying the problem in a different way. Each might have required a different project genre: (a) an evaluation report, (b) a curriculum plan, (c) a professional development project, or (d) a position paper on policy recommendations.

If the bullying prevention program were being reviewed, then a program evaluation report would be acceptable. If I conducted my study using students or parents, a curriculum plan could provide information for presentation in the classroom or at parents' night about dealing with bullying issues at home and in school. If I had conducted my study from the points of view of administrators, professional development would be appropriate (just as in my study with teachers). From any perspective though, a study on bullying incidents could be addressed by presenting a position paper with possible policy recommendations. Having conducted my study using teachers, I chose the

active role of teaching teachers to write policy rather than recommending policy to the administration in a position paper.

Alternative Definitions

I found alternative definitions in studying the problem of bullying. I described bullying behavior in my study with terms such as bully, victim, bystander, and bullying. Sometimes, researchers referred to the term "victim" as "the student who was bullied" or "the target." The term "bystander" was less frequent in the research, but when a person was watching the bullying, researchers most often used the term "onlooker." Researchers also defined bullying as negative behavior, disruptive behavior, threatening behavior, or harassment. Although I used these alternative definitions throughout my study, they all referred back to bully, victim, bystander, and bullying.

I also found alternative definitions when exploring professional development. Most often, researchers called it "training." I came across no alternative names for tools to administer professional development; however, I was not looking for any because I had developed and named my own method, PD5.

Alternative Solutions

As an alternative to PD5's collaborative professional development for and by teachers, I could have submitted a position paper with a possible policy recommendation to the district administration that addressed the outcomes of my study. If the end product of PD5 is not implemented or does not initiate positive change as required by the distinguished level of Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth) and by the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012), a new bullying prevention program

could introduce new anti-bullying strategies. However, these alternative solutions to conducting professional development with teachers may not have engaged them in best practices for providing evaluation evidence, nor directly addressed their varied bullying reporting practices at the study site. Thus, facilitating professional development where teachers write and implement their own age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy may have a greater chance of positive social change and improving the lives of students by reducing bullying incidents.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

I learned a great deal about the process of moving from a novice researcher toward a scholarly practitioner, from a project participant to a project developer, and from a follower to a leader of positive social change. As I gained new knowledge along the way, I grew intellectually, socially, and professionally. I will never finish learning from people. I will always collect qualitative data in human behavior, analyze it, and create a better world for students.

Researching and Developing PD5

I researched the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication), and Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth), their elements, and the committees that wrote them. I used what information I needed to create an artifact of evidence for Ohio teachers' evaluations. Using that information along with my personal experience, I developed PD5. It was a process!

When I am teaching, I like to have a foundational "how" to effectively do just about anything, then build from there. I created PD5 to be the foundational "how" for

repeatedly conducting professional development on a variety of topics, for all departments, at all grade levels. It did not happen overnight. I remembered staring off into a pile of blank forms on my desk, also needing my attention. They were simply templates created to retrieve information on something about education, that at one time or another, required some kind of professional development. That led me to review notes from previous professional development seminars and workshops looking for common themes on how the presentations were organized. The typical introductions and conclusions were obvious. With the thought of using templates in mind though, and knowing that all things started with a plan, the introduction to PD5 became Artifact Template 1: The Professional Development Plan.

Whenever I left seminars and workshops, I always wondered if people were really going back to their jobs and implementing what they learned, or were they just glad to get back to "normal" life. The presenters seemed to buy in to the topic, but did the participants always buy in? (I did not always buy in to the topic. Sometimes I just attended because it was required.) What if the participants were the presenters? If teachers were the presenters, then I thought it would be logical that they would buy in to the topic that they were presenting. The distinguished level of Standard 7 expected teachers to present some form of professional development and the idea of PD5 was to help teachers meet that standard. So, Artifact Template 2 became "The Presentation" (from the participant that is).

A plethora of research hailed the effectiveness of reflective thinking (Cengiz & Karatas, 2015; Dervent, 2015; Recchia & Beck, 2014). We even had elementary students

write reflections on their learning. Teachers were encouraged, and at times required, to reflect on training received or lessons presented. I always benefitted from looking back on previous years' lesson reflections. It seemed fitting that Artifact Template 3: Self-Reflection should come next.

At the end of most seminars and workshops, the presenters wanted feedback. At this point I really began envisioning myself as a teacher giving professional development to the other teachers in my social studies department. I had a plan (Artifact Template 1: The Professional Development Plan). I gave a presentation (Artifact Template 2: The Presentation). I told myself what I thought of myself (Artifact Template 3: Self-Reflection). Next, I needed to know what others thought so that the next time I gave the presentation, I would be better. So Artifact Template 4 became "Peer-Reflection." This was where most of my seminar and workshop notes were ending. These peer-reflections were the course evaluations. We filled them out and went home. Unless it was in-house training, I rarely, if ever, saw those people again. PD5 was different; but I really did not know how different until I began to adjust it for my project study.

The PD5 presenters were the participants. They were doing both the instructing and the learning. That much I knew, because that is one element of Standard 7 (Professional Growth and Responsibility) that I wanted PD5 to address. What I did not realize was that the teachers were creating one thing (the end product) by creating another thing (the PD5 artifact) and vice-versa. For the purpose of this project, teachers will create a school policy. They will not be able to create the school policy using PD5 without creating proof of doing so (the PD5 artifact); and they will not create the proof

without creating the school policy (the end product). Policies needed to be reviewed for effectiveness, which suggested a cyclical element needed to be written into PD5, hence Artifact Template 5: Recommendation. On Artifact Template 5: Recommendation, participants will recommend (a) their support for the end product, (b) trial implementation dates, and (c) cyclical review. Template 5 will turn this professional development plan into a living project.

Analysis of Self as a Scholar

A series of shifting thought processes had to occur over the course of my doctoral journey in order to arrive at this point in my project study. Doctoral scholarship demanded a higher level of communication than ever before (Jalongo, Boyer, & Ebbeck, 2014; Johnson, 2015). I learned to write, speak, and study in ways I never dreamed were possible for me. However, my desire to reach the top of my field was consuming and I was determined to overcome all obstacles and learn.

My creative writing ability lent some foundational skills, but the humor and word play diminished. The innuendos and inferences became indisputable facts and evidence. There was a particular order for presenting written, scholarly language; and accepting the constructive criticism was challenging. Eventually, the frustration turned into excitement and I anticipated every review, every email, and every text, ready to make the corrections and show my committee, and myself, what I learned.

Scholarly conversations eventually bled into my everyday vocabulary. I was so excited about what I was learning, that I wanted to tell the world all about it; but few people in my life understood what I was talking about, let alone really wanted to hear

about it. I felt a small language barrier begin to grow between my colleagues and myself. Ironically though, bringing my verbiage down to a level that fourth graders could understand was not as difficult. I found my Walden classmates to be my greatest resources in scholarly conversations. We call ourselves "WaldenWonderWomen."

Discussions in our Walden classroom loosened up as we discovered common ground in a modern doctoral peer-learning environment (Johnson, 2015). We demonstrated tolerance for scholarly yet critical feedback, freely gave that professional criticism with trust that it would be received with gratitude, and gratefully received it. We all seemed to struggle with time management, the expectations of rigor, the amount of work, and of course "The Block" and "The Waiting Game." Writer's block sucked up hours, days, and weeks of valuable writing time. I learned to give myself permission to be in "The Block" and set a date to come out of "The Block." That was very effective and I experienced it less and less as time went on. The wait between submitting work for review and receiving the feedback was wasted for a few years until I caught wind of webinars delivered by Beth and her team in the Writing Center. I began to post regular discussions about the webinars I attended. Several of us began sharing our newfound webinar knowledge, and "The Waiting Game" became "Webinar Games." This was the beginning of the end of "The Block."

Studying at the doctoral level was different than doing so at the bachelor and master levels. Success at the doctoral level required increased attention to detail and dedication, in spite of having earned undergraduate and graduate honors. Time management was crucial to moving forward, though it did not necessarily prevent it.

Saying no to ordinary events in order to say yes to writing was a process, but one soon realized and mastered when I took sabbatical leave from work for a year. That year was financially difficult as I was my only income, but time to write was priceless. I learned new study habits like challenging my sleep pattern to write at 4 a.m. in order to take advantage of my freshest brain power, immediately opening the thesaurus when opening my paper; anticipating progress by creating my own syllabus for the semester; and depending on and asking others for motivation and advice. I learned to work with and for a committee of instructors rather than just one, a social aspect of the doctoral journey that required patience for valuing a meeting of the minds rather than doing things my own way.

Whether conversations were audible or virtual it was just different at the doctoral level. The levels of scholarly writing, speaking, and studying required higher expectations of critical and concise thinking, higher than what I originally thought was necessary. It was humbling to realize I had no idea of the obligations this journey would demand, and more so to succumb to those demands.

Analysis of Self as a Practitioner

Practicing research required me to look beyond my classroom and at times beyond my local middle school. I discovered that bringing outside knowledge into my working environment was an important part of making connections between local and larger contexts. Talking about new ideas in education with local veteran colleagues was helpful because often their comments indirectly indicated the school's position in modern educational practices. It may have helped them understand the changing faces of

education and where they felt they fit into the bigger picture, too. It helped me understand how the local teachers might receive such new ideas.

New ideas about bullying were on the horizon all the time (Lampridis, 2015). The faces of bullies and victims constantly changed, but the same behavior patterns surfaced in research across all ages, races, socioeconomic statuses, nationalities, and job descriptions (Robers et al., 2015). It was a hot topic and researchers were just starting to investigate triggers, solutions, and outcomes. My study's literature review identified some areas in bullying where researchers called for further investigation, such as in teachers' responses and documentation practices. As it later turned out, my interviews revealed teachers' varied bullying reporting practices. It is exciting to know that I will add to that body of research, and that my project, PD5, will help teachers develop the solutions they need to improve the learning environment.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

As I became a project developer, I became a people developer. I found myself really analyzing the intended audience. I remembered sitting through workshops waning in the afternoon after a big lunch that I certainly was not going to burn off during the second half of the day. Heavy eyes and drifting thoughts blocked out any new instruction in the afternoon. With this in mind, I contemplated how to avoid the same in the project I was designing. I found a video with a catchy jingle and cute kids with a powerful message, something with which I could send the participants off to lunch and believe they would want to come back for more. I scheduled the video before lunch all three days. I thought that by the second day, and even more so by the third day, the message

and its importance would be so ingrained that they would sing the jingle in their sleep for a week. Yes, that was what I wanted for my participants – willing engagement.

I also understood how unrewarding professional development workshops could be. I wanted my participants to walk away with a substantial personal gain, not just the knowledge of gaining knowledge. (Although gaining knowledge was substantial, workshops could be brain drains.) I improved PD5 to reflect scholarly rigor for administering cyclical professional development that would in turn become an artifact showcasing achievement at the distinguished level of the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. Teachers could upload their PD5 artifact as evaluation evidence. Now how meaningful was that! Participation just became personal. Developing PD5 was about more than creating an end product to address a problem; it was about developing people to address a problem.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

Developing the project in response to data collected about a problem at the local middle school was exciting. I saw the progression of the research process and the importance of developing the project. Without the project, proof of the problem would just linger, with no response, no closure, no meaning. After developing the project, an evaluation was important in order to understand its value. Without an evaluation of the project, the question of its effectiveness would just linger, with no response, no closure, no meaning. The entire research process needed a beginning, the problem; and an ending, the evaluation of the solution.

PD5 will be the solution. Artifact Template 5: Recommendation makes PD5 important to the field of education because it transforms a traditional, linear professional development plan into a cyclical plan where participants commit to review the end product for future use, or evaluate the solution. My project will also be important to the field of education because unlike most traditional professional development plans, PD5 participants will walk away with two tangible items in addition to new and/or improved knowledge. One item will be a personal artifact (PD5) that is evaluation evidence of distinguished practice. The second item will be a usable product for teachers' practice (anti-bullying school policy). Particular to my study, using PD5 to develop a school policy will be important because of the increased probability of implementation due to the participants doing the actual policy writing. Contemplating the impact of this type of professional development in schools is exciting and I look forward to its potential social change in the workplace.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

There are implications for practice, applications for social change in the workplace, and directions for future use of PD5 in education. PD5 will have the potential to effectively deliver cyclical professional development as opposed to a traditional linear professional development plan, demonstrating continuous learning practices, and in particular to this study, continuous research and development practices. Socially, organizations using PD5 will unite the participants in a common cause when they collaborate in creating a new product useful in their own practice. I recommend future

research for understanding PD5's effects on unity among members and its contribution to continuous learning and research practices.

Implications for Practice

I was reminded by Penuel et al. (2007) that the ultimate question behind the success of professional development was whether or not it improved student learning, and that the distance between the evidence of student learning and teachers' professional development, as well as policy, was full of many components linked together. Often those components were linear where one depended on multiple others to happen before results were recognized. When contemplating PD5's implications for practice for this particular study, several questions, or components, came to mind:

1) Will the anti-bullying, school policy be implemented with fidelity?

2) Will bullying decrease?

3) Will student behavior improve?

4) Will these questions be answered before the six month cyclical review?

Likely, the answer to question four will be no. However, if participants decide to reconvene every six months to review the policy's effectiveness, and bring data from questions one, two, and three to the reviews, then feedback of PD5's possible success will emerge on a periodical basis rather than at the end. Adding in the academic success factor will require more reviews of the anti-bullying, school policy because many factors besides behavior determine academic success. Implementing PD5 for my current study could create a longitudinal study.

Other implications for the use of PD5 include conducting cyclical professional development on more measurable, short-term lessons where the components between professional development and improved student learning will be fewer. For example, departments can teach other departments how to use data analysis matrices designed specifically for students to analyze and track their own data within a particular subject area. Other departments rework the matrices to fit the needs of their subject areas. Each department completes the workshop series with a new/tweaked product to offer students for monitoring their own learning. Teachers can reconvene monthly and within a school year be able to see whether students' use of his or her personal data analysis matrix improved their learning in that subject area. The possible success for implementing PD5 to create personal student data analysis matrices for each subject area can be measured by student scores and in a shorter period of time, shorter than that needed to measure success of a school policy.

No matter how many components between professional development and improved student learning, PD5 has potential to effectively deliver professional development with the capacity to link some of those components through its tangible products. Its promise of cyclical feedback for periodic improvement of its end product will improve the conventional linear professional development workshop traditions.

Applications for Social Change

Whenever I left traditional seminars and workshops, I was glad to be going back to the norm. Few grabbed me enough to make me want to change what I knew was already working. PD5 has the potential to alter individuals' resistance to change. It has a

personal element to it, the evaluation evidence of distinguished practice. It will also engage the individual in creating a useful product for their personal practice. When professional development takes people away from their primary jobs, they can be resentful (Tawalbeh, 2015). I designed PD5 to enhance professional development so that it is personal to the participant, and thus promotes positive social change at the individual level. Teachers will be more inclined to want to participate because there will be personal application for them, the evaluation evidence.

PD5 has the potential to change the social climate at the local organizational level, too. Just the fact that teachers participate in my professional development project will create some level of social change because they themselves will be changed from the acquisition of knowledge, which may positively influence their decisions in addressing bullying incidents. More profoundly though, when the teachers implement the anti-bullying policy for which the professional development was conducted, the bullying may settle and a safer environment for learning will emerge. The teachers' collaborative development of the school policy aligned with the law will build unity among them, and more uniform practices will demonstrate joint commitments. Teachers and parents will have better associations; and students will feel supported in their social relationships at school and at home. The local stakeholders will feel pride in their school system. The social climate will move further toward commitment to best practices when teachers' spearhead my project. Its potential impact on social change will multiply with their participation.

Beyond the local level and further beyond the educational arena, PD5 can serve as a cyclical training template for professional development in any system. Organizations will have access to PD5 through publication as it is my intent to further develop it and publish a book on it. PD5 is not limited by the size or socioeconomic status of population, and it can be an integral supplement to any training program focusing on progressive change. The commitment to quality professional development in any institution that utilizes PD5 could inspire members' commitment to the organizational mission simply because of the personal application that goes along with the practical application.

Directions for Future Research

In my study, I called for further investigation of the position of the grade level within a building and how that might determine students' relative position within the hierarchy of bullying; and if the hierarchy of teachers' position within the building (in terms of grade levels) might cause them to respond differently to bullying behaviors than other teachers. Concerning my project, I suggest applying PD5 to a variety of professional development plans. The cyclical nature of PD5 can initiate a longitudinal study of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying, school policy developed by the teachers. Using PD5 to create a tool for students to track their own learning can begin a shorter investigation. These end products, and others like them, can be evaluated and the process can be viewed as action research, a future direction for PD5 research.

Conclusion

Sometime during my childhood, I saw the letters "Dr." in front of someone's name, probably a family physician. For many years I wondered what a person had to do

to get those letters. Somewhere along the line, I decided I wanted them, too. After earning my master's degree, I searched for two years to find just the right university for my doctoral degree. Walden's philosophy of positive social change fit right in with developing children into productive citizens in society. In my opinion, nothing stopped the development of children more than bullying.

I chose to explore explanations for bullying at the local middle school by interviewing teachers. I found that teachers' perceptions of bullying behaviors and their practices in reporting bullying incidents varied in regards to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. Believing in the teachers' responsibility as first responders, I thought a policy for addressing bullying incidents written by the teachers themselves would be more effective than a directive from above. I designed a professional development workshop to help teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the law. I expected that the teachers would find it worthy of implementing with full fidelity if it was their creation.

In reflecting on this journey, from identifying the problem to creating my professional development project, I found that a sense of peace came from realizing that my introspection did not reveal too many frustrating feelings. Describing my strengths felt good. Making recommendations for alternative approaches made me feel as scholarly as the researchers I cited. Analyzing my personal growth boosted my confidence in my self-actualization. Speculating on the potential impact that my study and its project could have on social change made me feel like the commonplace, though important, topic of bullying just became exciting. Wrapping up this section with a discussion on the

implications of my research, its applications for future research, and the potential use for PD5 sent me into a whirlwind of ideas and anticipation for what is yet to come my way.

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Appendix A: The Project

Middle School Teachers Write an Age-Appropriate, Anti-Bullying, School Policy Aligned with the Law

INTRODUCTION

This professional development workshop will take place over the course of three consecutive days. The purpose of this professional development workshop is to develop criteria for more uniform practices in teachers' responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. The overall goal is to have teachers collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians. The School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act was enacted by the 129th Ohio General Assembly to promote a "positive school day for each student and a school environment where every student feels safe" (School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act, 2012, Section 3). It requires districts to have procedures in place for responding to and reporting bullying incidents. This project will provide teachers' the opportunity to create their own procedures through policy writing as a solution for the needed improvements in their learning environment. Additionally, teachers will create an artifact for evaluation evidence that represents distinguished levels in Standard 6 (Collaboration and Communication), and Standard 7 (Professional Responsibility and Growth) in the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession (Ohio Department of Education, 2007).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Teachers will examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors and compare them to the results of the current study.
2. Teachers will collaboratively make connections between the results of the current study, current literature, and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012).
3. Teachers will collaboratively make connections between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) and writing a school policy, then practice writing a school policy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Teachers will create an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012).
2. Teachers will create an artifact for evaluation evidence demonstrating distinguished practice.

TRAINING MATERIALS

1. Smart Board, laptop, and Power Point presentation
2. Laptops for participants
3. Professional Development Project packet: Middle School Teachers Write an Age-Appropriate, Anti-Bullying, School Policy Aligned with the Law

TIME TABLES & TRAINER NOTES

Day One: Meeting Objective 1

1. Teachers will examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors and compare them to the results of the current study.

TIME	ACTIVITIES AND TRAINER NOTES
8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. (30 minutes)	Welcome: Review the agenda and show the TED Talk video "Texting that Saves Lives" by Nancy Lublin. https://www.ted.com/playlists/191/stand_up_to_bullying
8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. (15 minutes)	Complete Survey: Individuals will log into Survey Monkey to complete a pre-evaluation for expectations of the professional development project.
8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. (15 minutes)	Complete Self-Assessment #1: Individuals will examine their personal perceptions of bullying behaviors.
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. (1 hour)	Review Current Study: Present the results of the current study.
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. (15 minutes)	Break
10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. (30 minutes)	Participate in Discussion Groups: Small groups will discuss changes in personal perceptions of bullying. Small groups will present an overview of their changes to the whole group.
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. (30 minutes)	Complete Self-Assessment #2: Individuals will compare their perceptions of bullying behaviors with the results of the current study and those of their peers.
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (15 minutes)	YouTube: Show "Britain's Got Talent S08E05 Bar & Melody Duo Rap" video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7NdAngWwXg
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (1 hour)	Lunch
12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m. (15 minutes)	Review Literature: Introduce literature on responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or

	guardians.
12:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. (1 hour 15 minutes)	Jigsaw: Grade-level groups will explore and jigsaw the literature on responding to cyber bullying. Directions for Jigsawing are in the Google Slides presentation.
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. (15 minutes)	Break
2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (1 hour 15 minutes)	Jigsaw: Grade-level groups will explore and jigsaw the literature on reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians.
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. (30 minutes)	Wrap-up: Individuals will log into Survey Monkey to complete a formative evaluation for Day One.

Day Two: Meeting Objectives 2 and 3

2. Teachers will collaboratively make connections between the results of the current study, current literature, and the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012).

3. Teachers will collaboratively make connections between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) and writing a school policy, then practice writing a school policy.

TIME	ACTIVITIES AND TRAINER NOTES
8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. (15 minutes)	Welcome: Review agenda.
8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. (15 minutes)	Complete Survey: Review the formative evaluations from Day One.
8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. (15 minutes)	Review Current Study: Recall the results of the current study.
8:45 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. (15 minutes)	Review Literature: Introduce the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012).

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. (1 hour)	Review Literature: Grade-level groups will make connections between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) and the results of the current study.
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. (15 minutes)	Break
10:15 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. (15 minutes)	Review Literature: Introduce literature on policy writing.
10:30 p.m. – 11:15 p.m. (45 minutes)	Jigsaw: Grade-level groups will explore and jigsaw the literature on policy writing.
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (15 minutes)	You Tube: Show "Britain's Got Talent S08E05 Bar & Melody Duo Rap" video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7NdAngWwXg
11:30 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. (1 hour)	Lunch
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. (1 hour 30 minutes)	Practice Policy-Writing: Grade-level groups write a school policy particular to their grade level.
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. (15 minutes)	Break
2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (1 hour 15 minutes)	Practice Policy-Writing: Grade-level groups jigsaw their grade-level policy to other grade-level groups.
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. (30 minutes)	Wrap-up: Individuals will log into Survey Monkey to complete a formative evaluation for Day Two.

Day Three: Meeting the Overall Goal

Teachers will collaboratively develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) in regard to responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians.

TIME	**ACTIVITIES AND TRAINER NOTES**
8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	Welcome: Review agenda.

(15 minutes)	
8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. (15 minutes)	Complete Survey: Review the formative evaluations from Day Two.
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. (1 hour 30 minutes)	Write the Policy: Whole group writes the school policy.
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. (15 minutes)	Break
10:15 p.m. – 11:15 p.m. (1 hour)	Write the Policy: Whole group writes the school policy.
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (15 minutes)	You Tube: Show "Britain's Got Talent S08E05 Bar & Melody Duo Rap" video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7NdAngWwXg
11:30 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. (1 hour)	Lunch
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. (1 hour 30 minutes)	Culmination: Individuals will complete the PD5 templates.
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. (15 minutes)	Break
2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. (1 hour)	Culmination: Individuals will continue to complete then upload the PD5 templates and the school policy to Ohio's electronic Teachers/Principal Evaluation System (eTPES) and submit the school policy to the administration.
3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (15 minutes)	TED Talks Education: Show "To This Day…for the Bullied and the Beautiful" by Shane Koyczan. https://www.ted.com/playlists/191/stand_up_to_bullying
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. (30 minutes)	Wrap-up: Individuals will log into Survey Monkey to complete a summative evaluation for the professional development project.

ADDITIONAL TRAINER NOTES

1. In exchange for passing out hard copies, the facilitator will need participants' email addresses ahead of time for sending links to Survey Monkey and for sharing hand-outs via Google Drive.
2. Directions for Jigsaw activities:
    a) In your "expert" grade-level group, get to know three to five major points of interest from your assigned literature. Briefly explain what you are going to present on PD5 Artifact Template 2.
    b) Then, visit another grade-level group and teach your points of interest to them. (They will reflect on your presentation using PD5 Artifact Template 4.)
    c) Return to your own grade-level group and self-reflect and group-reflect on your presentation using PD5 Artifact Template 3.
    d) When other "experts" visit your table, learn, then reflect on their presentation using PD5 Artifact Template 4. (Repeat for each "expert" that presents to your grade-level group.)

GOOGLE SLIDES PRESENTATION

PD5 For Teachers

Middle School Teachers Write an Anti-Bullying, School Policy Aligned with the Law

Katherine Blust
Walden University
2016

Overview of Schedules

Day 1

Morning - Self-assessment journals

(Working Individually)

Afternoon - Explore and jigsaw literature on reporting and responding to bullying behaviors

(Working in Grade-Level Groups)

Day 2

Morning - Explore and jigsaw comparisons of district policies and the law

(Working in Grade-Level Groups)

Afternoon - Draft an anti-bullying, grade-level policy

(Working in Grade-Level Groups)

Day 3

Morning - Write an anti-bullying, school policy

(Working as a Whole Group)

Afternoon - PD5 templates and eTPES upload; submit proposed school policy to the district

(Working Individually)

Day 1 Morning Schedule

(Working Individually)

8:00 - 8:30	Welcome, Agenda
8:30 - 8:45	Survey Monkey
8:45 - 9:00	Self-Assessment Journal #1: Personal perceptions of bullying behaviors
9:00 - 10:00	Results of the current study
10:00 - 10:15	Break
10:15 – 11:15	Group Discussions: Small groups will discuss changes in perceptions, then share with the whole group
10:15 - 10:45	Self-Assessment Journal #2: Compare personal perceptions of bullying behaviors with the current study
10:45 - 11:30	"Rap" up the A.M.
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch

PD5: Professional Development Using Five Artifact Templates and a Topic

Artifact Template 1: The Professional Development Plan

Artifact Template 2: The Presentation

Artifact Template 3: Self-Reflection

Artifact Template 4: Peer Reflection

Artifact Template 5: Recommendation

The Topic: Middle school teachers, as members of a whole group, peer group, grade-level group, and individuals will complete five templates to develop an age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy.

What PD5 Can Do for Me

- It meets the Ohio Standards for Professional Development (PD)
- It meets the Distinguished level of the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession
    - Standard 6: Collaboration and Communication
    - Standard 7: Professional Growth and Responsibility
- It is a suitable product for upload to the electronic Teacher Principal Evaluation System (eTPES).
- It is a tool that aids in the collaborative development of an anti-bullying, school policy

PD5 Template 1: The Professional Development Plan

- The lead teacher or administrator will complete and sign this template.
- This template *will be shared* with members of the whole group.

PD5 Template 2: The Presentation

- This template will help grade-level groups plan their literature presentations to the whole group.
- Grade-level groups will complete this template as one group, and all group members will sign it and keep a copy for his/her own final product.
- This template *will be shared* with members of the whole group.

PD5 Template 3: Self-Reflection

- This template will help grade-level groups and individuals reflect on their literature presentations.
- Grade-level groups will self-reflect on his/her presentation as individuals, and keep a copy for his/her own final product. (This *will not be shared* at all.)
- Also, grade-level groups will reflect on their presentation as a group, and all group members will sign it and keep a copy for his/her own final product. (This *will be shared* with the other group members.)
- This template *will not be shared* with members of the whole group.

PD5 Template 4: Peer Reflection

- This template will help peer groups reflect on grade-level groups' literature presentations.
- Peer groups will complete this template as one group, and all group members will sign it and keep a copy for his/her own final product.
- This template *will be shared* with members of the presenting grade-level group.

PD5 Template 5: Recommendation

- This template will help the whole group make a unified recommendation for the policy, declare its usefulness in the learning environment, and provide evidence for the decision.
- The whole group will complete this template as one group, and all members will sign it and keep a copy for his/her own final product.

How am I going to do this?

Objective 1: I will examine my personal perceptions of bullying behaviors and compare them to the results of the local study.

Objective 2: As a member of a grade-level group, I will make connections between the results of the local study, the literature, and the law.

Objective 3: As a member of a grade-level group, I will make connections between the the law and writing a policy, then practice writing a policy.

Overall Goal: As a member of the whole group, I will write an age-appropriate, principle-based, anti-bullying, school policy aligned with the law.

What resources will I need?

Hand-outs: Google Slides, Participant Guides 1-3

Paper/Pencil: Extra note-taking

Chart Paper/Markers/Post-its: Group presentations

Laptop: Survey Monkey evaluations, Google Drive, Google Docs, and email

Survey Monkey Pre-Workshop Evaluation

- Log into your email
- Find the message from me
- Click on the survey invitation

Self-Assessment Journal #1

Examine your personal perceptions of bullying behaviors.

Results of the Local Study

Table 1: Teachers' Descriptions of Bullying Behaviors

Types of Bullying Behaviors	Teachers' Descriptions	Types of Bullying Behaviors
Physical	shoving, pushing, touching, and hitting, poking other students with pencils, pushing books out of students' arms, punching lockers, slamming restroom doors, peeking under restroom stalls	Physical
Verbal	gossip mean-spirited talk intimidating talk coercive talk	Verbal
Cyber	verbal bullying with technology devices covert	Cyber

Teachers' Levels of Confidence

Table 2: Teachers' Levels of Confidence in Responding to Bullying Behaviors with Students

Levels of Confidence	Percentage of Teachers
Low	8
Medium	50
High	42

Table 3: Teachers' Levels of Confidence in Reporting Bullying Behaviors to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Levels of Confidence	Percentage of Teachers
Low	33
Medium	17
High	50

Table 4: Teachers' Levels of Confidence in Reporting Bullying Behaviors to the Principal

Levels of Confidence	Percentage of Teachers
Low	0
Medium	17
High	83

Types of Bullying Behaviors to which Teachers Responded

Table 5: Types of Bullying Behaviors that Teachers Responded to with the Students

Bullying Behaviors	Percentage of Teachers
Physical	75
Verbal	100
Cyber	25

Table 6: Types of Bullying Behaviors that Teachers Responded to with the Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Bullying Behaviors	Percentage of Teachers
Physical	43
Verbal	17
Cyber	0

Table 7: Types of Bullying Behaviors that Teachers Responded to with the Principal

Bullying Behaviors	Percentage of Teachers
Physical	67
Verbal	17
Cyber	25

How Teachers Responded

Table 8: How Teachers Responded to Bullying Behaviors with the Students

Methods of Responding	Percentage of Teachers
verbally	75
a look or glance	58
take away recess or free time	42

Table 9: How Teachers Reported Bullying Behaviors to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Methods of Reporting	Percentage of Teachers
Phone Conferences	92
Face-to-face	67
Email/text	34
Handwritten note	0

Table 10: How Teachers Reported Bullying Behaviors to the Principal

Methods of Reporting	Percentage of Teachers
Phone Conferences	17
Face-to-face	100
Email/text	17
Handwritten note	25

When Teachers Responded

Table 11: When Teachers Responded to Bullying Behaviors with the Student

Frequencies	Percentage of Teachers
Immediately	75
Free Time	0
Later that Day	34
Next Day or Longer	16

Table 12: When Teachers Reported Bullying Behaviors to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Frequencies	Percentage of Teachers
Immediately	67
Free Time	34
Later that Day	75
Next Day or Longer	34

Table 13: When Teachers Reported Bullying Behaviors to the Principal

Frequencies	Percentage of Teachers
Immediately	100
Free Time	17
Later that Day	34
Next Day or Longer	17

Discussion Groups

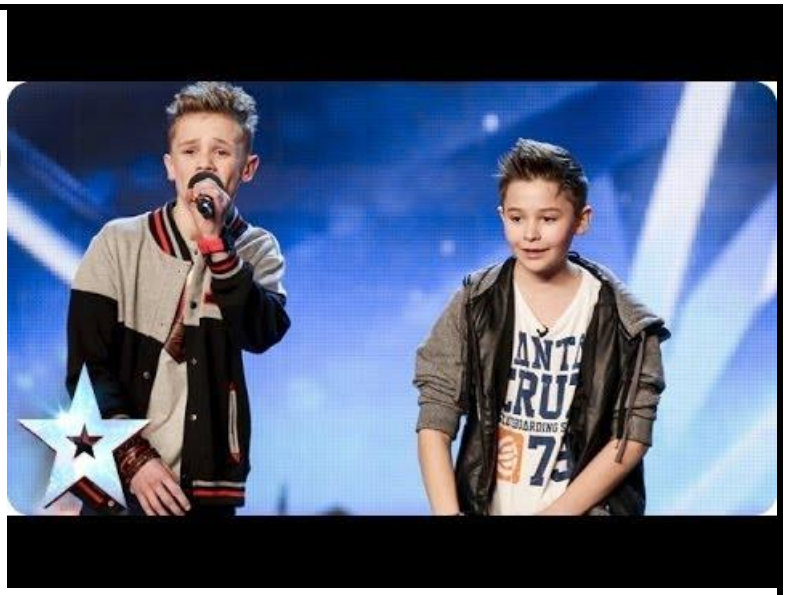
1. Discuss the change in your perceptions of bullying with your group members.

2. Share an overview of your group's change in perceptions with the whole group.

Self-Assessment Journal #2

Compare your personal perceptions of bullying behaviors with the results of the local study.

"Rap" up the A.M.



LUNCH

Day 1 Afternoon Schedule

(Working in Grade-Level Groups)

12:30 - 2:00	Explore and jigsaw literature on cyber bullying
2:00 - 2:15	Break
2:15 - 3:30	Explore and jigsaw literature on reporting bullying incidents to parents
3:30 - 4:00	Survey Monkey

How to Jigsaw the Literature

1. In your "expert" grade-level group, get to know three to five major points of interest from your assigned literature. Briefly explain what you are going to present on PD5 Template 2.

2. Then, visit another grade-level group and teach your points of interest to them. (They will reflect on your presentation using PD5 Template 4.)

3. Return to your own grade-level group and self-reflect and group-reflect on your presentation using PD5 Template 3.

4. When other "experts" visit your table, learn, then reflect on their presentation using PD5 Template 4. (Repeat for each "expert" that presents to your grade-level group.)

Literature

1. Read the Abstract.
2. Read the Results and/or Discussion
3. Discuss with your grade-level group three to five points of interest to present to the other grade-level groups

EXPLORE: Literature on Cyber Bullying

Grade 4
Web: http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/
Literature - http://www.hurtnomorehq.com/shared/media/editor/file/Bullying_in_cyber_age.pdf

Grade 5
Web: http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/
Literature: https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/37176/GLASS-DISSERTATION-2014.pdf

Grade 6
Web: http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/
Literature: http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0094026

Grade 7:
Web: http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/
Literature: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4140201/

Time to Jigsaw!

Cyber Bullying

EXPLORE: Literature on Reporting Bullying Incidents

Grade 4
Web: http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/
Literature: http://etec.hawaii.edu/proceedings/2014/Eskey.pdf

Grade 5
Web: http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/
Literature: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1015&context=ccfllfacpub

Grade 6
Web: http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/
Literature: http://www.kivaprogram.net/assets/files/kiva-ed-and-child-pdf.pdf

Grade 7
Web: http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it/
Literature: http://benthamopen.com/contents/pdf/TOPSYJ/TOPSYJ-8-78.pdf

Time to Jigsaw!

Reporting Bullying Incidents to Parents

Survey Monkey Day 1 Formative Evaluation

- Log into your email
- Find the message from me
- Click on the survey invitation

Day 2

Day 2 Morning Schedule

(Working in Grade-Level Groups)

8:00 - 8:15	Welcome, Agenda
8:15 - 8:30	Review Day 1 Survey Monkey results
8:30 - 8:45	Recall the results of the current study
8:45 - 10:00	Compare the results of the current study with the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012)
10:00 - 10:15	Break
10:15 - 11:15	Explore and jigsaw literature on policy writing
11:15 - 11:30	"Rap" up the A.M.
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch

Literature

1. Compare and contrast the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) with district policies.

2. Look for language on reporting, responding, cyber bullying, and parents.

EXPLORE: The School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012)

The Rest of Jessica Logan's Story
http://nobullying.com/jessica-logan/

The Ohio General Assembly Archives - House Bill 116
http://archives.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=129_HB_116_I

EXPLORE: District Policies

Grade 4 - Toledo Public Schools
http://www.tps.org/images/Bullying0001.pdf

Grade 5 - Garfield Heights City Schools
http://www.garfieldheightscityschools.com/Anti-Bullying.aspx

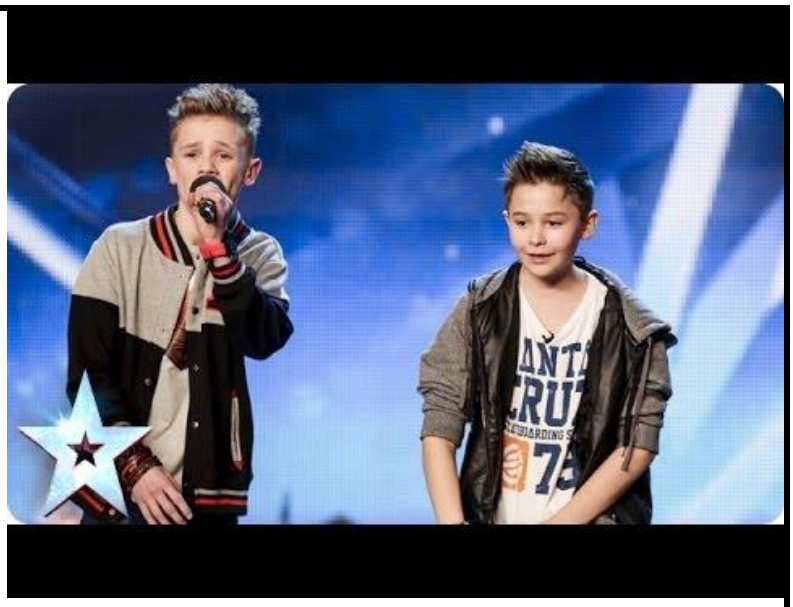
Grade 6 - Painesville City Schools
http://www.painesville-city.k12.oh.us/Anti-BullyingHarrassmentPolicy.aspx

Grade 7 - Akron Public Schools
http://old.akronschools.com/schools/home/pages/?schId=16191&linkId=Anti-Bullying%20Policy&pageTitle=Anti-Bullying%20Policy

Time to Jigsaw!

Similarities and differences between the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012) and District Policies

“Rap" up the A.M.



LUNCH

Day 2 Afternoon Schedule

(Working in Grade-Level Groups)

12:30 - 2:00	Write an age-appropriate, principle-based, anti-bullying, grade-level policy
2:00 - 2:15	Break
2:15 - 3:30	Jigsaw your grade-level policy
3:30 - 4:00	Survey Monkey

WRITE: Principle-Based, Grade-Level Policy

Stage 1: Developmental Path.

- Identify the issues: responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to custodial parents.
- How do the district's philosophy and the law relate to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to custodial parents?

WRITE: Principle-Based, Grade-Level Policy

Stage 2: Policy Design.

- Discuss various interpretations of cyber bullying. Create three to five flexible guidelines that help teachers respond to cyber bullying.
- Discuss various interpretations of bullying incidents that should be reported to custodial parents. Create three to five flexible guidelines that help teachers report bullying incidents to custodial parents.

WRITE: Principle-Based, Grade-Level Policy

Stage 3: Implementation and Alignment.

Create at least two flexible ways for each guideline to be consistently implemented .

WRITE: Principle-Based, Grade-Level Policy

Stage 4: Outcome and Assessment.

- How and when will the outcomes of teachers' responding to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to custodial parents be assessed?
- How and when will the policy be assessed.

Time to Jigsaw!

Grade-Level Policy

Survey Monkey Day 2 Formative Evaluation

- Log into your email
- Find the message from me
- Click on the survey invitation

Day 3

Day 3 Morning Schedule

(Working as a Whole Group)

8:00 - 8:15	Welcome, Agenda
8:15 - 8:30	Review Day 2 Survey Monkey results
8:30 - 10:00	Whole group writes the anti-bullying school policy
10:00 - 10:15	Break
10:15 - 11:15	Whole group writes the anti-bullying school policy
11:15 - 11:30	"Rap" up the A.M.
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch

This is it!

Middle School Teachers

Write

an Age-Appropriate,

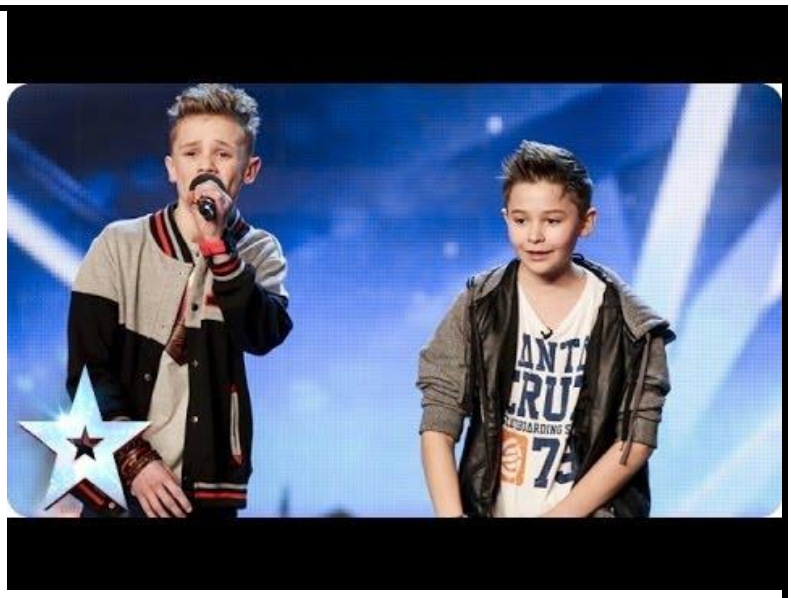
Principle-Based,

Anti-Bullying,

School Policy

Aligned with the Law

"Rap" up the A.M.



LUNCH

Day 3 Afternoon Schedule

(Working Individually)

12:30 - 2:00	Complete PD5 templates
2:00 - 2:15	Break
2:15 - 3:15	Upload the PD5 product to eTPES and submit the policy
3:15 - 3:30	TED
3:30 - 4:00	Survey Monkey

Putting Together My PD5 Artifact

Artifact Template 1: The Professional Development Plan (1)

Artifact Template 2: Grade-Level Group Presentations (3)

Artifact Template 3: Grade-Level Group Reflections (3) and Individual Reflections (3)

Artifact Template 4: Peer Group Reflections (9)

Artifact Template 5: The Whole Group's Recommendation (1)

Don't forget to include a copy of the final policy with your PD5 artifact!

Time to Upload!

Ohio eTPES Web Site

https://www.ohiotpes.com/Account/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2F

Time to Submit!

The lead teacher/administrator submits the final policy to the administration team/Board of Education for review.

Time to Breathe!

Wrap-up the Workshop with

TED

Shane Koyczan

Before you go…

Survey Monkey Day 3 Workshop Summative Evaluation

- Log into your email
- Find the message from me
- Click on the survey invitation

PARTICIPANT GUIDE #1: CREATING TEACHER EVALUATION EVIDENCE FOR WRITING AN ANTI-BULLYING SCHOOL POLICY

PD5 for Teachers

<u>Artifact</u>: Teacher Evaluation Distinguished Evidence for Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, Standard 6: Collaboration and Communication, and Standard 7: Professional Responsibility and Growth

<u>End Product</u>: Age-Appropriate, Anti-Bullying, School, Policy Aligned with the Law

_____
Name

_____
Date

_____
Institution

(Note: This cover page will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact.)

Artifact Template 1: The Professional Development Plan

Overview

Topic:
_____

Department/Grade Level:
_____

Group Members:
Name_____ Presentation Date _____
Name_____ Presentation Date _____
Name_____ Presentation Date _____
Name_____ Presentation Date _____
Name_____ Presentation Date _____

Overall Goal:
_____
_____

Objective(s):
_____
_____
_____
_____

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Presentations.

Artifact Template 2: Presentations

Literature Guide – The Law

Jessica Logan's Story

1. List and jigsaw one or more point(s) of interest from http://nobullying.com/jessica-logan

_____
_____
_____

The Ohio General Assembly Archives: Ohio HB 116 - School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012)

2. List and jigsaw one or more point(s) of interest from http://archives.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=129_HB_116_I

_____
_____
_____

3. Have your perceptions about bullying changed? How?

_____
_____
_____

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Presentations.

Artifact Template 2: Presentations

Literature Guide – Cyber Bullying

Professional Literature

1. List and jigsaw one or more point(s) of interest from the Abstract.

_____
_____
_____

2. List and jigsaw one or more point(s) of interest from the Results/Discussion.

_____
_____
_____

Government Web Site

3. List and jigsaw one or more point(s) of interest from www.stopbullying.gov

_____
_____
_____

4. Have your perceptions about bullying changed? How?

_____
_____
_____

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Presentations.

Artifact Template 2: Presentations

Literature Guide – Reporting Bullying Incidents to Parents

Professional Literature

1. List and jigsaw one or more point(s) of interest from the Abstract.

_____
_____
_____

2. List and jigsaw one or more point(s) of interest from the Results/Discussion.

_____
_____
_____

Government Web Site

3. List and jigsaw one or more point(s) of interest from www.stopbullying.gov

_____
_____
_____

4. Have your perceptions about bullying changed? How?

_____
_____
_____

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Presentations.

Artifact Template 3: Self-Reflections

Self-Assessment Guide

Self-Assessment #1: Personal perceptions of bullying behaviors

1. Describe bullying behavior. (Question 1 of the current study.)

_____
_____
_____

2. Describe how you know behavior is bullying. (Question 2 of the current study.)

_____
_____
_____

Self-Assessment #2: Personal perceptions of bullying behaviors

3. How do your answers compare with the results of the current study?

_____
_____
_____

4. Have your perceptions about bullying changed? How?

_____
_____
_____

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Self-Reflections.

Artifact Template 4: Peer Reflections

Literature Guide – The Law

Jessica Logan's Story

1. Reflect on peer group ___'s presentation of Jessica Logan's Story.

_____
_____
_____

The Ohio General Assembly Archives: Ohio HB 116 - School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012)

2. Reflect on peer group ___'s presentation of the School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act (2012).

_____
_____
_____

3. Have your perceptions about bullying changed? How?

_____
_____
_____

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Presentations.

Artifact Template 4: Peer Reflections

Literature Guide – Cyber Bullying

Professional Literature

1. Reflect on peer group ___'s presentation of the Abstract.

_____
_____
_____

2. Reflect on peer group ___'s presentation of the Results/Discussion.

_____
_____
_____

Government Web Site

3. Reflect on peer group ___'s presentation of cyber bullying.

_____
_____
_____

4. Have your perceptions about bullying changed? How?

_____
_____
_____

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Presentations.

Artifact Template 4: Peer Reflections

Literature Guide – Reporting Bullying Incidents to Parents

Professional Literature

1. Reflect on peer group ___'s presentation of from the Abstract.

_____
_____
_____

2. Reflect on peer group ___'s presentation of the Results/Discussion.

_____
_____
_____

Government Web Site

3. Reflect on peer group ___'s presentation of reporting bullying incidents to parents.

_____
_____
_____

4. Have your perceptions about bullying changed? How?

_____
_____
_____

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Presentations.

Artifact Template 5: Recommendation

Topic:

_____

Department/Grade Level:

_____

Support:

We recommend this policy because it will benefit the students/learning environment *(how)*

_____

_____

Implementation:

We recommend that this policy be implemented on _____ *(date)* until _____ *(date).*

Cyclical Review:

We recommend that this policy be reviewed between _____ *(date)* and _____ *(date)*, by _____ of this committee.
(Example: within one month of the end of the implementation date, by 2/3 or x% of this committee).

We agree to support, implement, and review this policy for future use.

Name	Signature	Contact Information

Note: This form will be uploaded to eTPES as part of the PD5 artifact, Presentations.

PARTICIPANT GUIDE #2: PRACTICE POLICY WRITING: THE ANTI-BULLYING, GRADE-LEVEL POLICY

Directions: Use this template to practice writing the four stages of a principle-based policy. Be specific to your grade-level.

SCHOOL NAME _____

GRADE LEVEL _____

POLICY TITLE _____

STAGE 1: DEVELOPMENTAL PATH

Identify the issues: Varied responses to cyber bullying and reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians.

How do the district's philosophy and the law relate to cyber bullying?

_____

_____

_____

_____

How do the district's philosophy and the law relate to reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians?

_____

_____

_____

_____

STAGE 2: POLICY DESIGN

Discuss various interpretations of cyber bullying. Create three to five flexible guidelines that help teachers respond to cyber bullying.

Discuss various interpretations of bullying incidents. Create three to five flexible guidelines that help teachers report bullying incidents to parents or guardians.

STAGE 3: IMPLEMENTATION AND ALIGNMENT

Create at least two flexible ways for each guideline to be consistently implemented.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

STAGE 4: OUTCOME AND ASSESSMENT

How and when will the outcomes of teachers' responding to cyber bullying be assessed?

_____

_____

_____

_____

How and when will the outcomes of teachers' reporting bullying incidents to parents or guardians be assessed?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PARTICIPANT GUIDE #3: FIANL POLICY WRITING: THE ANTI-BULLYING, SCHOOL POLICY

Directions: Use your completed grade-level template to help you complete this template. Use this template to record the whole group's decisions on the final policy to be submitted to the district and uploaded to Ohio eTPES. For examples, refer to http://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/key-components/index.html#purpose.

SCHOOL NAME _____

SCHOOL POLICY TITLE _____

PURPOSE STATEMENT

_____

_____

_____

_____

STATEMENT OF SCOPE

_____

_____

_____

_____

PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

_____

_____

_____

_____

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LEA (Local Education Association) POLICY (see School Day Security and Anti-Bullying Act, 2012)

_____

_____

_____

_____

COMPONENTS OF THE SCHOOL POLICY

A. Definitions:

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Reporting Practices:

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Investigating and Responding Practices:

_____

_____

_____

_____

D. Written Records:

E. Sanctions:

F. Referrals:

REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL POLICY

COMMUNICATION

TRAINING AND PREVENTION

TRANSPARENCY AND MONITORING

STATEMENT OF RIGHTS TO OTHER LEGAL RECOURSE

PROJECT PRE-EVALUATION

Directions: Please answer the following question:

1. What do you hope to gain from this professional development workshop?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PROJECT FORMATIVE EVALUATION (End of Day One and Day Two)

Directions: Please answer the following questions:

1. What did you learn today?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What questions do you have about what you have learned so far?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What do you want to learn more about?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PROJECT SUMMATIVE EVALUATION (End of Day Three)

Directions: Please answer the following questions:

1. What did you gain from this professional development workshop?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. How will this professional development workshop impact your personal practice?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Will you commit to the implementation and at least one future review of the age-appropriate, anti-bullying, school policy that you helped create today?

_____

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Middle School Teachers' Perceptions of Bullying Behaviors and Their Practices in Reporting Bullying Incidents

Note – In the following questions, the word "student" refers to the student who demonstrates bullying behaviors.

RQ#1 - What behaviors do middle school teachers perceive as bullying?

1. Describe bullying behavior.

2. Describe how you know behavior is bullying.

3. Describe your level of confidence in recognizing bullying behaviors as high, medium, or low. Why?

RQ#2 - What are middle school teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents?

The following questions refer to *only the student*.

4. Describe bullying behaviors to which you respond with only the *student*. Why?

5. Describe *when* you respond to bullying behaviors with only the *student*. Why?

6. Describe *how* you respond to bullying behaviors with only the *student*. Why?

7. Describe your level of confidence in responding to bullying behaviors with only the *student* as high, medium, or low. Why?

The following questions refer to *the parent(s)/guardian(s)*.

8. Describe the bullying behaviors that you report to the *parent(s)/guardian(s)*. Why?

9. Describe *when* you report bullying behaviors to the *parent(s)/guardian(s)*. Why?

10. Describe *how* you report bullying behaviors to the *parent(s)/guardian(s)*. Why?

11. Describe your level of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the *parent(s)/guardian(s)* as high, medium, or low. Why?

The following questions refer to *the principal.*

12. Describe the bullying behaviors that you report to the *principal*. Why?

13. Describe *when* you report bullying behaviors to the *principal*. Why?

14. Describe *how* you report bullying behaviors to the *principal*. Why?

15. Describe your level of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the *principal* as high, medium, or low. Why?

Appendix C: Interview Questions with Prompts for the Interviewer

Middle School Teachers' Perceptions of Bullying Behaviors and Their Practices in Reporting Bullying Incidents

Note – In the following questions, the word "student" refers to the student who demonstrates bullying behaviors.

RQ#1 - What behaviors do middle school teachers perceive as bullying?

1. Describe bullying behavior.
   Prompts:
   a) *Physical*
   b) *Verbal*
   c) *Cyber*
   d) *For example*

2. Describe how you know behavior is bullying.
   Prompts:
   a) *Aggressive*
   b) *Imbalance of power*
   c) *Continuous*
   d) *For example*

3. Describe your level of confidence in recognizing bullying behaviors as high, medium, or low. Why?

RQ#2 - What are middle school teachers' practices in reporting bullying incidents?

The following questions talk about *only the student*.

4. Describe bullying behaviors to which you respond with only the *student*. Why?
   Prompts:
   a) *Physical*
   b) *Verbal*
   c) *Cyber*
   d) *For example*

5. Describe *when* you respond to bullying behaviors with only the *student*. Why?
   Prompts:
   a) *Immediately*
   b) *At recess/free time*

c) *Later that day*
d) *The next day or longer*
e) *For example*

6. Describe *how* you respond to bullying behaviors with only the *student*. Why?
Prompts:
a) *Verbally*
b) *A look or glance*
c) *Take away recess/free time*
d) *For example*

7. Describe your level of confidence in responding to bullying behaviors with only the *student* as high, medium, or low. Why?
Prompt:
a) *High*
b) *Medium*
c) *Low*
d) *For example*

The following questions talk about ***the parent(s)/guardian(s)*.

8. Describe the bullying behaviors that you report to the *parent(s)/guardian(s)*. Why?
Prompts:
e) *Physical*
f) *Verbal*
g) *Cyber*
h) *For example*

9. Describe *when* you report bullying behaviors to *parent(s)/guardian(s)*. Why?
Prompts:
a) *Immediately*
b) *Later that day*
c) *The next day or longer*
d) *For example*

10. Describe *how* you report bullying behaviors to *parent(s)/guardian(s)*.
Prompts:
a) *Phone conference*
b) *Face-to-face meeting*
c) *Email/text message*

d) For example

11. Describe your level of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the *parent(s)/guardian(s)* as high, medium, or low. Why?

Prompt:

a) High

b) Medium

c) Low

d) For example

The following questions talk about *the principal.*

12. Describe the bullying behaviors that you report to the *principal*. Why?

Prompts:

a) Physical

b) Verbal

c) Cyber

d) For example

13. Describe *when* you report bullying behaviors to the *principal*. Why?

Prompts:

a) Immediately

b) Later that day

c) The next day or longer

d) For example

14. Describe *how* you report bullying behaviors to the *principal*. Why?

Prompts:

a) Phone conference

b) Face-to-face meeting

c) Email/text message

d) For example

15. Describe your level of confidence in reporting bullying behaviors to the *principal* as high, medium, or low. Why?

Prompt:

a) High

b) Medium

c) Low

d) For example

Appendix D: Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession

Table 24

Standard 6: Collaboration and Communication: Descriptions of Elements and Indicators at the Distinguished Level

Element	**Indicators at the Distinguished Level**
6.1 Teachers communicate clearly and effectively.	Teachers model effective verbal, nonverbal and media communication techniques and support positive changes in colleagues' communication abilities and styles.
6.2 Teachers share responsibility with parents and caregivers to support student learning, emotional and physical development and mental health.	Teacher create classroom, school and district learning environments in which parents and caregivers are active participants in students' learning and achievement.
6.3 Teachers collaborate effectively with other teachers, administrators and school and district staff.	Teachers advocate for and initiate increased opportunities for teamwork to support school goals and promote student achievement.
6.4 Teachers collaborate effectively with the local community and community agencies, when and where appropriate, to promote a positive environment for student learning.	Teachers build and sustain partnerships with the local community and community agencies in response to identified needs of students. Teachers serve as advocates for the local school system and communicate the value of the work within the community.

Note: As published in the Standards for Ohio Educators by the Ohio Department of Education (2007; p. 36)

Table 25

Standard 7: Professional Responsibility and Growth: Descriptions of Elements and Indicators at the Distinguished Level

Element	Indicators at the Distinguished Level
7.1 Teachers understand, uphold and follow professional ethics, policies and legal codes of professional conduct.	Teachers help shape policy at the local or state level.
7.2 Teachers take responsibility for engaging in continuous, purposeful professional development.	Teachers create and deliver professional development opportunities for others. Teachers pursue advanced degrees and/or National Board for Professional Teaching standards (NBPTS) certification.
7.3 Teachers are agents of change who seek opportunities to positively impact teaching quality, school improvements and student achievement.	Teachers take leadership roles in department, school, district, state, and professional organizations' decision-making activities, such as curriculum development, staff development or policy design. Teachers facilitate the development of efficacy – the belief that teachers can impact the achievement of all students – among other teachers in their school and district.

Note: As published in the Standards for Ohio Educators by the Ohio Department of Education (2007; p. 38)