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Principals' Perceptions Of Cyberbullying Policies In Selected Florida Middle Schools

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PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF CYBERBULLYING POLICIES IN SELECTED
FLORIDA MIDDLE SCHOOLS

by

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the issue of student cyberbullying in Florida's public middle schools. First, a content analysis of six Florida school district anti-bullying policies was conducted to determine the alignment between the state model policy and district policies. Next, 68 middle school principals from the same six Florida school districts completed the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey online. Survey respondents were either members or non-members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment.

Findings showed that all six school districts' anti-bullying policies were comprehensive in addressing the definitions of bullying behaviors, to include cyberbullying, as well as for reporting and responding to bullying incidents. However, it was found that improvements could be made concerning periodic review and updating of bullying policies as well as addressing issues of inclusiveness. Additionally, it was found that the middle school principals were generally aware of the seriousness of cyberbullying regardless of their membership status on the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment. They enforced both technology and bullying policies to prevent and respond to student cyberbullying. This was done either by their own initiative or as directed by the school districts. It was also discovered that principals were sensitive to the fact that students at their schools had been cybervictims, cyberbullies, or both. Moreover, principals believed that a majority of those activities occurred off-campus.

It remains, though, uncertain as to what factors influence whether or not a school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy. However, principals conveyed an

understanding that education about and enforcement of cyberbullying policies was imperative. Hence, more research is needed to determine how educators can continue to confront this type of adolescent aggression both on and off-campus as well as take the first of many steps toward improving student safety in cyberspace.

This is dedicated to my husband, Jason, my two daughters Madeline and Leonie, and my mother, Kathy.

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I would like to acknowledge Dr. Rose Taylor, my chair, Dr. Debbie Hahs-Vaughn, my co-chair, and Dr. George Pawlas and Dr. Janet McGee, committee members, for all of their hard work and dedication. I am grateful for their wisdom and guidance in this endeavor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Cyberbulling is "defined as willful and repeated harm inflicted through the medium of electronic text" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 152). Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) also stated that "Cyberbullying is the unfortunate by-product of the union of adolescent aggression and electronic communication, and its growth is giving cause for concern" (p. 131). In fact, through the "use of email, instant messaging, websites, voting booths, and chat or bash rooms, cyberbullies are deliberately antagonizing and intimidating others" (Beale & Hall, 2007, p. 8). According to a 2003-2004 survey conducted by i-SAFE America, 42% of adolescents have experienced online bullying and 53 % have admitted to expressing malicious comments to another adolescent while online (i-SAFE, 2009). Furthermore, what makes cyberbullying particularly harmful is that the offender can be anonymous; and there are no boundaries to where it takes place. In a study conducted by Li (2007), nearly 41% of victims were unaware of who cyberbullied them. In effect, cyberbullies thrive on anonymity and the ability to bully beyond the school yard and into their victim's home. This has proven to compromise a student's ability to feel secure and perform in school (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008a; Li; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Moreover, the emotional and psychological consequences of cyberbullying have also been associated with interpersonal violence, substance abuse, and low self-concept (Willard, 2007a).

For these reasons, Beale and Hall (2007) recommended "that educators need to be informed about cyberbullying, the forms it takes, and what strategies or actions they might take to combat it in their schools" (p. 9). In fact, substantial efforts on behalf of lawmakers have been directed toward the states in developing cyberbullying legislation. Recently passed or pending legislation (2006 through 2009) has occurred in sixteen states, including Florida (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b). State anti-bullying policies across the nation have been updated to define cyberstalking, cyberbullying, and other types of electronic harassment as prohibited behaviors. For example, Florida school districts were expected to develop a district anti-bullying and harassment policy by December, 2008. A key component of this requirement was the expectation that each district submit reports to the State Department of Education regarding incidents of bullying and harassment on an annual basis (FLDOE, 2009a). The policy also included a statement prohibiting bullying by "Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the school district system" (FLDOE, 2009b, p. 1). This is perhaps the first step toward dealing with the complex issue of cyberbullying.

Statement of the Problem

"All students are potential victims of electronic bullying" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 148). Therefore, it is imperative that school officials take an active role in developing interventions targeted at preventing and controlling it. However, according to Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara (2008) a minimal amount of research has been conducted that examines the content of school anti-bullying policies. In fact, they suggested that existing policies may be deficient in important areas, such as

cyberbullying. Accordingly, Li (2007) earlier considered socioeconomic status as a major factor in explaining cyberbullying in schools. However, the findings of his research indicated "that merely considering SES could not explain this phenomenon" (p. 1790). Li suggested that one possible explanation was school climates. More specifically, Li surmised that there was a lack of official policies that effectively addressed bullying or that policies against bullying and harassment were adopted but not followed. Li also stated, "Another explanation may be that bullying is becoming increasingly severe in terms of scope and the extent in large cities" (p. 1786). These suggestions indicated the need for further investigation of bullying and harassment policies as well as potential demographics that may have an influence on the extent to which students experience cyberbullying. More importantly, there was a void in the research regarding principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying incidents.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

Hinduja and Patchin (2009a) defined cyberbullicide as "suicide stemming directly or indirectly from cyberbullying victimization" (p. 185). A tragic example of cyberbullicide was the death of a 15-year old boy in southwest Florida named Jeffrey Johnston. Because a popular girl at school had become his girlfriend and another boy became seemingly jealous, Jeffrey was harassed and maligned through e-mail and web-site postings. A hate page was created to torment Jeffrey and as other kids joined in on the harassment, Jeffrey became suicidal. According to Hinduja and Patchin (2009a), he wrote a note to his friends on his computer six weeks before he took his own life in June of 2005. Johnston wrote: "I'm just writing to tell you I won't be in school anymore. I

decided to commit suicide because my life is too hard to live with" (Johnston as cited in Jurkowski, 2005, ¶ 18). Johnston never sent the note.

Because of Jeffrey's death, the Florida legislature in June of 2008 passed the "Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up for All Students Act." This Act created section 1006.147, Florida Statutes that required school districts to "adopt a policy prohibiting bullying and harassment of students and staff on school grounds or school transportation, at school-sponsored events, and through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through school computer systems or networks" (FLDOE, 2009a, p.2). Additionally, the statute required the "Florida Department of Education to develop and disseminate a model policy to each of the 67 school districts" (FLDOE, 2009a, p.2). School districts were given the choice to either adopt the model policy provided by the Florida Department of Education Safe Schools or develop their own (FLDOE, 2009a). Hence, the purpose of this study was three-fold: (a) to determine what selected Florida school districts were doing to address student cyberbullying, (b) to determine relationships between selected school demographics and student cyberbullying policies, and (c) to ascertain the perceptions of selected Florida middle school principals concerning the adoption of cyberbullying policies and implementation of those policies in their schools.

<u>Review of the Literature</u>

"Bullying is an all too common form of youth aggression" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 149). Borg (1999) explained that bullying usually takes place at school or during school-sponsored events "when a student or group of students intentionally and repeatedly uses their power to hurt and control others" (p.137). According to Quiroz, Arnette, and Stephens (2006), "Bullies' power can come from their physical strength,

4

age, financial status, popularity, social status, technology skills, or by association" (p. 1). Furthermore, Olweus (1995) stated that without systematic efforts on behalf of adults, an adolescent is likely to continue to be a bully or a victim for an extended period of time. In response, school-wide bullying intervention programs have been implemented (e.g., Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, Aggression Replacement Training (ART), and Aggressors, Victims, Bystanders). However, the dynamics of bullying have changed as technology has become common both in the home and at school. From texting to blogging to online social networking sites, social media has become integral to many teenagers' lives. In fact, Lenhart, Madden, Macgill, and Smith (2009) found that 51% of teens talk on their cell phones and 42% send messages through social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace every day. Consequently, modern technology has enabled bullies to extend their threats and control into cyberspace.

Research on Cyberbullying

Offending and Victimization

Previous research regarding the nature and extent of adolescences' experiences with cyberbullying suggested that the effects were dependent upon the role of the adolescent as cyberbully, cybervictim, and/or witness. In fact, according to a 2006 study of 384 youth conducted by Hinduja and Patchin, almost 11% of respondents reported being a victim of on-line bullying; whereas most respondents reported being a witness (47.1%) and approximately 29% reported being a bully. Similarly, Li (2007) reported that 53% of 177 seventh grade students surveyed knew of someone being cyberbullied. Furthermore, according to the cybervictims, almost 32% reported being bullied by their school mates, nearly 12% by people outside their schools, and approximately 16% by

multiple sources (school mates, people outside school, and others). Interestingly, the highest percentage, 40.9%, were completely unaware of who cyberbullied them (Li). These findings provided evidence that many bullies are anonymous and that bystanders of cyberbullying are worth noticing.

Regarding mediums found most conducive to cyberbullying, a majority of surveyed adolescents reported being harassed in a chat room or via computer text message (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006; Li, 2007; Slonje & Smith, 2008). With respect to frequency, Li determined that almost 60% of cyber victims surveyed were cyberbullied one to three times in the past 30 days; over 18% were cyberbullied four to ten times; and nearly a quarter were cyberbullied more than ten times. Conversely, according to the self-identified cyberbullies, "43% stated that they cyberbullied others less than four times, over 30% did four to ten times, and just over 26% of them cyberbullied others in excess of ten times" (Li, p. 1787). Comparatively, Hinduja and Patchin (2006) had 83 adolescents reported that in the past 30 days they had been victimized in a chat room an average of 3.36 times. In fact, one respondent reported being bullied in a chat room 50 times during the previous 30 days. Thus, it can be surmised that cyberbullying has become increasingly severe in terms of the scope and can occur through multiple modes of electronic communication.

Linking Bullying and Cyberbullying

Making the connection between traditional bullying and cyberbullying, Li (2007) discovered that those who reported being bullied in schools, about one third, had also been cyberbullied; and of that group approximately 17% were also cyberbullies. Within the traditional school bully group, nearly 86% reported that they were also victims.

Additionally, almost 30% of this group were cyberbullies and just over 27% were cyberbully victims. In other words, bullies tend to be cyberbullies; and victims of physical bullying are more likely to be cyberbullied. Additionally, Li also found that "cyberbullies were more likely to be victims in cyberspace than those who did not cyberbully" (p 1789).

Hinduja and Patchin (2008a), with a sample of approximately 1400 youth respondents, also found a statistically significant relationship between traditional schoolyard bullying and an increased risk of experiencing cyberbullying. More specifically, "youth who reported bullying others in real life in the previous six months were more than 2.5 times as likely to report bullying others online" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008a, p. 144). The same was true for victims of cyberbullying. Victims who were bullied offline in the past six months were more than 2.5 times more likely to bullied online. Coinciding with those trends, off-line bullies were more than five times as likely to bullying on-line as compared to those who did not engage in behaviors associated with bullying off-line. Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) proposed that these findings suggest that there are shared characteristics of both on-line and off-line victims and offenders that place them at a greater risk to engage in cyberbullying.

Characteristics of Cyberbullies and Cybervictims

Common characteristics associated with cyberbullies and cybervictims included demographics such as gender, race, and age as well as computer proficiency and academic achievement. Li (2007) found that females made up nearly 60% of cybervictims and just over one-half of cyberbullies were males. Following, Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found that approximately "one-third of both boys and girls surveyed

reported being victims of cyberbullying and about 18% of boys and 16% of girls claimed harassing others while on-line" (p. 152). Additionally, Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found no statistically significant difference between boys and girls regarding experiences with cyberbullying as either the victim or offender. However, both Li and Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found that girls were more likely to be harassed via email. Additionally, Slonje and Smith (2008) found that just over 36% of surveyed adolescents reported being cyberbullied by one boy and the same amount were unable to report the gender of the person who cyberbullied them. Along those same lines, in the Slonje and Smith study only 12% reported being cyberbullied by one girl and just over 5% "by several girls, several boys, or both boys and girls" (p. 152).

Concerning race and age, Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found that "whites and nonwhites were as likely to experience cyberbullying as a victim or offender" (p. 150). Likewise, Li (2007) found "that over 60% of cyberbullying victims and about 70% of cyberbullies were white" (p. 1785). However, older youth were more likely to report both victimization and offense; and the average age of respondents was 14.8 (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008a). With respect to grade level and class of offenders, Slonje and Smith (2008) reported that 32.8% of victims surveyed were unaware who cyberbullied them; 27.6% stated the perpetrator(s) was in the same class; and 12.1% reported the perpetrator(s) was in a different class but same grade level. Further, approximately 12% reported being victims of cyberbullies in different grades, 10% not in their school, and 2% in a higher grade.

Proficiency and time spent on the Internet was also proven to be a strong link to cyberbullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008a; & Li, 2007). In fact,

respondents for both the 2006 and 2008 studies conducted by Hinduja and Patchin, reported engaging in over five different on-line activities averaging of 18 hours per week on-line. Similarly, Li found that nearly 89% of cybervictims "used computers at least once a week and every cyberbully reported that he/she used computers at least four times per month" (p. 1790). In other words, the more frequent a student used the computer the more likely they were to be cyberbullies.

Pertaining to academic achievement, there was no statistically significant correlation found by Li (2007) between school grades and reported cyberbullying incidents as well as between school grades and cyberbullying victims. However, Li did report that, "Half of the cyberbully victims had above average school grades, whereas less than 35% of the cyberbullies reported their school grades were above average" (p. 1783).

Adult Awareness

Also of particular importance were the emotional and psychological effects of cyberbulling in addition to the perceived effort by adults to prevent cyberbullying. According to Hinduja and Patchin (2006) of 384 victims surveyed, respondents reported feeling at least one or more of the following: approximately 163 felt frustrated, 154 felt angry, and 104 felt sad. Almost a third (31.9%) reported that cyberbullying affected their performance at school, 26.5% reported it affected their home life, and just over 20% reported it affected them with their friends. However, 22% reported not being bothered by on-line bullying and less than 44% stated that bullying did not affect them. In response to online bullying, 56% reported confiding in an online friend and fewer than 9% informed an adult. Almost 37% told the bully to stop and approximately 32% had to

remove themselves from the situation. The other reported responses were split between telling a friend (25.7%), telling nobody (23%), telling their mom and dad (19.5%), and telling a sibling (16.8%) (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006). With similar results, Li (2007) found that those who were cyberbullied, only 34% stated that they notified an adult when the incident occurred. Similarly, only 30 of the 87 students who knew of someone being cyberbullied told an adult. However, notably just over "67% of students believed that adults in schools tried to stop cyberbullying when informed" (p. 1789).

The Role of Schools

<u>Legal Aspects</u>

According to Willard (2007a), "Schools must address instances of cyberbullying occurring through the use of the district Internet system or use of personal digital devices, such as cell phones, digital cameras, personal computers, and PDAs, while on campus" (p.1). However, according to an earlier article by Simmerle (2003) the anonymity associated with social networking technologies has made it easier for cyberbullying to take place and even more difficult to prevent and control. In fact, he postulated that determining how to effectively intervene remains unanswered. Simmerle stated:

> "Anonymity allows those bullies to be more scathing, hurtful and unless the bully makes real and intended threats or repeatedly and personally harasses a student, those that are caught usually cannot be punished by the school or through criminal law; most of this sort of bullying does not take place at school and therefore, the students are not under its jurisdiction." (p. 2)

Fortunately, key court decisions have provided some guidance regarding the type of behaviors that can be regulated, particularly school districts. The most influential and well known U.S. Supreme Court case involving student speech, *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)*, has provided a universal standard for

school districts to follow (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b). In Tinker, three public school students were suspended for wearing black armbands to protest the Vietnam War. The students' suspensions were declared by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional since the school district's decision violated the Free Speech clause of the First Amendment. In fact, the Court stated: "A prohibition against expression of opinion, without any evidence that the rule is necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or the rights of others, is not permissible under the First and Fourteenth Amendments" (Murray & Murray, 2007, p.253). In other words, school personnel must bear the burden of providing proof that student speech and/or behaviors cause substantial interference with the learning environment. But, according to Hinduja and Patchin (2009b) a major area of contention is deciphering a school disrict's jurisdiction regarding student behavior or speech that occurs away from campus.

Hinduja and Patchin (2009b) stated that "some courts have upheld the actions of school administrators in disciplining students for off-campus actions" (p. 1). Hinduja ad Patchin specifically referred to *J.S v. Bethlehem Area School District (2000)* where the court's decision rendered schools the authority to discipline students whose speech or behavior committed off-campus presents a clear disruption of the school environment. In *J.S v. Bethlehem Area School District (2000)* "a student was expelled from school for creating a webpage that included threatening and derogatory comments about specific school staff" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b, p. 2). Different than *Tinker*, the school district was able to demonstrate disruption and a negative impact on the recipient of the speech. More specifically, the court concluded: "Regrettably, in this day and age where school violence is becoming more commonplace, school officials are justified in taking very

11

seriously threats against faculty and other students" (Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania as cited by Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b).

<u>School Policy</u>

Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara

In an effort to mitigate the negative effects of bullying and provide awareness to the issue, Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara (2008) conducted a study to analyze school bullying policies in England. While this was not the only study of its kind, the research provided suggested that there was a need to further examine both the content of bullying and harassment policies as well as their degree of implementation. More specifically, according to Smith et al., schools in England were required by law to have an anti-bullying policy. However, they postulated that limited research demonstrated that these policies may be deficient in many important areas. Hence, the researchers analyzed 142 school anti-bullying policies, from 115 primary schools and 27 secondary schools. A 31 item scoring scheme was devised to assess each school's policy. Responses were recorded as either high, moderate, or low.

Smith et al. recorded a high response rate for defining bullying behaviors to include physical, verbal, and relational forms of bullying. A moderate response rate was reported regarding bullying due to race, sex, and material possessions. Following, responses were low for distinguishing between bullying and other kinds of aggressive behavior in addition to teacher-student bullying. Most intriguing, the responses were low for discussing homophobic bullying and cyberbullying (Smith et. al, 2008).

Similarly, recording bullying as well as communicating and evaluating bullying policies also received the lowest scores. This was because no policy received high levels

of response. More specifically, how reports of bullying would be recorded in addition to the policy being periodically reviewed and updated received moderate levels of response. The two remaining items, how bullying reports will be managed by designated personnel in addition to explaining how records of bullying incidents would be used, received low mentions too (Smith et. al, 2008).

<u>Section 1006.147, Florida Statutes, Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up For ALL Students Act</u>

In 2008, the Florida Legislature passed Section 1006.147 of the Florida Statutes also known as the Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up For ALL Students Act (FLDOE, 2009a). The Act mandated that "every school district in Florida develop and implement policies and procedures to address the problem of bullying and harassment of students and staff" (FLDOE, 2009a, p. 1). School districts were given the choice to either adopt the Florida Department of Education Safe Schools model policy or develop their own. An example of a proactive school district, the School Board of Palm Beach County decided to develop their own bullying and harassment policy, *School District Policy 5.002* (School District of Palm Beach County, 2009). Some requirements of the new law and policy included:

1. "Education of all students and staff about the characteristics of bullying and harassment;
2. Publication of anti-bullying policies in the Student-Parent Handbook and Staff Handbooks;
3. Requirements regarding the posting of reporting procedures in prominent places around school campuses and other workplaces;
4. Guidelines for ensuring the rapid administrative response to reports of bullying and harassment, including specific time requirements (within 24 hours or the next school day) for contacting parents or guardians of the accused and the target; and
5. Requirements that districts submit reports on the incidence of bullying and harassment to the State Department of Education on an annual basis." (School District of Palm Beach County, 2009, p. 1).

<u>Prevention</u>

In response to the ease and wide scope with which cyberbullying occurs, as well as a lack of established protocol to handle the issue, Beale and Hall (2007) formulated six research-based prevention-intervention strategies that school administrators can implement to combat the emerging phenomenon; the first three were of particular interest. First and foremost, both student and teacher education should be provided under the supervision of school administrators. The school's curriculum should be integrated with cyberbullying lessons, to include appropriate Internet etiquette, and disseminated through classroom and/or large group sessions with guidance counselors. Second, school administrators should have a clear understanding of what the school's or school board's anti-bully policy includes so that if need be, harassment by means of mobile and internet technology could be addressed. Third, "The school's acceptable use policy should be updated to specifically prohibit using the Internet for bullying" (Beale & Hall, p. 10). More specifically, the policy should detail in plain terms what constitutes cyberbullying as well as the anticipated negative consequences. However, Beale and Hall warned that school officials need to be aware that cyberbullying needs to be a contractual issue and not a legal issue. This can be done, as recommended by Aftab (2005), through the addition of "a provision to the school's acceptable use policy reserving the right to discipline students for actions conducted away from school so long that those actions have an adverse effect on a student" (p. 3). The provision, of course, would also apply if the actions adversely affected the safety and well-being of the student while in school.

Hinduja and Patchin (2009b) also determined six strategic components that would create an effective cyberbullying policy. They included:

1. "Specific definitions for harassment, intimidation, and bullying (including electronic variants);" (p. 1)
2. "Graduated consequences and remedial actions;"(p.1)
3. "Procedures for reporting;"(p. 1)
4. "Procedures for investigating;" (p. 2)
5. "Specific language that if a student's off-school speech or behavior results in 'substantial disruption of the learning environment,' the student can be disciplined;" (p.2) and,
6. "Procedures for preventing cyberbullying such as workshops, staff training, and curriculum enhancements." (p. 3)

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are selected Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?

2. To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts that are members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts that are not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment?

3. To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?

4. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?

5. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?

Definition of Terms

Cyberbullying –"Intentional and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, p. 185).

Cyberstalking – "Repeated harassment that includes threats of harm or that is highly intimidating and intrusive upon one's personal privacy" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, p. 185).

15

Free/reduced lunch – A student in Florida with annual household income less than $27,560 is eligible for free lunches (FLDOE, 2009).

Middle School- A public school unit comprised of students grades 6-8 (US Census Bureau, 2000).

Non-white student – For the purpose of this research study, a non-white student will be defined as a student with an ethnicity other than White (African American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, Multi-Racial, or Other).

State mentoring team – For the purpose of this research study, a member of the state mentoring team will be defined as those identified by the Florida Department of Education Safe Schools Office as school districts qualified to mentor the remaining Florida school districts in writing, adopting, and implementing a district-wide policy against bullying and harassment.

Student cyberbullying – For the purpose of this study, student cyberbullying will be defined as cyberbullying by students to students.

Assumptions

Assumptions influential to this study included the following:

1. The population contacted was those persons who were middle school principals during the 2008-2009 school years at their current schools.

2. The population contacted was those persons with Internet access and a working email address as provided by the school district.

3. The email messages containing information about this research study and the link for the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Surveys may have been successfully delivered to the address, but never seen by the addressee because of filters, full inboxes, or other technical reasons.

4. The email messages containing information about this research study and the link for the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Surveys were opened and read by the population contacted.

16

5. The Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Surveys were completed by the population contacted.

6. Responses to the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey provided by the population contacted were honest and based upon informed estimates.

7. The methodology employed was congruent with answering the proposed research questions of this study. More specifically, (a) a content analysis of school districts' anti-bullying policies was capable of determining what selected Florida school districts are doing to address student cyberbullying, (b) an online survey was capable of measuring principal perceptions and providing the appropriate data for determining the relationship between selected school demographics and student cyberbullying policies, and (c) a constant comparison analysis was appropriate to ascertain the perceptions of selected Florida middle school principals concerning the adoption of cyberbullying policies and implementation of those policies in their schools.

Methodology

The research design followed a mixed methodology approach. First, a content analysis of six Florida school districts' anti-bullying policies was conducted. Next, 68 middle school principals from the same six Florida school districts were surveyed. Principals were asked to complete the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey online via Survey Monkey. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted.

Population

The population for the content analysis of school district anti-bullying policies was defined as six Florida school districts: Palm Beach, Brevard, Marion, Duval, Seminole, and Lake. The population for the online survey was defined as the 68 middle school principals in the six prior mentioned Florida school districts. Palm Beach, Brevard, and Marion school districts were members of the state mentoring team against

bullying and harassment for a total of 21 middle school principals. Duval, Seminole, and Lake school districts were not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment for a total of 47 middle school principals. Differentiation between these two groups was important in order determine significant differences in principal perceptions for those located in school districts that were members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment as compared to those who were not. In other words, there was the conjecture that greater access to information, resources, and overall awareness to the issue of student cyberbullying by members of the state mentoring team would set these schools apart.

Also important to note, the remaining school districts on the mentoring team, Broward, Leon, Nassau, and Pinellas, were excluded in order to narrow the scope of this study. Duval, Seminole, and Lake were selected purposively to serve as comparable school districts in terms of district size and degree of urbanicity. More specifically, Duval was matched to Palm Beach as large, urban school districts; Seminole was matched to Brevard as medium-sized, suburban school districts; and Lake was matched to Marion as small, rural school districts.

<div align="center">Instrumentation</div>

Bullying Policy Contents Checklist

The Bullying Policy Contents Checklist was a modified version of a checklist developed by Smith, et al.(2008) to assess 142 schools' anti-bullying and harassment policies in England. For this study, the checklist was adapted to review six Florida school districts' anti-bullying and harassment policies. Refer to Appendix G for official

documentation of permission granted by Smith. Refer to Appendix H for the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist.

The Bullying Policy Contents Checklist consisted of 34 items. Each statement was rated as either yes or no; 'yes' the item existed in the policy or 'no' it did not. The checklist also allowed for relevant comments to be recorded next to each item. This enabled the researcher to provide further clarity regarding whether or not an assessment statement had been met. Additionally, the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist was divided into four subsections: (a) Definition of bullying behavior, (b) Reporting and responding to bullying incidents, (c) Recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating the policy, and (d) Strategies for preventing bullying.

The subsection 'Definition of bullying behavior' contained 14 items. Example statements for this section included, "Have a definition of bullying" and "Does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behavior." The subsection 'Reporting and responding to bullying incidents' consisted of 11 items. Example statements for this section included "Say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying" and "Clearly mention the responsibilities of student bystanders if they know of bullying." Subsection three, 'Recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating the policy' contained four items. Example statements for this section were "Say reports of bullying will be recorded" and "Mention periodic review and updating of the policy." The last subsection, 'Strategies for preventing bullying' included five statements. Example statements for this section were "Mention any encouraging cooperative behavior, rewarding good behavior, improving school

climate, or creating a safe environment" and "Mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or outside school."

It is important to note that minor modifications were made to the original instrument. Two items not applicable to this study were deleted and replaced with two items that specifically addressed cyberbullying. The two statements deleted were: (a) "Discuss the issue of adult/teacher-student bullying or vice versa" from the subsection 'Definition of bullying behavior' and (b) "Mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors" from the subsection 'Strategies for preventing bullying'. The two added statements were placed under the subsection 'definition of bullying behavior'. The statements were "Has an explicit definition of cyberbullying" and "Mention the forms in which cyberbullying can occur."

Validity and Reliability

Smith et al. (2008) provided both reliability of the coding scheme and the internal reliability of the scale for the content analysis they performed. Inter-rater reliability of two coders ranged from 85% to 100%. Concerning internal reliability, the Cronbach's alpha of the total anti-bullying policy content scale was .76, reasonably high. The reliability for three of the four subsections of the scale were also moderately high; .69 for 'Definition of bullying behavior', .64 for 'Reporting and responding to bullying incidents', and .68 for 'Recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating the policy'. The last subsection 'Strategies for preventing bullying' scored .32.

Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey

The Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey was designed to measure principals' level of preparedness to address cyberbullying concerns at their

schools. The survey was a modified version of the 'Cyberbullying Report Card'

published in, *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to

Cyberbullying* (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009). Refer to Appendix C for official

documentation of permission granted by Hinduja and Patchin.

The original instrument contained 31 statements in paper/pencil form and was

categorized into six subsections: General Assessment, School Climate/Culture,

Curriculum and Education, Cyberbullying Response, Policies, and Technology. The

survey was modified to consist of a general Principal Survey and was taken online by

respondents via a web link provided by Survey Monkey. The modified survey contained

a total of 33 items. Question one required an access code to be entered by the respondent

in order to complete the survey. Question two asked, "Were you the principal at your

current middle school during the 2008-2009 school?" to verify that the respondent was

qualified to answer questions pertaining to the 2008-2009 school year. Other

modifications were made as a result of the cognitive interviews and consisted mainly of

minor changes in sentence construction and/or word usage.

Items 3 through 24 were on a dichotomous scale. More specifically, middle

school principals had the option to respond 'Yes' or 'No' to 21 statements regarding their

knowledge of cyberbullying policies and response measures. The 21 statements were

divided into four subscales: General Assessment, Policy, Response, and Legal Aspects.

An example statement for General Assessment included, "I believe cyberbullying is a

significant problem at my school." For Policy, an example statement included, "In

addition to the district policy, my school has implemented additional guidelines specific

to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including

21

cyberbullying." For Response, an example statement included, "My school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal." An example statement for Legal Aspects included, "I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus."

Items 25 through 28 were open ended questions. More specifically, questions 25 and 26 inquired about the types of cyberbullying instruction both students and faculty have received to date or will have received during the 2009-2010 school years as directed by either the principal or school district. Questions 27 and 28 asked for the principal's perception of his/her role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying. Last, items 29 through 32 requested demographic data specific to the principal. Question 33 asked, "Would you like to receive a copy of the published results upon completion of this study?" Refer to Appendix B for the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey.

Reliability and Validity

There were no known studies that have collected reliability and validity evidence for the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. However, for purposes of this study, evidence of content validity was obtained via three rounds of cognitive interviews before disseminating the survey to the population. A total of nine interviews were conducted; six in person and three over the phone. Interviewees were required to have a working knowledge of at least one of the three following criteria: (a) middle school administration, (b) testing and measurement, and/or (c) school safety. Detailed notes of each interview were documented and utilized when appropriate to modify the

survey. Refer to Appendix E for the Cognitive Interview Protocol. Refer to Appendix I for the Cognitive Interview Results.

Data Collection

Copies of all 67 Florida school districts' policies were obtained during the summer of 2009. The source for these data was the Florida Department of Education Safe Schools Office. Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the Florida Department of Education Model Policy Against Bullying and Harassment (FLDOE, 2009). Contact information for the selected middle school principals were also obtained during the summer of 2009. The source for this information was the Florida Department of Education website and/or the individual school districts' websites.

During October 2009, a brief initial contact letter was mailed to the middle school principals, inviting them to participate in the study (see Appendix D). Approximately one week later, respondents received an email detailing the major components of the research study, a statement of informed consent, and a link to the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey (see Appendix E). A thank you postcard was mailed 2-3 days later (see Appendix F). When necessary, replacement surveys were emailed in November 2009 and final contact was made by mail in December 2009 (Dilman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). Respondents were encouraged to complete the survey by October 30, 2009 for the first survey emailing. Replacement surveys for the second emailing were due November 13, 2009 and for the third emailing November 27, 2009. Hard copies of the survey were mailed December 9, 2009 and due December 30, 2009. This timeline was contingent upon IRB approval as well as approval by the individual school districts.

Data Analysis

To answer Research Question One, "What are selected Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?" a content analysis was performed to assess the six selected school districts' bullying and harassment policies; Palm Beach, Brevard, Marion, Duval, Seminole, and Lake. For Research Question Two, "To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts that are members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts that are not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment?" a frequency distribution was used to describe principals' responses items 3 through 24 of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey.

To make inferences about these items, four independent t-tests were conducted. The independent variable was whether or not the principal's school was a member of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment. The dependent variables were the general assessment, policies, response, and legal aspects subscale scores. These variables were further considered composite variables as the scores for each subsection were added together and then divided by the total number of items for each subsection for easier interpretation.

For Research Question Three, "To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?" a logistic regression was performed. The independent variables were total student population, total percentage of students

receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of minority students. The dependent

variable was type of policy, either having a campus specific cyberbullying policy or not

having a campus specific cyberbullying policy.

To answer Research Questions Four and Five, "What do Florida middle school

principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?" and "What do

Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student

cyberbullying?" a constant comparison analysis was used. More specifically, responses

were coded to identify relevant trends and themes expressed. Table 1 displays the

research questions, data sources, and statistical analyses for this study.

Table 1 Data Sources and Analyses, Chapter One

Research Question	Data Source	Statistical Procedure
1. What are Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?	Florida Department of Education Model Policy Against Bullying and Harassment 67 Florida School Districts' Bullying and Harassment Policies	Content Analysis of the 67 Florida School Districts' Bullying and Harassment Policies
2. To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts with the state model policy against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts with a district specific policy against bullying and harassment?	Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey Items 3-24	Three Independent T-Tests
3. To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?	Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey Item 11	Logistic Regression
4. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?	Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey Items 25-27	Constant Comparison Analysis
5. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?	Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey Item 28	Constant Comparison Analysis

The delimitations of this study included:

1. The Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey was distributed to middle school principals in the following six Florida school districts: Palm Beach, Brevard, Marion, Duval, Seminole, and Lake. Palm Beach, Brevard, and Marion school districts are members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment; Duval, Seminole, and Lake are not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment.

2. Data was collected from a content analysis and an online survey.

3. Respondents were the principals at their current schools during the 2008-2009 school years.

Limitations

The limitations of this study included:

1. Data from the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey were analyzed based on the return rate of the responses received from the selected middle school principals.

2. Information and data from the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey were dependent upon the accuracy of the data provided by the middle school principals.

3. The Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey has not been tested for statistical validity or reliability.

Significance of the Study

This study added to the limited body of knowledge about cyberbullying by determining the extent to which both district and school level student cyberbullying policies have been implemented in selected Florida middle schools. More specifically, this study targeted the level of awareness of middle school principals regarding cyberbullying incidents occurring within the school environment as well as off-campus. Results of this study also provided information if it was possible to make a prediction regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy

based upon variables including total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students. More importantly, further insight was provided pertaining to middle school principals' perceptions about their role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying.

Summary

Cyberbullying is a serious and pervasive issue facing youth in the first part of the 21st century (Willard, 2007a). Students should be afforded a safe and civil learning environment. However, like traditional bullying, cyberbullying has proved to compromise a student's ability to feel secure and perform in school (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008a; Li, 2007; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Cyberbullying was also associated with other negative correlates such as interpersonal violence, substance abuse, and low self-concept (Li). For these reasons, state legislatures, including Florida's, have taken the necessary measures to protect students by requiring school districts to adopt an official policy prohibiting bullying and harassment (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b). However, despite these precautions, management by school personnel has remained difficult as students continue to embrace rapid developments in internet and mobile communication technologies (Willard, 2007b).

Consequently, the contents of this chapter have provided a synopsis of the relevant literature and conceptual frameworks that substantiate both the need and importance of this research study. Chapter Two is a comprehensive review of the relevant literature regarding bullying, social networking technologies, cyberbullying, and legal and policy aspects of preventing and controlling cyberbullying. Chapter Three contains a thorough description of the design of the study and overview of the

methodology. Chapter Four presents the results of the data collected. Connections are made between the analyses conducted and the proposed research questions. Chapter Five provides a discussion and interpretation of the analyses presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five also includes recommendations for future research as well as implications for both policy and practice in addressing student cyberbullying.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

"Bullying is an all too common form of youth aggression" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 149). Borg (1999) explained that bullying usually "takes place at school or during school-sponsored events when a student or group of students intentionally and repeatedly uses their power to hurt and control others" (p.137). According to Quiroz, Arnette, and Stephens (2006), "Bullies' power can come from their physical strength, age, financial status, popularity, social status, technology skills, or by association" (p. 1). Furthermore, Olweus (1995) stated that without systematic efforts on behalf of adults, an adolescent is likely to continue to be a bully or a victim for an extended period of time. In response, school-wide bullying intervention programs have been implemented (e.g., Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, Aggression Replacement Training (ART), and Aggressors, Victims, Bystanders). However, the dynamics of bullying have changed as technology has become common in both the home and at school. The use of social media, from texting to blogging to online social networking sites, has become integral to many teenagers' lives. In fact, Lenhart, Madden, Macgill, and Smith (2009) found that 51% of teens talk on their cell phones and 42% send messages through social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace every day. Consequently, modern technology has enabled bullies to extend their threats and control into cyberspace. Hence, there is a greater need for educational leaders to intervene by creating and enforcing policies that protect victims of cyberbullying. Therefore, the purpose of this review of literature was to first provide an overview of the nature and extent of cyberbullying among today's

youth; and second, present what prior research has stated regarding policy issues and their effect on cyberbullying.

<div align="center">Bullying</div>

Olweus (1993) defined bullying in the following manner, "A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself" (p. 9). While researchers have interpreted the meaning of bullying in slightly different ways, Olweus' definition included three important, universally accepted components:

1. "Bullying includes dominant, aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions toward victims;
2. Bullying involves a consistent pattern of behavior repeated over time by the bully;
3. Bullying consists of an imbalance of power or strength." (p. 8).

Furthermore, it is also accepted that a target can be bullied by single individual or a group; and that the target can be a single individual or group (Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003; Olweus; Quiroz, et al., 2006; Seals & Young, 2003). To further clarify what constitutes negative actions regarding bullying, Quiroz et al. (2006), have described two types, direct and indirect bullying. Direct bullying involves an array of behaviors including "hitting, tripping, pinching, verbal threats, name calling, racial slurs, insults, and demanding money, property, or service" (p. 4). Direct bullying can even escalate to a criminal level involving stabbing, choking, burning, and shooting (Dake, et al., 2003; Quiroz, et al.; Seals & Young, 2003). Indirect bullying, on the other hand, is a more subtle form of bullying, but no less harmful. Indirect bullying involves rejecting, excluding, and isolating; manipulating friends and relationships; and blackmailing, terrorizing, and proposing dangerous dares (Dake, et al.; Quiroz et al.; Seals & Young).

What was also known about bullying was why adolescents bully. According to Olweus (1993), "students who bully have strong needs for power and dominance; find satisfaction in causing injury and suffering to other students; and were often rewarded in some way for their behavior with material or psychological rewards" (p. 34). Additionally, multiple researchers have found that a student can assume both roles - victim and bully at the same time (Borg, 1999; Graham & Juvonen, 2002; Ma, 2001; Olweus; Seals & Young, 2003). Perhaps more importantly, students who bully others not only have the potential to harm their victims, but can also have a substantial impact on bystanders of bullying as well as the overall climate of the school community (Olweus). To counteract those effects, additional information about bullying including the interrelated roles of victims and bullies, the characteristics of bullies and victims, and the emotional and psychological effects of bullying were examined.

<u>Research on Bullying</u>

Offending and Victimization

The literature confirmed that there are bullies, victims of bullying, and bystanders of bullying; and their roles are often interchangeable (Borg, 1999; Dake et al., 2003; Graham & Juvonen 2002; Ma, 2001; Olweus, 1993; Quiroz et al. 2009; Seals & Young, 2003). In effect, Olweus generated what is known as the 'Bullying Circle.' More specifically, there were seven roles. The first, 'students who bully', are "those who bully intentionally, instigate bullying, and play a leader role" (p. 34). The second type, 'followers or henchmen', "outwardly support bullying behaviors and are active bullies, but do not assume a lead role" (p. 34). Next, 'supporters or passive bullies,' "openly and actively encourage bullying by laughing or calling attention to the situation however,

they do not join in" (p. 34). Similarly, 'passive supporters or possible bullies' "like the bullying but do not display outward signs of support" (p. 35). Fifth, 'disengaged onlookers,' "do not actively participate in bullying situations on behalf of either the bully or the victim; they choose not get involved and take a stand" (p. 35). Following, 'possible defenders' "dislike the bullying and think that they should help the student but do nothing about it" (p. 35). Last, the 'defenders' "dislike the bullying and actively try to help the student who is being bullied" (p. 36).

Connected to the 'Bullying Circle', a substantial amount of research has been devoted to the victim/bully cycle. Two studies were of particular importance. Borg (1999) surveyed 6,282 primary and secondary Maltese students and found that nearly 61% were self-identified victims and almost 49% were self-identified bullies no less than once during the school year. Results also showed that just over a third of the respondents were both victims and bullies at least once over the survey period. Borg suggested that these findings reflected that some students cope with the unpleasant experience of being bullied by displacing their frustrations onto other students.

Additional analysis by Borg (1999) also revealed variations in the frequency of victimization and perpetration. In fact, according to Borg, of the group of self-identified bullies, "67.9 per cent were occasional victims, whereas 32.1 per cent were frequent bullies" (p. 142). Along those same lines, almost 73% were occasional bullies, while approximately 27% were frequent bullies. Regarding the entire sample, nearly 42% were occasional victims and just short of 35% were occasional bullies. Concerning serious bullying, 19% reported being frequent victims and 14% were frequent bullies. Those numbers translated into one in three engaged in serious bullying during the survey period.

Borg suggested that these findings show that occasional bullying is more prevalent than more serious frequent bullying.

Borg (1999) also found that occasional bullying reported by victims increased from Year 5 to Form 1; Form 1 being the first year of secondary school. Occasional bullying then declined for the remaining three years of secondary school. Serious bullying as experienced by victims also declined from Year 5 to the end of secondary school. Borg suggested that these finding corroborate what related studies found; the number of victims involved in serious bullying declines as students grow older. With regard to bullies' experiences, Borg found no definitive trend in the number of bullies engaged in frequent or serious bullying. However, Borg did report serious bullying as high as 17.3% in Year 5 to as low as 11.7% in Forms 1 and 4 (the beginning and end of secondary school). Borg stated that overall, "These results would suggest that whereas the hard core of regular bullies quickly establishes itself and remains largely the same in magnitude over grade, the pool of potential victims progressively shrinks to such an extent that the same victims become targets of several bullies acting on their own or in a group" (p. 144).

In a later study, Ma (2001) also focused on the victim-bully cycle. To do this Ma examined cross-sectional data from the New Brunswick School Climate Study for 6,883 students in grade 6 and 6,868 students in grade 8. Ma found that the cycle of bullying was present in several aspects of school life. School-level variables measured were school size, school mean SES, discipline climate, academic press, and parental involvement. Ma further explained for the purpose of the study, a variable "that is not significantly related to the contrast (between victims and bullies) must be considered to

have the same partial association with victims as it has with bullies" (p. 360). Hence, Ma observed for grade 6 variables school size and parental involvement showed a partial association with victims that was significantly different than bullies. Discipline climate showed an equivalently shared effect between victims and bullies, while SES and academic press had no effect on both groups. Conversely, for grade 8 academic press displayed partial association with victims that was significantly different from that of bullies. Both school size and discipline demonstrated an equivalently shared effect on victims and bullies, while school mean SES and parental involvement had no effect on victims and bullies (Ma).

<center>Characteristics of Bullies and Victims</center>

Several research studies attempted to identify the characteristics of victims and bullies. In review, questions about student factors like gender, grade level, ethnicity, self-esteem, academic performance, and peer harassment were among the most commonly addressed. According to Olweus (1993), students who were bullied were "more susceptible to depression, low self-esteem, health problems, poor grades, and suicidal ideation" (p. 11). Olweus also found that students who bullied others were more likely to "get into frequent fights, steal and vandalize property, drink alcohol and smoke, report poor grades, perceive a negative climate at school, and may even carry a weapon"(p. 35). However, Olweus also cautioned that not all bullies exhibit behavior problems or choose to participate in obvious rule-breaking activities with the possibility of getting caught. Rather, some were socially savvy and were excellent at currying favor with their teachers and other adults; and this was especially true for girls.

<center>35</center>

Corroborating Olweus' research, multiple researchers found that bullies tend to engage in substance abuse, criminal misconduct, and academic misconduct (Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Forero, McLellan, Rissel, & Bauman, 1999; Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton, & Scheidt, 2001). The same group of researchers also found that bullies had less responsive and less supportive parents. Other notable characteristics included having friends who are bullies (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000); and had lower school bonding, a lack of desire to well in school, and the inability to be happy at school and/or take school seriously (Graham & Juvonen, 2002).

Sharing some of the same characteristics, victims of bullying also had less responsive and less supportive parents (Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Forero et al, 1999; Nansel et al., 2001) and had lower school bonding, a lack of desire to well in school, and the inability to enjoy school and/or take school seriously (Graham & Juvonen, 2002). Additionally, victims tended to suffer from feelings of loneliness, had low self-esteem, and suffered from anxiety (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000). Even more alarming, according to Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpela, Rantanen, and Rimpela (2000), "victims of bullying experienced physical health problems such as sleep problems, stomach aches, and fatigue; neck, shoulder, and back pain" (p. 672). Kaltiala-Heino et. al also stated that victims tend to suffer from eating disorders and experience suicidal ideation.

Conflicting research existed concerning the investigations of gender, ethnic, and grade-level differences. According to Olweus (1993), boys were more likely than girls to bully physically; and both boys and girls were as equally likely to bully verbally. However, according to Graham and Juvonen (2002), the evidence was inconclusive regarding indirect bullying among boys and girls. Consensus existed concerning who did

the bulling. Boys were generally bullied by boys, and girls tend to be bullied by both genders (Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Forero et al., 1999; Nansel et al., 2001). With respect to race, Nansel et al. found "no significant differences in bullying or victimization among African American, Hispanic, and White students in the United States" (p. 2094). Last, the impact of grade level on the prevalence of bullying appeared to be uncertain. However, while no concluding evidence was found as to when bullying peaks, there was general agreement that bullying takes place mostly when students transition from primary school to secondary school (Borg, 1999; Nansel, et al.; Olweus). In fact, Walsh (2005) found from a survey of 238 teachers in one school district that teacher recognition of serious bullying took place during the middle school years.

Pulling all of this information together were two important studies. Graham and Juvonen (2002) asked just over 400 students in an urban middle school to complete a set of procedures to nominate classmates that they perceived as either aggressors or victims of peer harassment. Nomination procedures were also used to measure peer acceptance and rejection. Additionally, participants were asked to report their self-perceived levels of loneliness, social anxiety, and self-esteem. The results were reported by ethnic group.

Considered majority ethnic groups, African American and Latino students each received more nominations as aggressors than as victims of harassment. More specifically, 62% of the African American and 54% of the Latino students were perceived as aggressors by their peers; and only 38% and 46% as harassment victims. The opposite pattern was observed for the minority ethnic groups; White, Persian, Asian, and Other. Approximately 78% of White students and 86% of Persian students were nominated as victims of harassment than aggressors. For the remaining

37

two groups, 61% of Asians and 62% of those students classified as Other were nominated as harassment victims. In other words, African American and Latino students had more students with reputations as aggressors than as victims of harassment, whereas White, Persian, Asian, and students considered Other had more victims of harassment than aggressors. However, Graham and Juvonen found that "African American harassment victims reported more loneliness and lower self-esteem than did harassment victims in the other ethnic groups, and they were rejected by their peers" (p. 173).

In a similar study, Seals and Young (2003) also explored the relationship of ethnicity to bullying and victimization. However, they additionally considered gender, grade-level, self-esteem, and depression as plausible factors. A convenience sample of 454 public school students in grades 7 and 8 were surveyed. Three instruments were used to collect the data: the Peer Relations Questionnaire, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the Children's Depression Inventory.

 Seals and Young (2003) found that just over 15% of White students reported being a bully, whereas almost 85% of African American students were self-identified bullies. However, only 18.5% of White students reported being a victim of bullying, while almost 82% of African American students reported being bullied. The percentage of non-bully, non-victim White students was just short of 19% and for African American students just over 80 %. Concerning gender, 67% of males reported being a bully and 44% reported being a victim. For females, 34% reported being a bully and 57% reported being a victim of bullying. Comparing grade levels, 58% of students reported being bullies seventh grade and 42% of students in eighth grade. Similarly, 49% of students in seventh grade and 51% of students in eighth grade reported victimization by peer

harassment (Seals & Young). Of equal importance Seals and Young discovered that both

bullies and victims exhibited increased levels of depression as compared to students who

were neither bullies nor victims. Lastly, there were no statistically significant difference

among the three groups, bullies, victims and non-bullies/non-victims in terms of self-

esteem.

<div align="center">Emotional and Psychological Consequences</div>

Olweus (1993) observed that both bullies and victims experience a range of

emotional and psychological consequences as a result of bullying. Shared consequences

included suffering symptoms of depression; experiencing suicidal ideation; having less

responsive and supportive parents; and having lower school bonding and adjustment

(Berthold & Hoover, 2000; Cleary, 2000; Forero et al., 1999; Hawker & Boulton, 2000;

Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus). To be more specific, in a study conducted by Kaltiala-

Heino et al. (2000), "bullies were 2.8 to 4.3 times more likely to suffer from symptoms of

depression as compared to students not engaged in bullying; for victims 4 times more and

self-identified bully/victims 6.3 to 8.8 times more" (p. 674). Concerning self-perceived

suicidal ideation, bullies were 4 times more likely to have such thoughts, 2.1 times more

likely for victims, and 2.5 times more for bully/victims.

These groups differed in that the victims were found to burden a greater number

of effects. Stated by Olweus (1993) victims also had the tendency to suffer from feelings

of loneliness, have low self-esteem, suffer from eating disorders, and even suffer from

psychiatric problems as a result of severe bullying. In fact, in a key study conducted by

Hawker and Boulton (2000) peer victimization was found to be positively related to

psychosocial maladjustment. More specifically, Hawker and Boulton conducted a meta-

analysis of over twenty years of research published between 1978 and 1997. To generate

the data, Hawker and Boulton calculated the mean effect sizes to test for practical

significance between victimization and six types of maladjustment: depression,

loneliness, generalized and social anxiety, and global and social self-worth.

The results of Hawker and Boulton's study suggested that victimization and

depression was strongly related with mean effect sizes greater than zero (p<.0001).

Loneliness, though less statistically significant than depression, still provided evidence of

a positive association with victimization. Regarding anxiety, Hawker and Boulton (2000)

found numerous studies correlating victimization positively with some measure of social

anxiety. However, studies examining the relationship between generalized anxiety and

victimization were less common. Additionally, it was difficult for Hawker and Boulton to

make definitive statements concerning both self-esteem and self concept due to the fact

that multiple studies were biased as a result of shared method variance. In other words,

the mean effect sizes for both self-esteem and self-concept studies were influenced by

additional variables like depression, loneliness, and anxiety. However, it can be surmised

that victims were more depressed and lonely than nonvictims.

The Impact of Technology

According to Internet World Stats online (2009), nearly 24% of the world's

population uses the Internet with the highest percentages of users located in North

America (74.4%). For youth in the United States, 87% use email and 60% have a

desktop/lap top (Rainie, 2009). These individuals, also known as digital natives if born

after 1990, do not know a world without computers and the conveniences that modern

technologies have provided. In fact, 75% of teens have a cell phone, 68% send and/or

receive instant messages, 20% have their own PDAs or Blackberries, 54% read blogs, 50-60% post photos online, 25% have created or modified web pages or blogs for others. Also notable, 70% of teens online use social networking sites and have participated in 10 Virtual Worlds (Rainie).

Also monitoring students' online behavior, a combined 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 i-SAFE survey of 55,000 students found that "over 70% of students go online at least once a week" (i-SAFE, 2009, p. 1). Additionally, it was found that nearly 85% spend a minimum of one hour per week on the Internet and 33% choose email, instant messages, and chat rooms as the primary modes to keep in contact with their friends. However, risky online behaviors were also reported. Fifty-three percent of teens reported preferring to be alone when surfing the Internet and "12% reported having unsupervised access to the Internet at school" (p. 1). Additionally, 39% admitted to giving out personal information like their name, address, age, and gender; 53% reported seeing something on the Internet that should not be posted; and 64% admitted knowing of or hearing about other students who have done something on the Internet that should not be done (i-SAFE, 2009).

<p style="text-align:center">Social Networking Technologies</p>

Lenhart, Madden, Mcgill, and Smith (2007) discovered that "64% of online teens ages 12-17 have participated in one or more content-creating activities on the Internet" (p. 2). More specifically, 39% reported sharing their own stories, artwork, videos, and/or photos online; 28% maintain a personal but public online journal and blog; and 27% keep up their own personal webpage. In addition, 55% have Facebook and/or MySpace profile.

Willard (2006) acknowledged that there were many positives of online social networking sites. Willard noted that in these communities, members were provided with opportunities for self-expression and friendship building. To be more specific, social networking sites provide members with instant messaging capabilities and discussion groups as well as allow them to make connections with other members who share similar interests. Also important, according to Willard, was that most of these sites have Use Agreements. Agreements usually entailed clauses that "prohibit the use of harmful speech, impersonation, and other inappropriate or potentially dangerous activities from taking place" (p. 2). Additionally, a minimum age of 13 was required to obtain a personal profile.

However, Willard (2006) also expressed legitimate concerns associated with social networking sites for two reasons: (a) some teens, as expected, do not make good choices when interacting on these sites, and (b) many parents do not pay sufficient attention. In fact, according to Lenhart (2008) 32% of teens online teens have experienced at least one of many types of online harassment/aggression. More specifically, Lenhart (2008) found that 15% of teens reported having private material, instant messages, texts, and email, forwarded without permission. Also, 13% reported having received threatening messages; 13% claimed that someone had spread a rumor about them online; and 6% reported having someone without their permission post an embarrassing picture of them online.

Lenhart (2008) also found that girls, particularly between the ages of 15 and 17, reported more online bullying (70%); whereas 38% of all online girls reported experiencing some type of online harassment/aggression. Accordingly, social

networking users were also found to report online bullying. To be exact, 39% of social networking site users experienced it. However, 67% teens surveyed by Lenhart think that bullying takes place more offline.

<div align="center">Social Networking and Bullying</div>

Investigating the accuracy of media reports asserting the risks of social networking, Hinduja and Patchin (2008b) conducted an extensive content analysis of a random sample of adolescent MySpace profile pages. According to Hinduja and Patchin (2008b), the media have focused primarily on instances in which MySpace profiles have been closely linked to many social problems. These problems included "cyberbullying, cyberstalking, alcohol and drug abuse, hate crimes, planned and executed bombings, planned school shooting, suicide, and even murder" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008b, p. 4).

Of the 9,282 profiles reviewed, Hinduja and Patchin (2008b) examined both the number of adolescents who revealed identifiable information on their personal profiles and as well as the types of information. First, Hinduja and Patchin (2008b) found that 54% of the profiles were created by females and more than 8% showed evidence of age inflation. Additionally, almost 57% of the adolescents' profiles included at least one picture of themselves. While a majority of the pictures of the youth were with family and friends, some included others posing in swimsuits and underwear. Hinduja and Patchin (2008b) asserted that, "Not only could these pictures be used by would-be cyberbullies to inflict harm, but they may also attract the attention of sexual predators or others with prurient motives" (p. 136).

Regarding personal information, the youth's first name was included on almost 40% profiles and their full name on approximately 9%. Eighty-one percent included their

current city, 28% their school, 4% their instant messaging name, and less than 1% included their email address. Only 4 cases reported their personal cell phone numbers (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008b).

Hinduja and Patchin (2008b) also stated that they found a significant amount of questionable behavior exhibited within the profile pages. Many youth admitted that they had used alcohol (18%), 8% discussed smoking cigarettes, and 2% stated that they had used marijuana. Additionally, almost 33% had a swear word found in the comments section of their profile, while just under 20% had a swear word in their personal profile information. Accordingly, Hinduja and Patchin (2008b) explained such public revelations can have potentially long term consequences because prospective employers, college admissions counselors, and even some law enforcement agencies have been known to review social networking sites. Additionally, Hinduja and Patchin (2008b) stated that "These environments are ideal for online aggression because they are popular, easy and widely accessible, and because bullies can hide or disguise their identity" (p. 3).

Mobile Bullying Survey

A 2005 National Children's Home mobile bullying survey of 770 adolescents aged 11 to 19 in the United Kingdom revealed that 97% of the respondents owned a mobile phone. In fact, the purpose of the study was to identify the ways in which adolescents can be bullied via a mobile phone. Defined for the survey, mobile bullying was identified to be one or more unwelcome text messages or photographs that the recipient would find threatening or cause discomfort in some way.

The results of the survey revealed that 20% of the adolescents had experienced some sort of digital bullying (email, internet chatroom, or text). Looking at each

separately, text bullying was the most significant at 14%, followed by internet chatrooms at 5%, and 4% by email. When asked, "Has someone had ever taken a photograph of you using a mobile phone camera that made you feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, or threatened?"; 10% said yes and 17% believed that the image had been sent to someone else. Concerning who carried out the behavior, 73% said they knew the person who bullied them and 26% said it was a stranger. More disconcerting, when asked if they had informed anyone about the bullying, 28% reported not telling anyone, 41% told a friend, 24% spoke to a parent, and only 14% asked a teacher for help. As far as when the bullying incidents took place, 50% of the threats took place at school, 17% took place during the weekend, and 21% occurred after school or during school holidays (National Children's Home, 2005).

<div align="center">Cyberbullying</div>

As defined in Chapter One, cyberbulling is "willful and repeated harm inflicted through the medium of electronic text" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 152). Relatively new, the research on cyberbullying was consistent with what was discovered about traditional bullying. Like traditional bullying, cyberbullying was found to be most prevalent during the transition from primary school to secondary school (Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, & Tippett, 2007; Williams & Guerra, 2007; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Additionally, boys were generally cyberbullied by boys; and girls were cyberbullied by both genders (Berson, Berson, & Ferron, 2002; Burgess-Proctor, Hinduja, & Patchin, 2008a; Kowlaski & Limber, 2007). Both cyberbullies and cybervictims tended to suffer from symptoms of depression; only a small percentage of cybervictims tell adults when they were cyberbullied; and the evidence was inconclusive

when comparing racial groups and the occurrence of cyberbullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008a; Li, 2007, Slonje & Smith, 2008; Ybarra & Mitchell).

Despite these similarities, there were issues specific to cyberbullying. First, cyberbullying can take place through multiple modes: cell phone text messaging, email, instant messages, in chat rooms, on personal websites, social networks, online bulletin boards, and virtual worlds (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009a). Second, it can take on different forms: flaming, harassment, denigration, impersonation, outing, trickery, exclusion, and ultimately cyberstalking (Willard, 2007c). More specifically, Willard (2007c) defined flaming as "online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language" (p. 1); harassment as "repeatedly sending nasty, mean, and insulting messages" (p.1); and denigration as "dissing someone online by sending or posting cruel gossip rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendship" (p.1). Equally hurtful, impersonation was defined by Willard as "pretending to be someone else or sending or posting material to get that person in trouble or damage their reputation or friendships" (p. 2); outing as "sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online" (p. 2); and trickery as "convincing someone into sharing secrets or revealing information in confidence and then sharing it online without their permission" (p. 2). The act of 'exclusion' as explained by Willard is "intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group" (p. 3); and perhaps most devastating, cyberstalking "is repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear on behalf of the victim" (p. 4).

A third concern was the anonymity and pseudonymity of cyberbullying. As explained by Hinduja and Patchin (2009a), cyberbullies can remain unknown by their

victims by assuming fictitious identities. This can be done by setting up temporary email accounts and using false names in chat rooms and instant messaging programs. Also disconcerting is the lack of inhibition displayed by adolescents online. Willard (2007c) rationalized it as the "you can't see me-I can't see you" mentality. More specifically, youth have the perception of being invisible while online. This is because when they use the Internet they do not receive tangible or face-to-face feedback about the ramifications of their actions, including those that are hurtful. This sense of disconnect is compounded by the shared assumption that everyone does it. In fact, Willard (2007c) noted several commonly used phrases shared by youth to explain why they have engaged in irresponsible online behaviors: "Life online is just a game"; "Look at me-I'm a star"; "It's not me. It's my online persona"; "What happens online stays online"; and "On the Internet, I have the free-speech right to write or post anything I want, regardless of the harm it might cause another" (p. 4).

The remaining concerns were the lack of supervision in cyberspace and the viral nature of cyberbullying. Hinduja and Patchin (2009a) acknowledged that there are chat room hosts and message board administrators in public chatrooms, however, cautioned that not every nasty or hateful statement is caught. Moreover, "no individuals can monitor or censor offensive content in private communications through message boards, social networking sites, electronic mail, or instant messages sent via computer or cell phone" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009a, p. 22). Also problematic is the increasingly common trend of personal computers in adolescents' bedrooms. Out of sight, parents are unable to monitor what their children are viewing while online and are unable to detect their children's participation in online bullying (or victimization). Lastly, what makes

cyberbullying especially pervasive is that humiliating and hurtful messages can be sent in mass, quickly, and with no recourse (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009a). For these reasons, more research on cyberbullying was needed.

Research on Cyberbullying

Offending and Victimization

Research regarding the nature and extent of adolescences' experiences with cyberbullying suggested that the effects were dependent upon the role of the adolescent as cyberbully, cybervictim, and/or witness (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006; Li, 2007; Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2007; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). In fact, according to a 2006 study of 384 youth conducted by Hinduja and Patchin, almost 11% of respondents reported being a victim of on-line bullying; whereas most respondents reported being a witness (47.1%) and approximately 29% reported being a victim. Similarly, Li reported that 53% of 177 seventh grade students surveyed knew of someone being cyberbullied. Furthermore, according to the cybervictims, almost 32% reported being bullied by their school mates, nearly 12% by people outside their schools, and approximately 16% by multiple sources (school mates, people outside school, and others). Interestingly, the highest percentage, 40.9%, were unaware of who cyberbullied them (Li).

Also with comparable results, Wolak et al. (2007) concluded from a telephone survey of a nationally representative sample of 1500 youth Internet users, ages 10 to 17, that 9% had been harassed online during the previous year. Forty-three percent were victimized by known peers and 57% were victimized by people they did not know in person but had met online. However, only 25% of the incidents by known peers were considered repeated incidents; 21% by online only contacts (Wolak et al.).

Regarding mediums found most conducive to cyberbullying, a majority of surveyed adolescents reported being harassed in a chat room or via computer text message (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006; Li, 2007; Slonje & Smith, 2008). With respect to frequency, Li (2007) determined that almost 60% of cyber victims surveyed were cyberbullied one to three times in the past 30 days; over 18% were cyberbullied four to ten times; and nearly a quarter were cyberbullied more than ten times. Conversely, according to the self-identified cyberbullies, 43% stated that they cyberbullied others four times or less, over 30% cyberbullied four to ten times, and just over 26% of them cyberbullied others in excess of ten times. Comparatively, Hinduja and Patchin (2006) had 83 adolescents report that they had been victimized in a chat room an average of 3.36 times during the past 30 days. In fact, one respondent reported being bullied in a chat room 50 times during the past 30 days. Thus, it can be surmised that cyberbullying has become increasingly severe in terms of the scope and can occur through multiple modes of electronic communication.

Linking Bullying and Cyberbullying

Willard (2007c) asserted that cyberbullying and cyberthreats were related to school yard bullying. More specifically, Willard postulated that students who were victimized at school were also victimized online; or students who were victimized at school became cyberbullies in retaliation. More so, Willard (2007c) believed that cybervictims tended to share their anger or depression online as distressing material. Making the connection between traditional bullying and cyberbullying, Li (2007) discovered that those who had been bullied while in school, about one-third had also been cyberbullied; and of that group approximately 17% were also cyberbullies. Within the

traditional school bully group, nearly 86% reported that they were also victims.

Additionally, almost 30% of this group was cyberbullies and just over 27% were

cyberbully victims. In other words, bullies tend to be cyberbullies and victim of physical

bullying were more likely to be cyberbullied. Additionally, Li also found that

"cyberbullies were more likely to be victims in cyberspace than those who do not

cyberbully" (p. 229).

Also examining the overlap between conventional bullying and cyberbullying,

Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) used data from the Youth Internet Safety Survey, a cross-

sectional, nationally representative telephone survey of youth Internet users in the United

States, to assess the characteristics related to online bullying. Fifteen hundred youth

respondents were separated into four groups: "targets, online aggressors,

aggressor/targets, and non-harassment involved youth" (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004, p.

1308). Ybarra and Mitchell found that almost one in five (19%) in the sample was

involved in some form of online harassment in 2003; this breaks down to 3% as

aggressor/targets, 4% as targets, and 12% as aggressors. Additionally, 56% of

aggressor/targets reported being the victim of offline bullying, while 49% of aggressors

and 44% of targets reported similar experiences. Moreover, for those youth who admitted

to harassing and/or embarrassing someone online, 84% reported knowing the target in

person. In contrast, only 31% of victims reported knowing the bully in person.

Questioning the repetitive nature of cyberbullying, Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) found that

55% of online targets were harassed more than once by the same individual; 16% were

harassed four or more times in 2003.

Similarly, Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) also found a statistically significant relationship between traditional schoolyard bullying and an increased risk of experiencing cyberbullying. With a sample of approximately 1400 youth respondents, Hinduja and Patchin stated, "youth who reported bullying others in real life in the previous six months were more than 2.5 times as likely to report bullying others on-line" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008b, p. 144). The same was true for victims of cyberbullying. Youth who were victims of offline bullying were more than 2.5 times as likely to be victims online in the past six months. Coinciding with those trends, off-line bullies were more than five times as likely to bullying on-line as compared to those who did not engage in behaviors associated with bullying off-line. Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) suggested that these findings corroborate a conjecture that there were distinctive characteristics shared by some individuals that positioned them at a greater risk to be both on-line and off-line victims and offenders.

Characteristics of Cyberbullies and Cybervictims

Gender

Li (2007) found that females made up nearly 60% of cyber victims and just over one-half of cyberbullies were males. Following in 2008, Hinduja and Patchin found that approximately one-third of both boys and girls surveyed reported being cyberbullied and about 16 % of girls and 18% of boys admitted harassing others while online. Additionally, Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found no statistically significant difference between boys and girls regarding experiences with cyberbullying as either the victim or offender. However, both Li and Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found that girls were more likely to be harassed via email. Additionally, Slonje and Smith (2008) found that just

over 36% of surveyed adolescents reported being cyberbullied by one boy and the same amount could not report the gender of the person who cyberbullied them. Along those same lines, in the Slonje and Smith study only 12% reported being cyberbullied by one girl and just over 5% "by several girls, several boys, or both boys and girls" (p. 152).

Focusing specifically on the victimization of adolescent girls, two studies were of particular interest. Berson, Berson, and Ferron (2002) conducted a web-based study to examine adolescent girls' interactions in cyberspace. This was done as part of a collaborative research project with *Seventeen Magazine Online*, CyberAngels, the College of Education at the University of South Florida, and the Department of Child and Family Studies at the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute. Of the 10,800 completed surveys from May through June 1999, Berson et al. found that 50% of the respondents were 14 to15 years of age and in the ninth or tenth grades; 22% were 12 to 13 years of age; and middle school aged students comprised 26% of the respondents. Regarding online habits, 30% of the respondents reported spending at least three to five hours per week online per week, 25% from six to nine hours, and 12% from ten to twelve hours. An overwhelming majority (92%) reported a home computer as their primary access site. Considering supervision of online activities, "70% of the adolescent girls indicated that a parent or both parents had discussed online safety with them and 35% reported that teachers had addressed cybersafety while in school" (p. 68). However, ongoing discussions about safety decreased considerably with only 30% stating that a parent or teacher asked them about their online experiences. Related, the adolescent girls' online interactions were reflective of the lack these conversations. Sixty percent of the respondents reported filling out a form or a questionnaire online that included their

name, address, date of birth, phone number, or school name. In addition, 45% admitted to giving the same personal information to a person they met while online; 61% reported receiving pictures online from someone; and 23% have sent pictures of themselves to another person they have met while online. Of special interest to this study, 15% of respondents stated that they were recipients of disturbing communication online including suggestive or threatening emails. "Three percent admitted that they have initiated threatening or sexual explicit messages" (Berson et al., p. 69).

In later research, Burgess-Proctor, Hinduja, and Patchin (2009), analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data from 3,141 Internet-using adolescent girls. They found that the mean age of the respondents was 14.6 and 69.1% were in high school grades 9 through 12. Additionally, it is important to note that 78% were Caucasian/white and 75% were from the United States.

Investigating the types of cyberbullying behaviors the adolescent girls experienced, 38.3% responded positively to the statement "I have been bullied online." Moreover, the most frequent online victimization tactics reported were being ignored (45.8%) and being disrespected (42.9%). These behaviors were supported by the name calling the girls described. The girls reported being called "fat," "ugly," a "slut," and a "bitch." Accordingly, the spreading of gossip, including spreading lies and rumors about the victim, was also very common. Equally important, 11.2% reported serious behaviors like being threatened while online. "All of these occurrences most commonly took place in chat rooms (26.4%), by computer text message (21.7%), and via email (13.5%)" (Burgess-Proctor et al., p. 3).

Burgess-Proctor et al. also asked the respondents if they knew who cyberbullied them. Of the 1,203 adolescent girls who were self-identified cybervictims, 20.5% stated not knowing the identity of their cyberbully. Consequently, just under 80% reported knowing who bullied them; 31.3% by a school friend, 36.4% by someone else from the school, and 28.2% by someone in a chatroom. Qualitative analysis also revealed these sources to be ex-boyfriends. Regarding their responses to cyberthreats, 27.3% reported retaliating by 'cyberbullying back.' Almost 47% reported confiding in an online friend, 18.4% in friend offline, 13% informed a parent, and only 7% told another adult. A significant amount told nobody (35.5%) and 24.5% reported doing nothing at all (Burgess-Proctor, Hinduja, & Patchin).

Concerning the emotional effects of cyberbullying related to the Burgess-Proctor et al. 2009 study, "27.1% reported being affected at home and 22.7% reported being affected at school" (p. 2). In addition, "35% reported feeling angry, over 30% felt sad, and 41% were frustrated by being cyberbullied" (p. 3). In fact, the girls' reported additional emotions including feeling "upset," "depressed," "violated," "hated," "annoyed," "helpless," "exploited," and "stupid and put down." Also, some girls described how the bullying made them feel unsafe, while others reported having extreme emotional reactions including thoughts of suicide (Burgess-Proctor et al.).

Race and Age

Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found that Whites and non-Whites were as likely to experience cyberbullying as a victim or offender. Likewise, Li (2007) found that "over 60% of cyberbullying victims and about 70% of cyberbullies were White" (p. 1785). However, older youth were more likely to report both victimization and offense; and the

average age of respondents was 14.8 (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008a). With respect to grade level and class of offenders, Slonje and Smith (2008) reported that 32.8% of victims surveyed were unaware who cyberbullied them, 27.6% stated the perpetrator was in the same class, and 12.1% reported in a different class but same grade level. Further, approximately 12% reported being victims of cyberbullies in different grades, 10% not at their school, and 2% in a higher grade.

Adding to these findings, Williams and Guerra (2007) and Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, and Tippett (2009) found that Internet bullying peaks in middle school and remains relatively high during high school. More specifically, Williams and Guerra compared responses from a questionnaire administered to 2,293 youth in grades 5, 8, and 11 in 2005 and later in 2006 and found that physical and Internet bullying peaked in eighth grade and declined in eleventh grade. Conversely, verbal bullying was found to peak in eighth grade and remained relatively high in the eleventh grade. Smith et al. found no significant differences in the amount of cyberbullying incidents for youth between 11 to 13 and 14 to 16 age groups. Smith et al. postulated that these results reflect increased use and ownership of mobile phones and email with older youth. However, they detected significant interactions between age and gender. Generally speaking, younger boys perceived email bullying to be more severe than did older boys. Additionally, older boys were more likely to admit bullying others through instant messaging than younger boys. However, there was little fluctuation in the girls' perceptions as they aged for both email bullying and instant messaging. Yet, Smith et al. found that "girls were significantly more likely to be cyberbullied, especially by text messages and phone calls than boys" (p. 379).

Concentrating exclusively on electronic bullying among middle school students (grades 6 through 8), Kowlaski and Limber (2007) had 3,767 students from six elementary and six middle schools in southeastern and northwestern United States complete a questionnaire regarding their experiences with cyberbullying. More specifically, 1,915 girls and 1,852 boys filled out a questionnaire consisting of the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire plus 23 questions developed for the study.

Kowlaski and Limber (2007) found that in the last two months 11% of the students had been cyberbullied at least once; 7% admitted to being both a victim and bully; and 4% reported cyberbullying someone at least once in the previous two months. Examining the interaction between grade, gender, and chat room bullying, boys in grades 7 and 8 bullied others in chat rooms at a greater frequency than girls in grades 7 and 8. Sixth grade boys reported the lowest frequency of chat room bullying; whereas, chat room bullying decreased at a relatively equal rate from grades 6 to 8 for girls. Regarding bullying via email, eighth grade boys reported the highest frequency for email bullying as compared to sixth grade boys which reported the least amount. Girls, on the other hand, demonstrated a slight decrease in email bullying from grades 6 to 8. Kowlaski and Limber suggested that these findings support the perception that "as children move through middle school, they spend more time on computers and related technologies and consequently become more proficient at their use" (p. 29). Additionally, Kowalski and Limber postulated that with age, students are also more likely to begin engaging in social networking sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, and Xanga, all environments conducive for electronic bullying.

Computer Proficiency and Academic Achievement

Proficiency and time spent on the Internet also proved to be a strong link to cyberbullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008a; & Li, 2007). In fact, respondents for both the 2006 and 2008 studies conducted by Hinduja and Patchin, reported engaging in five different on-line activities averaging 18 hours per week on-line. Similarly, Li found that "nearly 89% of cybervictims used computers at least once a week and every cyberbully reported that he/she used computers at least four times per month" (p. 1788). In other words, the more frequent a student used the computer the more likely they were to be cyberbullies. However, it should be noted that the researcher found only three studies that directly addressed computer proficiency and time spent online.

Pertaining to academic achievement, there was no statistically significant correlation found by Li (2007) between school grades and reported cyberbullying incidents as well as between school grades and cyberbullying victims. However, Li did report that, "Half of the cyberbully victims had above average school grades, whereas less than 35% of the cyberbullies reported their school grades were above average" (p. 1783). These results contradicted previous research regarding conventional bullying and academic success. In fact, Graham and Juvonen (2002) reported both victims and bullies as having lower school bonding or a lack of desire to well in school. They also found that both victims and bullies demonstrated the inability to enjoy school and/or take school seriously. Additionally, Pellegrini and Bartini (2000) found that victims tended to suffer from feelings of loneliness, have low self-esteem, and suffered from anxiety which interfered with their ability to concentrate and perform in school. Lastly, Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpela, Rantanen, and Rimpela (2000) also found that "victims tended to experience physical health problems such as sleep problems, stomach aches, neck, shoulder, back

pain, and fatigue" (p. 672). All of these were side effects that had the potential to affect both school attendance and performance. Hence, more research was needed.

<p style="text-align:center">Emotional and Psychological Consequences</p>

Also of particular importance were the emotional and psychological effects of cyberbulling. According to Hinduja and Patchin (2006) of 384 victims surveyed, respondents reported feeling at least one or more of the following: approximately 163 felt frustrated, 154 felt angry, and 104 felt sad. Almost a third (31.9%) reported that cyberbullying affected their performance in school, 26.5% reported it affected their home life, and just over 20% reported it affected them with their friends. However, 22% reported not being bothered by on-line bullying and less than 44% stated that bullying did not affect them. Related, Ybarra and Mitchell (2007) examined the psychosocial and behavioral characteristics of 1,500 youth who reported experiencing Internet harassment as part of the Second Youth Internet Safety Survey. Ybarra and Mitchell found that "The likelihood of reporting behavioral problems and some psychosocial problems increased as harassment perpetration increased" (p.192). More specifically, students who were occasional perpetrators of Internet harassment reported problems with rule-breaking three times more than those who never harassed others in the past year; and seven times more for frequent perpetrators. Similarly, aggression problems were associated with two-fold increased odds with limited Internet harassment and nine-fold increased odds with frequent Internet harassment (Ybarra & Mitchell).

In response to online bullying, Hinduja and Patchin (2006) found that 56% reported confiding in an online friend and fewer than 9% informed an adult. Almost 37% told the bully to stop and approximately 32% had to remove themselves from the

situation. The other reported responses were split between telling a friend (25.7%), telling nobody (23%), telling their mom and dad (19.5%), and telling a sibling (16.8%) (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006). With similar results, Li (2007) found that those who were cyberbullied, only 34% stated that they informed adults about the incidents. Similarly, for the 87 students who knew of someone being cyberbullied, only 34.5% told an adult. However, notably "just over 67% of students believed that adults in schools tried to stop cyberbullying when informed" (Li, p. 230). Also comparable, Agatston, Kowalski, and Limber (2007) found from 148 middle and high school students interviewed during focus groups from two middle schools and two high schools in one pubic school district, that students viewed cyberbullying as a problem; but one rarely discussed at school. In fact, Agatston et al. related that the students did not perceive school officials as source of help when dealing with cyberbullying.

Also related to adult awareness, Dehue, Bolman, and Vollink (2008), surveyed 1,211 students and their parents in the Netherlands to ascertain their experiences with cyberbullying. The students surveyed were either in their last year of primary school or their first year of secondary school. Dehue et al. found that 60% of parents reported setting rules for their children regarding the frequency with which they were allowed to use the Internet; and 80% discussed what they were and were not allowed to do on the Internet. However, Dehue et al. suggested that many parents were not aware that their child was or had been a cyberbully or cybervictim. More specifically, only 4.8% of parents reported that their child was engaged in Internet and/or text message bullying as compared to 17.3% of students who admitted engaging in such behaviors. Also, only

11.8% of parents reported that their child was being cyberbullied as compared 22.9% of students who reported being a cybervictim (Dehue et al.).

The Role of Schools

Legal Aspects

According to Willard (2007a), "Schools must address instances of cyberbullying occurring through the use of the district Internet system or use of personal digital devices, such as cell phones, digital cameras, personal computers, and PDAs, while on campus" (p.1). However, according to an earlier article by Simmerle (2003) the anonymity associated with social networking technologies has made it easier for cyberbullying to take place and even more difficult to prevent and control. In fact, Simmerle postulated that determining how to effectively intervene remains unanswered. Simmerle stated:

> "Anonymity allows those bullies to be more scathing, hurtful and unless the bully makes real and intended threats or repeatedly and personally harasses a student, those that are caught usually cannot be punished by the school or through criminal law; most of this sort of bullying does not take place at school and therefore, the students are not under its jurisdiction." (p. 2)

Fortunately, key court decisions have provided some guidance regarding the type of behaviors that can be regulated, particularly school districts. The most influential and well known U.S. Supreme Court case involving student speech, *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)*, has provided a universal standard for school districts to follow (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b). In Tinker, the suspension of three public school students for wearing black armbands to protest the Vietnam War was declared by the Court as unconstitutional since the school district's decision violated the Free Speech clause of the First Amendment. In fact, the Court stated: "A prohibition against expression of opinion, without any evidence that the rule is necessary to avoid

substantial interference with school discipline or the rights of others, is not permissible under the First and Fourteenth Amendments" (Murray & Murray, 2007, p.253). In other words, "school officials may intervene only when there is a substantial and material threat of disruption or interference with the rights of other students" (Willard, 2007c, p. 10). Influential as well, *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier (1988)* also addressed student speech. In *Hazelwood,* the principal of Hazelwood East High School deleted two articles in a student newspaper that pertained to teen pregnancy and the impact of parental divorce on students, citing the inappropriate nature of the articles for younger students at the school. Several students sued, and ultimately the United States Supreme Court affirmed that "school officials have the right to censor school-sponsored publications as long as the censorship is 'reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns'" (Student Press Law Center, 2004, p. 6). However, according to Hinduja and Patchin (2009b) a major area of contention still remains - whether or not school district personnel can interfere and/or regulate behavior or student speech that occurs off-campus.

Hinduja and Patchin (2009b) stated that "some courts have upheld the actions of school administrators in disciplining students for off-campus actions" (p. 1). Hinduja ad Patchin specifically referred to *J.S v. Bethlehem Area School District (2000)* where the court's decision rendered schools the authority to discipline students whose speech or behavior committed off-campus presents a clear disruption of the school environment. In *J.S v. Bethlehem Area School District (2000)* "a student was expelled from school for creating a webpage that included threatening and derogatory comments about specific school staff" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b, p. 2). Different than *Tinker*, the school district was able to demonstrate disruption and a negative impact on the recipient of the speech.

More specifically, the court concluded: "Regrettably, in this day and age where school violence is becoming more commonplace, school officials are justified in taking very seriously threats against faculty and other students" (Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania as cited by Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b).

With additional commentary regarding the authority and responsibility of school officials to respond to cyberbullying, Willard (2007b) further examined issues surrounding search and seizure, free speech, and liability. More specifically, Willard (2007b) asserted that a school has the right to "monitor and search student Internet use records and files if there is reasonable suspicion that a user has violated district policy or the law" (p. 10). Willard (2007b) further explained that users should expect limited privacy when utilizing the school district's Internet system. However, regarding "cell phones and other personal digital devices (laptops, PDAs, digital cameras), review of student cell phone records may violate individual states' wire tapping laws" (p. 11). On the other hand, school officials have the right to review their records if there is reasonable suspicion of misuse (Willard, 2007b).

With respect to free speech, Willard (2007b) contended both the *Tinker* and the *Hazelwood* standards are applicable. To be more specific, Willard (2007b) explained that while courts in the past have ruled against school districts' that have responded with formal discipline, as of late, more are supporting intervention. This is due to the fact that research has proven the detrimental impact on students and the school community when students are harmed by bullying, including cyberbullying. Regarding *Hazelwood*, Willard (2007b) postulated that "schools should be able to impose 'educationally-based restrictions' whenever students use personal digital devices in the classroom for

instructional activities" (p. 16). Willard (2007b) also affirmed that prior precedent allows school districts to regulate all on-campus use of PDAs if clearly covered by the district anti-bullying and harassment policy. However, in order to address free speech issues in cases of off-campus cyberbullying, Willard (2007b) recommended documentation of two items: (a) school nexus and (b) disruption, interference, and threat thereof to the school environment.

Lastly, the issue of district liability involves the occurrence of cyberbullying incidents through the district Internet system or via cell phone or other personal digital devices used while on-campus or during school-sponsored events (Willard, 2007b). To be more exact, school districts may be liable due to negligence and/or statutory liability. According to Willard (2007b), negligence refers to the school district's duty to exercise a "reasonable standard of care." In others words, did the school district exercise precautions against cyberbullying through the regulation and close monitoring of the district Internet system? Also, Willard (2007b) asked, "Was it foreseeable that students would use the district Internet system to cyberbully others?" and "Is there an actual injury?"(p.118). With respect to statutory liability, the concern is directed toward violation of federal and state civil rights statutes, specifically Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. By this, a school may be questioned regarding the degree to which officials have "caused, encouraged, accepted, tolerated, or failed to correct a sexually or racially hostile environment" (Willard, 2007b, p.119). Hence, comprehensive review and revision of Internet management practices and Acceptable Use policies is necessary to address cyberbullying.

Policy

Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara (2008) conducted a study to analyze school bullying policies in England. According to Smith et. al., schools in England were required by law to have an anti-bullying policy. However, they postulated that policies may be deficient in many important areas. Hence, the researchers analyzed 142 school anti-bullying policies, from 115 primary schools and 27 secondary schools. A 31 item scoring scheme was devised to assess each school's policy.

For Section A, Smith et al. reported a high response rate for defining bullying behaviors to include physical, verbal, and relational forms of bullying. A moderate response rate was reported regarding bullying due to race, sex, and material possesions. Following, responses were low for distinguishing between bullying and other kinds of aggressive behavior in addition to addressing student-teacher bullying. Most intriguing, the responses were low for mentioning homophobic bullying and cyberbullying (Smith et. al, 2008).

For section B, only instructions of how parents will be informed if their child is involved in a bullying incident received a high response rate. Items that received moderate responses included: (a) how both victims and teaching staff should respond to incidents of bullying, including reporting; and (b) how perpetrators of bullying will be punished depending on the type and severity of the incident. However, low responses were recorded for discussing the responsibilities of both teaching staff and student bystanders if witnesses of bullying in addition to parents' responsibilities if they are aware of bullying. Low responses were also obtained regarding the effectiveness of sanctions recorded by follow-up reports as well as what actions would be taken if bullying persisted. Of equal importance, low responses were recorded for mentioning

victim support and how the aggressors would be helped to change their behavior (Smith et al., 2008).

Section C received the lowest scores. This was because no policy received high levels of response. More specifically, how reports of bullying would be recorded in addition to the policy being periodically reviewed and updated received moderate levels of response. The two remaining items, how bullying reports will be managed by designated personnel in addition to explaining how records of bullying incidents would be used, received low mentions too (Smith et. al, 2008).

The last section, D, received high scores. This was because schools had to mention only one of the five following criterion: (a) preventative strategies to combat bullying, (b) promotion of cooperative behaviors, (c) how good behavior would be rewarded, (d) measures to improve school climate, or (e) creation of a safe learning environment. One item moderately reported was counsel for parents about bullying. Low mentions were given to "general peer support issues, the preventative role of playground supervisors or lunchtime supervisors, and issues of inclusiveness" (Smith et al., 2008, p. 8). Smith et al. asserted that these findings revealed a range in score regarding the adequacy and coverage of anti-bullying and harassment policies.

Section 1006.147, Florida Statutes

In 2008, the Florida Legislature passed Section 1006.147 of the Florida Statutes also known as the Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up For ALL Students Act (FLDOE, 2009a). The Act mandated that "every school district in Florida develop and implement policies and procedures to address the problem of bullying and harassment of students and staff" (FLDOE, 2009a, p. 1). School districts were given the choice to either adopt the Florida

Department of Education Safe Schools model policy or develop their own. An example

of a proactive school district, the School Board of Palm Beach County decided to develop

their own bullying and harassment policy, *School District Policy 5.002* (School District

of Palm Beach County, 2009). Some requirements of the new law and policy included:

> "1. Education of all students and staff about the characteristics of bullying and
> harassment;
> 2. Publication of anti-bullying policies in the Student-Parent Handbook and Staff
> Handbooks;
> 3. Requirements regarding the posting of reporting procedures in prominent
> places around school campuses and other workplaces;
> 4. Guidelines for ensuring the rapid administrative response to reports of bullying
> and harassment, including specific time requirements (within 24 hours or the next
> school day) for contacting parents or guardians of the accused and the target; and
> 5. Requirements that districts submit reports on the incidence of bullying and
> harassment to the State Department of Education on an annual basis." (School
> District of Palm Beach County, 2009, p. 1).

Florida's State Model Policy Against Bullying and Harassment

According to the Florida Department of Education Safe Schools Office (2009c),

there were multiple bullying programs being utilized throughout the state of Florida.

Proven bullying programs included *Aggression Replacement Training* (ART) in

Hernando and Indian River Counties; *Aggressors, Victims, Bystanders* in Brevard,

Collier, Columbia, DeSoto, Dixie, Escambia, FAU Lab School, Flagler, Glades,

Lafayette, Levy, Manatee, Okaloosa, Palm Beach, Pinellas, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, St.

Lucie, Union, and Volusia Counties; the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* in the

FAU Lab School, Marion, Orange, Pasco, Pinellas, Sarasota, Seminole, and Sumter

Counties; *PATHS* in Madison and Okaloosa counties; *PeaceBuilders* in Franklin and Gulf

Counties; and *Positive Action* in Charlotte and Leon Counties. Other promising bullying

programs highlighted by the Florida Office of Safe Schools included: *Project ACHIEVE*

in Charlotte county; *Bullying Safe* in Lee County; *Bully-Proofing Your School* in Brevard

and Volusia Counties; *Foundations: Creating Safe and Civil Schools* in Clay and Duval

Counties; *Safe School Ambassadors* in Seminole County; *Success in Stages: Build*

Respect, Stop Bullying in Union County; and *TRUST* in Miami-Dade County (FLDOE,

2009c).

In addition to the implementation of these programs, and in compliance with the

requirements of Section 1006.147 of the Florida Statutes, the Florida Department of

Education Safe Schools Office also developed a state model policy against bullying and

harassment. Distributed October 1, 2008, the model policy contained a set of

prerequisites for individual districts to follow and/or include when developing their own

policy. Required components included (FLDOE, 2009b):

1. "A statement prohibiting bullying and harassment" (p. 1);
2. "A definition of bullying and a definition of harassment" (p. 1);
3. "A description of the type of behavior expected from each student and school employee of a public K-12 educational institution" (p. 2);
4. "Consequences for a student or employee of a public K-12 educational institution who commits an act of bullying or harassment" (p. 3);
5. "Consequences for a student or employee of a public K-12 educational institution who is found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another of an act of bullying or harassment" (p. 3);
6. "A procedure for reporting an act of bullying or harassment, including provisions that permit a person to anonymously report such an act" (p. 4);
7. "A procedure for the prompt investigation of a report of bullying or harassment and the persons responsible for the investigation" (p.4)
8. "A process to investigate whether a reported act of bullying or harassment is within the scope of the district school system, and if not, a process for referral of such an act to the appropriate jurisdiction" (p. 5);
9. "A procedure for providing immediate notification to the parents/legal guardians of both the victim and perpetrator of bullying or harassment, as well as notification to all local agencies where criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator" (p.5);
10. "A procedure to refer victims and perpetrators of bullying or harassment for counseling" (p. 6);
11. "A procedure for including incidents of bullying and harassment in the school's school safety and discipline data report under section 1006.09(6) of the Florida Statutes. The report must include each incident of bullying or harassment and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals" (p.7);

12. "A procedure for providing instruction to students , parents/legal guardians, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers on identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying and harassment" (p. 8);

13. "A procedure for regularly reporting to a victim's parents/legal guardians the actions taken to protect the victim" (p. 8); and

14. "A procedure for publicizing the policy which must include its publication in the code of student conduct required under section 1006.07(2) of the Florida Statutes and in all employee handbooks" (p. 8).

Additionally, a point of clarification was made regarding section 1006.147(7)(a) of the Florida Statutes stating, "The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised in defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section" (Florida Statutes Online, 2009). As explained by the Florida Department of Education Office of Safe Schools (2009a),

> "if a student bullies using a district-issued laptop computer at home after school hours, he/she is still subject to the same disciplinary actions as if he/she had bullied using a computer in the school computer lab during second period. Instances of using personal electronic devices to bully or harass outside of what is described in Section 1006.147(2)(a)-(b), F.S., must be considered on a case-by-case basis determined by the facts as a result of the investigation" (p. 6).

Consequently, it can be interpreted that schools must meet the aforementioned *Tinker* standard when addressing incidents of cyberbullying. In other words, school personnel must bear the burden of providing proof that student speech and/or behaviors via the Internet and other portable electronic devices have caused a substantial disruption to the learning environment even if produced off-campus. Moreover, as decided in *J.S v. Bethlehem Area School District (2000)* if there was evidence that a student's and/or a school personnel's safety was compromised, both the school and local law enforcement agencies had the jurisdiction to intervene.

Prevention

Worthen (2007), as a member of a national expert panel on electronic media and youth violence asserted that, "schools and districts can play the biggest role in addressing youth violence and negative behavior – electronic or otherwise" (p. 61). In effect, Beale and Hall (2007) formulated six research-based prevention-intervention strategies that school administrators can implement to combat the emerging phenomenon. First and foremost both student and teacher education should be provided under the supervision of school administrators. The school's curriculum should be integrated with cyberbullying lessons, to include appropriate Internet etiquette, and disseminated through classroom and/or large group sessions with guidance counselors. Second, school administrators should have a clear understanding of what the school's or school board's anti-bully policy includes so that if need be, harassment by means of mobile and internet technology could be addressed. Third, "The school's acceptable use policy should be updated to specifically prohibit using the Internet for bullying" (Beale & Hall, p. 10). More specifically, the policy should detail in plain terms what constitutes cyberbullying as well as the anticipated negative consequences. However, Beale and Hall warned that school officials need to be aware that cyberbullying needs to be a contractual issue and not a legal issue. This can be done, as recommended by Aftab (2005), through the addition of "a provision to the school's acceptable use policy reserving the right to discipline students for actions conducted away from school so long that those actions have an adverse effect on a student" (p. 3). The provision, of course, would also apply if the actions adversely affected the safety and well-being of the student while in school.

Beale and Hall (2007) also stated that school administrators should provide parents with education. In particular, "school administrators should encourage parents to

have conversations with their children regarding the ramifications of internet harassment, including school discipline, civil litigation, and criminal prosecution" (p. 11). Next, school administrators should establish a working relationship with the local police department. Police official in charge of Internet crimes, as known as 'cybercops', could come to their schools to address both parents and students regarding proper Internet use. It was also recommended by Beale and Hall that school leaders provide all faculty members with professional development opportunities to bring them up to speed regarding issues related to cyberbullying, especially prevention and early detection. Further, it was suggested that administrators create a school climate that is conducive to students feeling empowered and a sense of responsibility to report any and all typess of cyberbullying to an adult. Also, to establish consistency as students move though grade levels and among schools, school administrators should develop and adopt the same cyberbullying curriculum. Last, and ultimately, school administrators should establish a "schoolwide cyberbullying task force consisting of educators, parents, students, and community members, proficient in technology use, to develop and implement anti-cyberbullying programs aimed at keeping schools safe and secure" (Beale & Hall, p. 10).

Hinduja and Patchin (2009b) also determined six elements that would comprise an effective cyberbullying policy. They included:

1. "Specific definitions for harassment, intimidation, and bullying (including electronic variants)" (p. 1);
2. "Graduated consequences and remedial actions" (p.1);
3. "Procedures for reporting" (p.1);
4. "Procedures for investigating" (p. 2);
5. "Specific language that if a student's off-school speech or behavior results in 'substantial disruption of the learning environment,' the student can be disciplined" (p. 2); and
6. "Procedures for preventing cyberbullying such as workshops, staff training, and curriculum enhancements." (p. 3)

Summary

In this chapter, a comprehensive review of the relevant literature regarding bullying, social networking technologies, cyberbullying, and legal and policy aspects of preventing and controlling cyberbullying was discussed. It was found that both victims and perpetrators of traditional bullying share some of the same characteristics as cyberbullies and cybervictims; and their roles are often interchangeable. However, it was discovered that there are issues specific to cyberbullying. Cyberbullies can remain virtually anonymous and harass their victims twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Also, survey research regarding the popular profiles and personal websites like MySpace and Facebook, confirmed the viral and vicious nature of cyberbullying. Additionally, it was found that school personnel and parents have been largely uniformed about the seriousness and prevalence of electronic harassment. Hence, both legal and policy issues surrounding cyberbullying remain in the early stages of development.

Chapter Three contains a thorough description of the design of the study and overview of the methodology. Chapter Four presents the results of the data collected. Connections are made between the analyses conducted and the proposed research questions. Chapter Five provides a discussion and interpretation of the analyses presented in chapter four. Chapter Five also includes recommendations for future research as well as implications for both policy and practice in addressing student cyberbullying.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The methodology employed in this study was congruent with answering the five proposed Research Questions. First, a content analysis of six Florida school districts' anti-bullying policies was conducted to determine the extent to which cyberbullying was addressed in each individual policy. Next, 68 middle school principals from the same six Florida school districts were surveyed. Principals were asked to complete the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey online via Survey Monkey. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted to: (a) determine perceived relationships between selected school demographics and student cyberbullying policies and (b) ascertain the perceptions of selected Florida middle school principals concerning the adoption of cyberbullying policies and implementation of those policies in their schools.

Statement of the Problem

"All students are potential victims of electronic bullying" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 148). Therefore, it is imperative that school officials take an active role in developing interventions targeted at preventing and controlling it. However, according to Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara (2008) a minimal amount of research has been conducted that examines the content of school anti-bullying policies. In fact, they suggested that existing policies may be deficient in important areas, such as cyberbullying. Accordingly, Li (2007) earlier considered socioeconomic status as a major factor in explaining cyberbullying in schools. However, the findings of his

research indicated "that merely considering SES could not explain this phenomenon" (p. 1790). Li suggested that one possible explanation was school climates. More specifically, Li surmised that there was a lack of official policies that effectively addressed bullying or that policies against bullying and harassment were adopted but not followed. Li also stated, "Another explanation may be that bullying is becoming increasingly severe in terms of scope and the extent in large cities" (p. 1786). These suggestions indicated the need for further investigation of bullying and harassment policies as well as potential demographics that may have an influence on the extent to which students experience cyberbullying. More importantly, there was a void in the research regarding principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying incidents.

<p style="text-align:center">Research Questions</p>

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are selected Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?

2. To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts that are members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts that are not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment?

3. To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?

4. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?

5. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?

Population

The population for the content analysis of school district anti-bullying policies was defined as six Florida school districts: Palm Beach, Brevard, Marion, Duval, Seminole, and Lake. The population for the online survey was defined as the 68 middle school principals in the six prior mentioned Florida school districts. Palm Beach, Brevard, and Marion School Districts were members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment for a total of 21 middle school principals. Duval, Seminole, and Lake School Districts were not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment for a total of 47 middle school principals. Differentiation between these two groups was important in order determine significant differences in principal perceptions for those located in school districts that were members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment as compared to those who were not. In other words, there was the conjecture that greater access to information, resources, and overall awareness to the issue of student cyberbullying by members of the state mentoring team would set these schools apart.

Also important to note, the remaining school districts on the mentoring team, Broward, Leon, Nassau, and Pinellas, were excluded in order to narrow the scope of this study. Duval, Seminole, and Lake were selected purposively to serve as comparable school districts in terms of district size and degree of urbanicity. More specifically, Duval was matched to Palm Beach as large, urban school districts; Seminole was matched to Brevard as medium-sized, suburban school districts; and Lake was matched to Marion as small, rural school districts.

Bullying Policy Contents Checklist

The Bullying Policy Contents Checklist was a modified version of a checklist developed by Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara (2008) to assess 142 schools' anti-bullying and harassment policies in England. For this study, the checklist was adapted to review six Florida school districts' anti-bullying and harassment policies. Refer to Appendix G for official documentation of permission granted by Smith. Refer to Appendix H for the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist.

The Bullying Policy Contents Checklist consisted of 34 items. Each statement was rated as either yes or no; 'yes' the item existed in the policy or 'no' it did not. The checklist also allowed for relevant comments to be recorded next to each item. This enabled the researcher to provide further clarity regarding whether or not an assessment statement had been met. Additionally, the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist was divided into four subsections: (a) Definition of bullying behavior, (b) Reporting and responding to bullying incidents, (c) Recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating the policy, and (d) Strategies for preventing bullying.

The subsection 'Definition of bullying behavior' contained 14 items. Example statements for this section included, "Have a definition of bullying" and "Does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behavior." The subsection 'Reporting and responding to bullying incidents' consisted of 11 items. Example statements for this section included "Say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying" and "Clearly mention the responsibilities of student bystanders if they know of bullying." Subsection three, 'Recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating the policy' contained four items. Example statements for

this section were "Say reports of bullying will be recorded" and "Mention periodic review and updating of the policy." The last subsection, 'Strategies for preventing bullying' included five statements. Example statements for this section were "Mention any encouraging cooperative behavior, rewarding good behavior, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment" and "Mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or outside school."

It is important to note that minor modifications were made to the original instrument. Two items not applicable to this study were deleted and replaced with two items that specifically addressed cyberbullying. The two statements deleted were: (a) "Discuss the issue of adult/teacher-student bullying or vice versa" from the subsection 'Definition of bullying behavior' and (b) "Mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors" from the subsection 'Strategies for preventing bullying'. The two added statements were placed under the subsection 'definition of bullying behavior'. The statements were "Has an explicit definition of cyberbullying" and "Mention the forms in which cyberbullying can occur."

Validity and Reliability

Smith et al. (2008) provided both reliability of the coding scheme and the internal reliability of the scale for the content analysis they performed. Inter-rater reliability of two coders ranged from 85% to 100%. Concerning internal reliability, the Cronbach's alpha of the total anti-bullying policy content scale was .76, reasonably high. The reliability for three of the four subsections of the scale were also moderately high; .69 for 'Definition of bullying behavior', .64 for 'Reporting and responding to bullying

incidents', and .68 for 'Recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating the policy'. The last subsection 'Strategies for preventing bullying' scored .32.

Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey

The Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey was designed to measure principals' level of preparedness to address cyberbullying concerns at their schools. The survey was a modified version of the 'Cyberbullying Report Card' published in, *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying* (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009). Refer to Appendix C for official documentation of permission granted by Hinduja and Patchin.

The original instrument contained 31 statements in paper/pencil form and was categorized into six subsections: General Assessment, School Climate/Culture, Curriculum and Education, Cyberbullying Response, Policies, and Technology. The survey was modified to consist of a general Principal Survey and was taken online by respondents via a web link provided by Survey Monkey. The modified survey contained a total of 33 items. Question one required an access code to be entered by the respondent in order to complete the survey. Question two asked, "Were you the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school?" to verify that the respondent was qualified to answer questions pertaining to the 2008-2009 school year. Other modifications were made as a result of the cognitive interviews and consisted mainly of minor changes in sentence construction and/or word usage.

Items 3 through 24 were on a dichotomous scale. More specifically, middle school principals had the option to respond 'Yes' or 'No' to 21 statements regarding their knowledge of cyberbullying policies and response measures. The 21 statements were

divided into four subscales: General Assessment, Policy, Response, and Legal Aspects. An example statement for General Assessment included, "I believe cyberbullying is a significant problem at my school." For Policy, an example statement included, "In addition to the district policy, my school has implemented additional guidelines specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying." For Response, an example statement included, "My school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal." An example statement for Legal Aspects included, "I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus."

Items 25 through 28 were open ended questions. More specifically, questions 25 and 26 inquired about the types of cyberbullying instruction both students and faculty have received to date or will have received during the 2009-2010 school years as directed by either the principal or school district. Questions 27 and 28 asked for the principal's perception of his/her role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying. Last, items 29 through 32 requested demographic data specific to the principal. Question 33 asked, "Would you like to receive a copy of the published results upon completion of this study?" Refer to Appendix B for the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey.

Reliability and Validity

There were no known studies that have collected reliability and validity evidence for the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. However, for purposes of this study, evidence of content validity was obtained via three rounds of cognitive

interviews before disseminating the survey to the population. A total of nine interviews were conducted; six in person and three over the phone. Interviewees were required to have a working knowledge of at least one of the three following criteria: (a) middle school administration, (b) testing and measurement, and/or (c) school safety. Detailed notes of each interview were documented and utilized when appropriate to modify the survey. Refer to Appendix E for the Cognitive Interview Protocol. Refer to Appendix I for the Cognitive Interview Results.

Data Collection

Copies of all 67 school districts' policies were obtained during the summer of 2009. The source for these data was the Florida Department of Education Safe Schools Office. Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the Florida Department of Education Model Policy Against Bullying and Harassment (FLDOE, 2009). Contact information for the selected middle school principals were also obtained during the summer of 2009. The source for this information was the Florida Department of Education website and/or the individual school districts' websites.

During October 2009, a brief initial contact letter was mailed to the middle school principals, inviting them to participate in the study (see Appendix D). Approximately one week later, respondents received an email detailing the major components of the research study, a statement of informed consent, and a link to the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey (see Appendix E). A thank you postcard was mailed 2-3 days later (see Appendix F). When necessary, replacement surveys were emailed in November 2009 and final contact was made by mail in December 2009 (Dilman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). Respondents were encouraged to complete the survey by October 30,

2009 for the first survey emailing. Replacement surveys for the second emailing were due November 13, 2009 and for the third emailing November 27, 2009. Hard copies of the survey were mailed December 9, 2009 and due December 30, 2009. This timeline was contingent upon IRB approval as well as approval by the individual school districts.

Data Analysis

To answer Research Question One, "What are selected Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?" a content analysis was performed to assess the six selected school districts' bullying and harassment policies; Palm Beach, Brevard, Marion, Duval, Seminole, and Lake. For Research Question Two, "To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts that are members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts that are not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment?" a frequency distribution was used to describe principals' responses items 3 through 24 of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey.

To make inferences about these items, four independent t-tests were conducted. The independent variable was whether or not the principal's school was a member of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment. The dependent variables were the general assessment, policies, response, and legal aspects subscale scores. These variables were further considered composite variables as the scores for each subsection were added together and then divided by the total number of items for each subsection for easier interpretation.

For Research Question Three, "To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?" a logistic regression was performed. The independent variables were total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of minority students. The dependent variable was type of policy, either having a campus specific cyberbullying policy or not having a campus specific cyberbullying policy.

To answer Research Questions Four and Five, "What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?" and "What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?" a constant comparison analysis was used. More specifically, responses were coded to identify relevant trends and themes expressed. Table 2 displays the research questions, data sources, and statistical analyses for this study.

Table 2 Data Sources and Analyses, Chapter Three

Research Question	Data Source	Statistical Procedure
1. What are Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?	Florida Department of Education Model Policy Against Bullying and Harassment 67 Florida School Districts' Bullying and Harassment Policies	Content Analysis of the 67 Florida School Districts' Bullying and Harassment Policies
2. To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts with the state model policy against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts with a district specific policy against bullying and harassment?	Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey Items 3-24	Four Independent T-Tests
3. To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?	Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey Item 11	Logistic Regression
4. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?	Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey Items 25-27	Constant Comparison Analysis
5. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?	Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey Item 28	Constant Comparison Analysis

Summary

A thorough description of the study design has been detailed in this chapter.

More specifically, the target populations for both the content analysis and survey were

defined. The Bullying Policy Contents Checklist and the Cyberbullying Policies and

Response Principal Survey were described in depth to include both evidence of reliability

and validity of each instrument employed. Additionally, procedures used for data

collection and analysis were outlined.

Chapter Four presents the results of the data collected. Connections are made

between the analyses conducted and the proposed research questions. Chapter Five

provides a discussion and interpretation of the analyses presented in chapter four.

Chapter Five also includes recommendations for future research as well as implications

for both policy and practice in addressing student cyberbullying.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

The results of this study are based upon both rigorous quantitative and qualitative statistical analyses. First, an overview of the development and distribution of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal survey are detailed. Next, the population contacted as well as both district-level and school-level demographic variables (total student populations, total percentage of non-White students, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and grades) are described. Additionally, these descriptors are further delineated to differentiate between those survey respondents who were in school districts that were members of the state mentoring against bullying and harassment and those who were not.

To make inferences about the data, a content analysis of the six school district's anti-bullying policies, using the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist, was conducted. Three independent *t* tests and a logistic regression were also performed. Lastly, two constant comparison analyses were used to identify relevant themes in the survey respondents' perceptions of their roles to prevent and respond to student cyberbullying.

Statement of the Problem

"All students are potential victims of electronic bullying" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 148). Therefore, it is imperative that school officials take an active role in developing interventions targeted at preventing and controlling it. However, according to Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara (2008) a minimal amount of research has been conducted that examines the content of school anti-bullying policies. In fact, they suggested that existing policies may be deficient in important areas, such as

cyberbullying. Accordingly, Li (2007) earlier considered socioeconomic status as a

major factor in explaining cyberbullying in schools. However, the findings of his

research indicated "that merely considering SES could not explain this phenomenon" (p.

1790). Li suggested that one possible explanation was school climates. More

specifically, Li surmised that there was a lack of official policies that effectively

addressed bullying or that policies against bullying and harassment were adopted but not

followed. Li also stated, "Another explanation may be that bullying is becoming

increasingly severe in terms of scope and the extent in large cities" (p. 1786). These

suggestions indicated the need for further investigation of bullying and harassment

policies as well as potential demographics that may have an influence on the extent to

which students experience cyberbullying. More importantly, there was a void in the

research regarding principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to

cyberbullying incidents.

<u>Research Questions</u>

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are selected Florida school districts' policies regarding student
cyberbullying?

2. To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment,
policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in
school districts that are members of the state mentoring team against bullying and
harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts that are not
members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment?

3. To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a
middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total
student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and
total percentage of non-white students?

4. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing
student cyberbullying?

5. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?

<u>Overview of Survey Development and Distribution</u>

Cognitive Interview Process

There were no known studies that have collected reliability and validity evidence for the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. To obtain this evidence, three rounds of cognitive interviews were conducted before disseminating the survey to the population. A total of nine interviews were conducted; six in person and three over the phone. Interviews took place during the months of August and September 2009. Informed consent was obtained from each of the respondents and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. Refer to Appendix G for the Cognitive Interview Protocol and Informed Consent. Additionally, interviewees were required to have a working knowledge of at least one of the three following criteria: (a) middle school administration, (b) testing and measurement, and/or (c) school safety. Detailed notes of each interview were documented and utilized when appropriate to modify the survey.

Respondents for the first round of interviews were the following: (a) the Director of Middle School Programs, Brevard County Public Schools, Florida; (b) the Administrative Coordinator of Safe and Drug Free Schools, Lake County Public Schools, Florida; and (c) a middle school principal, Orange County Public Schools, Florida. Respondents for the second round of interviews were: (a) an elementary school principal, Lake County Public Schools, Florida; (b) a consultant, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Marion County Public Schools, Florida; and (c) a supervisor, Safe and Healthy Schools, Duval County Public Schools, Florida. Round three consisted of interviews with: (a) the

District SAFE Counselor, Orange County Public Schools, Florida; (b) the Bullying

Prevention/Intervention Coordinator, Palm Beach County Public Schools, Florida; and

(c) a parent liaison for the Association of Parents and Teachers, Lake County Public

Schools, Florida.

A majority of the respondents stated that the questions were easy to understand

and were appropriate for the survey. There was also collective agreement that the visual

presentation of the survey was acceptable. Relevant comments and modifications were

made for questions 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 18, and 20. Selected comments in summary form are

presented.

Question three: "I know what cyberbullying is and in what forms it can occur."

> Respondent One suggested to break question three into two separate statements:
> (a) "I know what cyberbullying is" and (b) "I know in what forms cyberbullying
> can occur." It was also suggested that if a participant answers 'no' to the
> statement, "I know what cyberbullying is" that they be forced to exit the survey.

Questions five and six:

Question five: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of
cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported
school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Question six: "I know how many students at my school have cyberbullied others, either
while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during
the 2008-2009 school year."

> Respondent One suggested that a statement be included in the survey directions
> advising the principal to have access to current disciplinary records or be in close
> contact with a designee in charge of discipline while taking the survey. The
> respondent felt that would assist the researcher in gathering more accurate data for
> questions 5 and 6. Otherwise, respondent one felt that most principals would have
> difficulty answering both questions since most principals do not directly handle
> disciplinary infractions on a daily basis.
>
> Respondent Four expressed concern that it would be difficult for principals to
> answer questions five and six. The respondent explained that principals often
> choose to delegate discipline to an assistant principal. However, respondent four

conceded that the principal is ultimately responsible for serious disciplinary infractions especially when it compromises a student's safety.

Respondent five suggested that the researcher underline the phrase 'either while on campus or during school hours' to further clarify what is being asked of the participant for question five. Additionally, respondent five suggested that the researcher underline the phrase 'either while on campus or during school hours' to further clarify what is being asked of the participant in question six.

Respondent Six expressed concern for getting accurate answers from principals for these two questions for multiple reasons. First, the respondent explained that most principals delegate the responsibility of student discipline to an assistant principal. Second, the discipline referral form for Duval County Public Schools does not differentiate between bullying and cyberbullying; both infractions would receive the same code. The same is true for the SEISR. When reporting to the state, school districts are not required to differentiate between bullying and cyberbullying. Third, respondent 6 commented that 'either while on campus or during school hours' does not address school-sponsored activities that occur off campus and/or outside of school hours. Respondent 6 also stated that the question fails to stipulate whether or not school district equipment is used to cyberbully another student.

Questions seven and eight:

Question seven: "I am aware that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Question eight: "I am aware that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent Three paused after reading this question and then proceeded to read it two more times before answering 'yes'. The respondent explained that choosing 'yes' was not a reflection of knowing how many students may have been victims or perpetrators of cyberbullying; instead being aware of the prevalence and seriousness of cyberbullying by watching the news. The respondent explained that there is an underlying assumption that cyberbullying is a significant issue even if he/she could not put a number on it.

Respondent Six expressed concern for getting accurate answers from principals for these two questions. The respondent explained that the word 'aware' implies that the principal should 'know exactly' how many students are cyberbullied off campus; and consequently most principals would answer 'no' to both questions. The respondent suggested rewording the questions to state: "I am sensitive to the fact that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school years" and "I am sensitive to the fact that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Question 11: "In addition to the district policy, my school has implemented additional guidelines specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying."

> Respondent Three commented that the researcher may have a large number of principals respond 'no' to this question. The respondent explained that most school districts have an 'Acceptable Use Policy' regarding technology included in the Student Code of Conduct that both parents and students are responsible for reading and signing. The respondent assumed that a majority of principals would defer to district policy and choose not to have additional school-specific policies. Respondent three explained that principals tend to adhere closely to district policies and opt to not to create school-level guidelines for fear of reprimand by district-level administrators; especially if the policy involves potential risks for civil liability.

> Respondent Eight suggested inserting the word 'standards' after guidelines to further clarify the question. The revised question would read: "In addition to the district policy, my school has implemented additional guidelines/standards specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying."

Question 18: "In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of bullying and harassment including cyberbullying."

> Respondent Eight believed that most principals in Palm Beach County would answer 'no' to this question. The respondent explained that principals are trained to strictly follow district procedures. The district always 'errs on the side of caution' and does not want an employee to 'mess up' a potential law enforcement investigation. The respondent further explained that most principals are sensitive to violations of a student's First Amendment freedoms as well as search and seizure rights.

Question 20: "My school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal."

> Respondent Two commented that this is a good question to ask because having an anonymous reporting system for each school district is a new requirement and mandated by state law. For Lake County Public Schools, there is the Speak Out Hotline.

> Respondent Eight commented that this is an excellent question and every principal should answer 'yes' since it is required by Florida state law.

Respondent Nine suggested adding an additional question to determine whether or not a school has its own anonymous reporting system in addition to the district's system. The respondent then suggested putting 'school district' and 'my school' in all caps to distinguish between the two questions.

Only a select number of comments have been included. Refer to Appendix J for a complete copy of the Cognitive Interview Results. Refer to Appendixes K, L, M for versions 2.0, 3.0, and 4.0 of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. Survey questions presented beyond this point were the final edited questions.

<div align="center">IRB Approval</div>

University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board approval was granted August 2009. Applications to conduct research in the individual school districts were completed September 2009. Approval was granted by all six school districts, Palm Beach, Brevard, Marion, Duval, Seminole, and Lake, under the following conditions: (a) principals were not obligated to participate in the study, and (b) a report of the researcher's findings be forwarded to the individual school districts upon completion of the study. It is important to note, however, that only one out of thirty-four middle schools in Palm Beach County were approved to participate in the study. This decision was rendered by the Director of Research and Evaluation in adherence to the Superintendent's decision to permit only those schools that achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the 2008-2009 school year according to standards stipulated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to participate in any supplemental activities beyond what was necessary to improve their status.

Distribution of Surveys and Response Rates

A total of 68 surveys were distributed via Survey Monkey on October 1, 2009. The survey link remained open until December 30, 2009. Forty-six respondents opened and/or began the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. Five respondents replied as not being the principal of their current school during the 2008-2009 school year, a requirement for the study, and thus were forced to exit the survey immediately. Forty-one respondents answered 'yes' as being the principal of their current school during the 2008-2009 school year; however, seven failed to proceed past question two to complete the survey. Thirty-four respondents completed the survey after three attempts by electronic form and one final attempt by hard copy through US mail. This yielded a 50% return rate; 34 out of 68 respondents contacted.

Figure 1 illustrates the frequency of survey respondents by school district. Duval had the most respondents with twelve, followed by Brevard with eight, Marion with five, Lake and Seminole with four, and Palm Beach with one. Comparing the total population contacted and the number of surveys completed for each district, Brevard had the highest response rate with 67%, followed by Marion at 62.5%, Duval at 46%, Lake at 44%, and Seminole with 33%. Palm Beach had a 100% response rate; however, only one school was contacted.
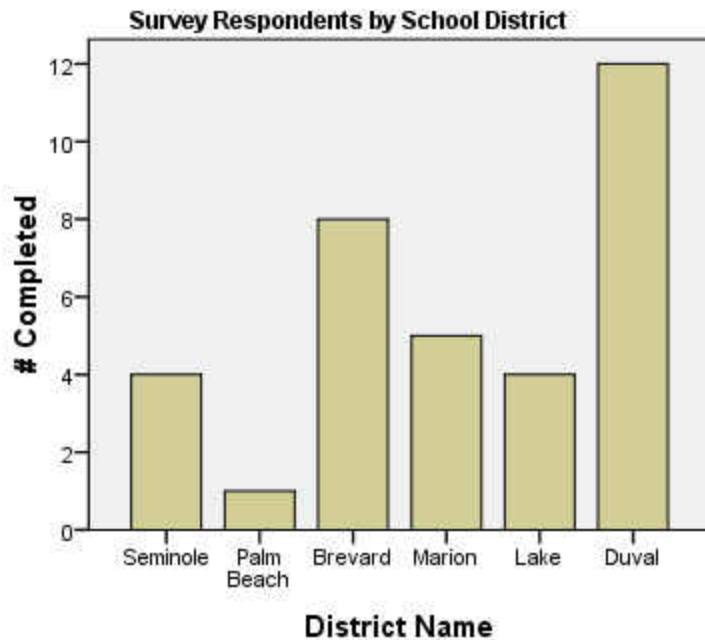
Figure 1: Survey Respondents by School District

Descriptive Statistics

Description of School Districts

Principals at 68 middle schools in six Florida school districts (Palm Beach, Brevard, Marion, Duval, Seminole, and Lake) were contacted. Palm Beach, Brevard, and Marion school districts were members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment for a total of 21 middle school principals. Duval, Seminole, and Lake school districts were not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment for a total of 47 middle school principals. Duval, Seminole, and Lake were selected purposively to serve as comparable school districts in terms of district size and degree of urbanicity as compared to the three prior mentioned school districts chosen from the state mentoring team. More specifically, Duval was matched to Palm Beach as large, urban school districts; Seminole was matched to Brevard as medium-sized, suburban school

districts; and Lake was matched to Marion as small, rural school districts. Table 3 details

pertinent demographic variables for the six school districts (FLDOE, 2009).

Table 3 School District Demographics 2008-2009 School Year

School District	Total Student Population	Total % of Non-White Students	Total % Students Receiving Free/Reduced Lunch	School District Grade
Palm Beach	170,745	60.9%	44.1%	A
Duval	122,606	59.8%	45.7%	B
Brevard	73,076	30.9%	34.4%	A
Seminole	64,933	41.8%	34.4%	A
Marion	41,547	41.3%	54.9%	B
Lake	40,996	37.7%	44.8%	B

Sample

In this section a description of both school and principal demographics are

detailed. More specifically, the distribution of school grades, total student populations,

the total percentage of non-White students, and the total percentage of students receiving

free/reduced lunch are depicted. Additionally, a complete description of the principals

who responded to the survey including years of experience, gender, and ethnicity are

provided.

School Demographics

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of school grades where the survey respondents were located. Twenty-four schools were graded "A" comprising just over 70% of the total population. Two schools earned a "B" and six earned a "C". Accounting for less than 6% of the population, only 2 schools received a "D". No school received a grade of "F".
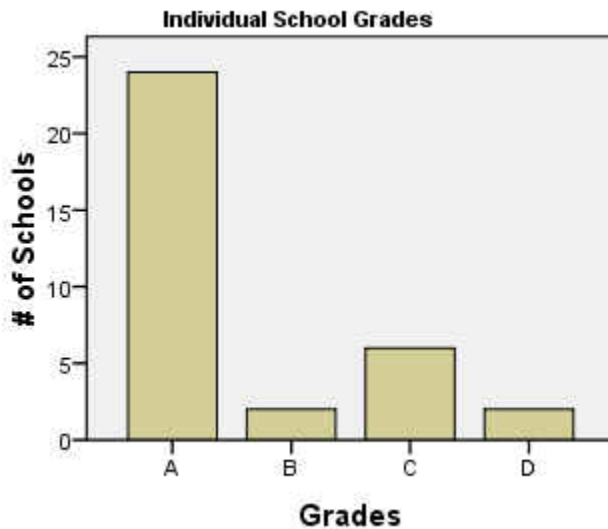
Figure 2: School Grades, 2008-2009 School Year

Regarding total student populations for the schools where the survey respondents were located, the mean size of the schools was 911 students (SD=345) and the median number of students at each location was 885. The range in school size was 1323 with the smallest school having a student population of 258 students and the largest with 1581 students.

Figure 3 illustrates the total percentage of non-white students for the schools where the survey respondents were located. A majority of the schools had a student

population that was 40-50% non-white. To be exact, the mean percentage of non-white students was 47.45% and the median was 47.9%. There was little difference between the two measures suggesting that the percentage of non-white students per school for the population were very similar. The range was 88 with the lowest percentage of non-white students at a school site being 9.8% and the highest at 97.8%.
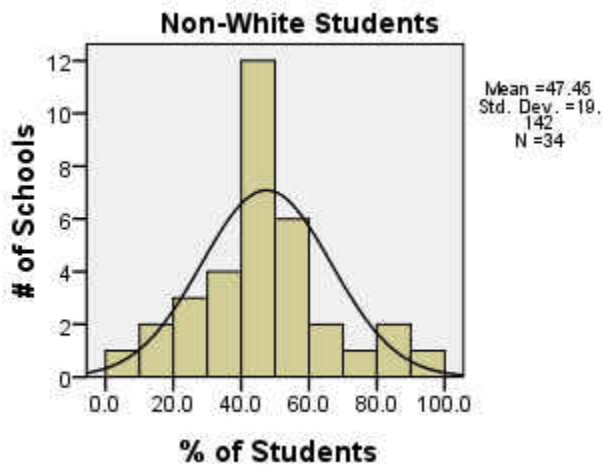
Figure 3: Total Percentage of Non-White Students, 2008-2009 School Year

Figure 4 depicts the total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch for the schools where the survey respondents were located. Fourteen schools had free/reduced lunch rates between 30-50%; an additional seven schools had rates between 60-70%. More specifically, the mean percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch was 44.35%. Additionally, the range was 77 with the lowest percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch at a school site being 11.4% and the highest being 88.5%.

Students Receiving Free/Reduced Lunch

Mean =44.35
Std. Dev. =18.992
N =34
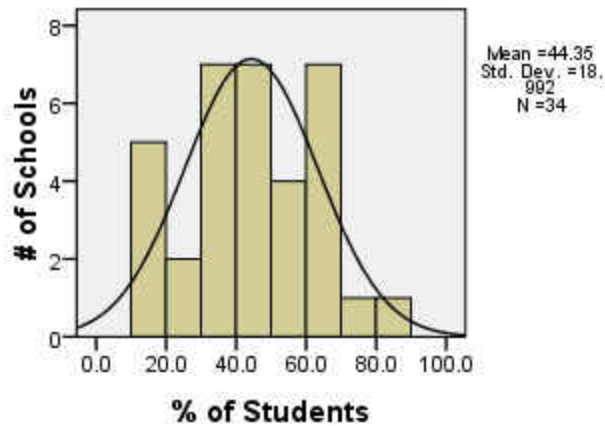
Figure 4: Total Percentage of Students Receiving Free/Reduced Lunch, 2008-2009
School Year

Principal Demographics

Table 4 details the survey respondents' years of experience as a principal. Of the

34 respondents, fifteen (44.1%) had 4-6 years of experience; twice as many who reported

having 1-3 years of experience (17.6%) and three times as many with 7-9 years of

experience (14.7%). Eight (23.5%) respondents reported having 10+ years experience as

a principal.

Table 4 Principal Demographics, Years as a Principal

Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal?

	Frequency	*Percentage*
1-3 Years	6	17.6%
4-6 Years	15	44.1%
7-9 Years	5	14.7%
10+ Years	8	23.5%

96

Table 5 specifies the survey respondents years of experience as a principal at their current schools. Sixteen (47.1%) respondents reported their current status as 1-3 years; fourteen (41.2%) reported 4-6 years. Hence, more than three quarters of the survey respondents had six years or less at their current schools. Only two respondents (5.9%) reported having 10+ years.

Table 5 Principal Demographics, Years as a Principal at Current School

Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal at your current school?

	Frequency	*Percentage*
1-3 Years	16	47.1%
4-6 Years	14	41.2%
7-9 Years	2	5.9%
10+ Years	2	5.9%

Gender and Ethnicity

Concerning the survey respondents' gender and ethnicity, twenty-one (62%) were female and twelve (35%) were male; one respondent chose not to respond. Regarding ethnicity, twenty-three were White and ten were Black. Again, one respondent chose not to disclose his/her ethnicity.

Summary Statistics of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey

The Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey contained 33 items, 22 of which were yes/no items regarding their knowledge of cyberbullying policies and

response measures at both the school and district levels. There were six items for which 100% of respondents replied 'yes.' These included the following questions:

I know what cyberbullying is. (Question 3)

My school district has a clear policy regarding cell phones and other portable electronic devices. (Question 12)

My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology. (Question 13)

My staff members know the school district policy regarding the use of technology. (Question 14)

It is clear to students that the inappropriate use of technology will not be tolerated by school administration. (Question 15)

My staff and I take ACTUAL incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school. (Question 17)

For questions 4, 10, 16, and 19 over 90% of the respondents answered 'yes'. Questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 had greater variation in yes/no responses. Depicted in Table 6 are the frequency and response percentages for each question. Total respondents for each question ranged from 32 to 34. Additionally, a crosstabulation of the respondent's school membership status, *non-member or member* of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment, are detailed.

Table 6 Summary Statistics of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey

Item	Question	Frequency (Percentage)		Frequency (Percentage)			
		Yes	No	Yes		No	
				Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team	Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team
4	I know the mediums through which cyberbullying can occur.	31 (91.2%)	3 (8.8%)	18 (58.1%)	13 (41.9%)	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)
5	I know how many students at my school have been VICTIMS of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours or school sponsored events, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.	19 (55.9%)	15 (44.1%)	10 (52.6%)	9 (47.4%)	10 (66.7%)	5 (33.3%)
6	I know how many students at my school have CYBERBULLIED OTHERS, either while on campus or during school hours or school sponsored events, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.	17 (50%)	17 (50%)	10 (58.8%)	7 (41.2%)	10 (58.8%)	7 (41.2%)

Table 6

Item	Question	Frequency (Percentage)		Frequency (Percentage)			
		Yes	No	Yes		No	
				Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team	Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team
7	I am aware that students at my school have been VICTIMS of cyberbullying WHILE OFF CAMPUS during the 2008-2009 school year.	29 (85.3%)	5 (14.7%)	15 (51.7%)	14 (48.3%)	5 (100%)	0 (0%)
8	I am aware that students at my school have CYBERBULLIED OTHERS WHILE OFF CAMPUS during the 2008-2009 school year.	23 (67.6%)	11 (32.4%)	12 (52.2%)	11 (47.8%)	8 (72.7%)	3 (27.3%)
9	I believe cyberbullying is a significant problem at my school.	7 (21.9%)	25 (78.1%)	2 (28.6%)	5 (71.4%)	17 (68%)	8 (32%)
10	My school district has a clear policy against bullying and harassment that includes cyberbullying.	31 (93.9%)	2 (6.1%)	17 (54.8%)	14 (45.2%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)

Table 6

Item	Question	Frequency (Percentage)		Frequency (Percentage)			
		Yes	No	Yes		No	
				Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team	Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team
11	In addition to the district policy, MY SCHOOL has implemented additional guidelines specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying.	19 (55.9%)	15 (44.1%)	10 (52.6%)	9 (47.4%)	10 (66.7%)	5 (33.3%)
16	My staff and I take SUSPECTED incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.	30 (93.6%)	2 (6.4%)	17 (56.7%)	13 (43.3%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)
18	In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of bullying and harassment including cyberbullying.	18 (56.3%)	14 (43.7%)	11 (61.1%)	7 (38.9%)	7 (50%)	7 (50%)

Table 6

Item	Question	Frequency (Percentage)		Frequency (Percentage)			
		Yes	No	Yes		No	
				Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team	Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team
19	My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents.	31 (93.9%)	2 (6.1%)	18 (58.1%)	13 (41.9%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
20	My SCHOOL DISTRICT has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.	22 (68.6%)	10 (31.4%)	10 (45.5%)	12 (54.5%)	8 (80%)	2 (20%)
21	In addition to the school district system, MY SCHOOL has its own anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.	20 (58.8%)	14 (41.2%)	12 (60%)	8 (40%)	8 (57.1%)	6 (42.9%)

Table 6

Item	Question	Frequency (Percentage)		Frequency (Percentage)			
		Yes	No	Yes		No	
				Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team	Non-member State Mentoring Team	Member State Mentoring Team
22	I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus.	28 (87.5%)	4 (12.5%)	15 (53.6%)	13 (46.4%)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
23	I am familiar with major court decisions related to student speech on the Internet.	12 (32.5%)	20 (62.5%)	4 (33.3%)	8 (66.7%)	15 (75%)	5 (25%)
24	I am familiar with the school district's civil liability for failure to prevent cyberbullying incidents or improper response to cyberbullying incidents.	25 (75.6%)	8 (24.4%)	12 (48%)	13 (52%)	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)

Sub Question Responses

Eight questions had sub questions (5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 18, 20, and 21) that required

short responses from the survey respondents to further clarify their responses.

Question five: I know how many students at my school have been VICTIMS of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours or school sponsored events, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

Overall, nineteen (56%) responded 'yes' and fifteen (44%) responded 'no' to

knowing the number of victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during

school hours or school sponsored events, that resulted in a reported school incident

during the 2008-2009 school year. For the nineteen who responded 'yes', it was

requested, "If YES, please provide how many students." The mean number of students

victimized by cyberbullying, as reported, was 12 per school. The median number of

victims was four and a half; and the most commonly reported number of victims was two

and 10. Additionally, the range in responses was 121 with the lowest reported number of

victims being two and the highest being 123.

Question 6: I know how many students at my school have CYBERBULLIED OTHERS, either while on campus or during school hours or school sponsored events, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

The responses were evenly split (17/17) to knowing how many students have

cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours or school sponsored

events, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year. Also

for the seventeen who responded 'yes', it was requested, "If YES, please provide how

many students." It was found that the mean number of identified cyberbullies per school

was four. The median number of cyberbullies was three and the most commonly

reported number of cyberbullies was two and 10. Additionally, the range in responses

was 11 with the lowest reported number of cyberbullies being two and the highest being

13.

Question seven: I am aware that students at my school have been VICTIMS of cyberbullying WHILE OFF CAMPUS during the 2008-2009 school year.

Overall, twenty-nine (85%) answered 'yes' and five (15%) answered 'no' to being

aware of the fact that there were victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the

2008-2009 school year. Additionally, for the twenty-nine who responded 'yes', it was

requested, "If YES, how were you made aware of these incidents?" Sample responses

included (quoted directly from the individual surveys):

> 1. Hearsay, self-report, parent complaint
> 2. Parents and student by way of complaints
> 3. A lot of parent complaints – 30+; however, there were probably 100
> that were not brought to my attention
> 4. Parents – interviews connected with other incidents
> 5. Parent/student complaints

Of the twenty-five acceptable responses (four were removed for inappropriate

numerical responses), twenty-four (96%) stated some type of parental intervention to stop

incidents of cyberbullying. Mentioned thirteen times, student reporting and/or complaints

were the second most common response. Law enforcement/resource officer notification

was recorded three times and teacher/staff member reports were mentioned only once.

Question eight: I am aware that students at my school have CYBERBULLIED OTHERS WHILE OFF CAMPUS during the 2008-2009 school year.

Twenty-three (68%) answered 'yes' and eleven (32%) answered 'no' to being

aware of students' cyberbullying others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school

year. In addition, for the twenty-three who responded 'yes', it was requested, "If YES,

how were you made aware of these incidents?" Sample responses included (quoted

directly from the individual surveys):

> 1. Reporting, parent complaint
> 2. Complaints from students, parents, and guardians (this includes foster parents)
> 3. Rumor and parent complaint
> 4. Parent call
> 5. Have seen it in text

Of the twenty-one acceptable responses (two were removed for inappropriate

numerical responses), eighteen (86%) stated some type of parental notification to inform

school administrators about cyberbullying incidents. Student complaints/reporting

accounted for just over 70% (23) of the responses. Teacher and staff member reporting

was mentioned once.

Question eleven: In addition to the district policy, MY SCHOOL has implemented additional guidelines specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying.

Nineteen (56%) answered 'yes' and fifteen (44%) answered 'no' to having

implemented additional guidelines specific to their campuses to further address bullying

and harassment concerns including cyberbullying. Furthermore, for the nineteen who

responded 'yes', it was requested, "If YES, what year did your school adopt those

guidelines?" The most commonly reported year for adoption was 2007. The earliest year

of adoption was 2005 and the most recent was 2009.

Question eighteen: In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of bullying and harassment including cyberbullying.

Eighteen (56%) answered 'yes' and fourteen (44%) answered 'no' to having

developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of

bullying and harassment including cyberbullying. Additionally, of the thirty-two

respondents, eighteen (56%) chose to explain why or why not they developed a formal

procedure specific to their campuses. For those who do not have a campus specific

procedure, sample responses included (quoted directly from the individual surveys):

> 1. The District procedures and guidelines are quite comprehensive.
> Cyberbullying is not widespread here, so we are comfortable using the
> guidelines already provided.
> 2. District policy has been vetted by an attorney
> 3. District policy has mimicked state mandates and it works for schools.

For those who have adopted a formal procedure in addition to the school district

procedure, sample responses included (quoted directly from the individual surveys):

> 1. Due to past complaints. It's part of our school-wide Foundations
> Program.
> 2. To keep students safe; secure; and to keep issues from snowballing.
> 3. Because this is a serious issue. I have consoled with many parents
> whose children are innocent victims; and this tarnishes school morale.

*Question twenty: My SCHOOL DISTRICT has an anonymous reporting system to allow
students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.*

Twenty-two (69%) responded 'yes' and ten (31%) responded 'no' to knowing

whether or not their school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow students

to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal. To follow up, respondents

were asked, "If YES, in what ways are the students able to report?" Sample responses

included (quoted directly from the individual surveys):

> 1. Phone/tip line
> 2. The school system has a reporting system that sends information to the
> school where the incident is reported – anonymously.
> 3. Drop box/ phone/tip line, email, text
> 4. I don't know
> 5. There is a phone/tip line and a website with a "contact us" link.
> 6. Save a friend hot line

7. Online form

Of the twenty-two responses, sixteen (73%) mentioned a phone/tip line as the most common way students were able to report cyberbullying incidents. Email and/or text messages were listed six times and drop boxes were listed three times. Admittance of not knowing was reported twice.

Question twenty-one: In addition to the school district system, MY SCHOOL has its own anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.

Twenty (59%) responded 'yes' and fourteen (41%) responded 'no' to confirming whether or not their school has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal. To follow up, respondents were asked, "If YES, in what ways are the students able to report?" Sample responses included (quoted directly from the individual surveys):

> 1. Students are allowed to write informal notes and drop them off anonymously to any teacher.
> 2. Students can come to any teacher, administrator or our School Resource Officer in person, leave a note or have their parent contact us with a suspected case.
> 3. Bully Box
> 4. Forms available in office
> 5. Boxes in the gym locker rooms which is handled by the mentor
> 6. Notes dropped for counselors or administrators
> 7. At (X school) we have a phone usage agreement with the students. If they want to report anonymously they are to call the school after 8:00 PM and dial my extension and leave me a message.

Of the twenty responses, nine listed drop boxes as their school specific reporting system. Listed four times each was informal notes and written statements given to school counselors and/or administrators. Personal contact with the principal was detailed once.

Summary Analysis of Survey Statistics

Further analysis of the survey responses revealed that responses were evenly split (either 60/40 or 50/50) for four questions (5, 6, 11, 18, 21). More specifically, questions 5 and 6 required knowledge of cyberbullying incidents while on campus or during school hours and/or school sponsored events. Interestingly, a higher percentage of survey respondents answered 'yes' to being aware of cyberbullying incidents occurring off-campus or during non-school hours as found by questions 7 and 8. In fact, knowledge of cybervictims on campus as compared to off-campus increased from 55.9% in question 5 to 85.3% in question 7. Accordingly, knowledge of cyberbullies on campus as compared to off-campus increased from 50% in question 6 to 67.6% in question 8.

Questions 11, 18, and 21 involved either knowledge or actions taken to address policy and/or response measures at the school level. For all three questions, both members and non-members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment were split between having campus specific policies and responses measures in addition to school district policies. These campus specific policies and response measures included having their own cyberbullying policy, a formal procedure for investigating cyberbullying incidents, and an anonymous reporting system for students to report incidents of cyberbullying.

Another notable finding was that over half of the respondents answered 'no' to questions 9 and 23. Question 9 asked the survey respondents whether or not they believed cyberbullying was a significant problem at their school. A majority (68%) of those who responded 'no' were non-members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment. Question 23 asked the survey respondents whether or not they were familiar with major court decisions related to student speech on the Internet.

Similarly, a majority (75%) of those who responded 'no' were non-members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment.

<u>Research Question Results</u>

Research Question One

To answer research question one, "What are selected Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?" a content analysis was performed to assess the six selected school districts' bullying and harassment policies of the districts from which principals were sampled in this study. Refer to Appendix I for the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist which was the instrument used to review the policies. Refer to Appendix N for the six school districts' Bullying Policy Contents Checklist Evaluations. They were coded Districts A, B, C, D, E, and F to protect their identities.

Table 7 details the scores for the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist Evaluations for the six school districts. Scores for each subsection (A, B, C, and D) as well as an overall score are provided.

Table 7 Summary of Bullying Policy Contents Checklist Evaluations, Six School Districts

School District	Section A (13 pts)	Section B (11 pts)	Section C (4 points)	Section D (6 pts)	Overall Score (34 pts)
Member State Mentoring Team					
A	10	9	3	4	26
B	10	8	3	5	26
C	9	8	3	5	25
Non-member State Mentoring Team					
D	10	8	3	4	24
E	10	8	3	5	26
F	10	6	3	3	22

Section A, Definition of Bullying Behavior

Section A, Definition of Bullying Behavior, received the highest scores for the six school districts. The average score for this section was 9.8 and the median was ten; out of a total of 13 points. A score of one or zero could be earned for each statement indicating either the presence or absence of specific qualities. Table 8 details the school district's scores for Section A.

Table 8 Summary Results for Section A, Definition of Bullying Behaviors

		Member State Mentoring Team			Non-member State Mentoring Team		
Item	Question	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E	District F
1	Have a definition of bullying?	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behavior?	0	0	0	0	0	1
3	Mention physical bullying (hits, kicks)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
4	Mention direct verbal bullying (threats, insults, nasty teasing)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
5	Mention relational bullying (rumors, social exclusion)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
6	Mention material bullying (damage to belongings, extortion of money)?	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 8

Item	Question	Member State Mentoring Team			Non-member State Mentoring Team		
		District A	District B	District C	District D	District E	District F
7	Mention cyberbullying (email, text messages)?	1	1	0	1	1	1
8	Mention homophobic bullying?	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Mention racial bullying (or harassment)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
10	Mention sexual bullying (or harassment)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
11	As well as student-student bullying, discuss the issue of adult/teacher-student bullying or vice-versa?	1	1	1	1	1	1
12	Mention bullying due to disabilities?	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Mention bullying because of faith or religious beliefs?	1	1	1	1	1	1

All six school districts received one point for statements 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, and 13; which are a majority of the defining behaviors of bullying. Conversely, all six districts received zero points for statements 8 (Mention homophobic bullying?) and 12 (Mention bullying due to disabilities?). Variation in score was observed for statements 2

(Does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviors?) and 7 (Mention cyberbullying?).

Regarding statement 2, all six districts defined and differentiated between 'bullying' and 'harassment'. However, only District F defined the specific term 'aggressive behavior'. Additionally, District F defined 'relational aggression', 'hazing', 'intimidation', and 'menacing'. For statement 7, Districts A, B, D, E, and F explicitly defined both 'cyberstalking' and 'cyberbullying'. District C only defined cyberstalking and bullying by "Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the school district system." The standard definition for cyberstalking as supplied by the state model policy and used by all six school districts was:

> "Cyberstalking as defined in s. 784.048(1)(d), F.S., means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose." (FLDOE, 2009b, p. 2)

The individual school districts defined cyberbullying as followed:

District A (Member State Mentoring Team):

> *"Cyberbullying means the use of electronic communication or technology devices, to include but not be limited to, e-mail messages, instant messaging, text messaging, cellular telephone communications, internet blogs, social websites (e.g. MySpace, Facebook, etc.), internet chat rooms, internet postings, digital pictures or images, and defamatory websites to engage in acts of bullying or harassment regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school district property and /or with or without the use of school district resources. For off-campus conduct, the School District shall be responsive in cases where the off-campus conduct causes, or threatens to cause, a substantial disruption at school or interference with the rights of students to be safe and secure.*
>
> *The School Board recognizes that cyberbullying can be particularly*

devastating to young people because:

i. Cyber bullying is often engaged in off-campus, but the harmful impact is felt at school.

ii. Cyberbullying permits an individual to easily hide behind the anonymity that the Internet and other technology devices provide;

iii. Cyberbullying provides a means for perpetrators to spread their harmful and hurtful messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed;

iv. Cyberbullying does not require individuals to own their own action, as it is usually very difficult to identify cyberbullies because of screen names, so they do not fear being punished for their actions; and

v. The reflection time that once existed between the planning of a prank – or a serious stunt – and its commission is all but erased when it comes to cyberbullying activity." (FLDOE, 2009d, p. 2-3).

District B (Member State Mentoring Team):

"Cyberbullying is defined as a situation when a child, tween, or teen is repeatedly harassed, humiliated, threatened, and intimidated, or otherwise targeted by another child, tween, or teen through the use of digital technologies, including but not limited to, instant and text messaging, email, blogs, social websites (e.g. MySpace, Facebook), and chat rooms, therefore, affecting the student's learning environment." (FLDOE, 2009e, p. 2)

District D (Non-member State Mentoring Team):

"Cyberbullying, is defined as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, e-mail, blogs, social websites (e.g., MySpace, Facebook), chat rooms, instant and text messaging, and cell phone technologies." (FLDOE, 2009g, p. 2)

District E (Non-member State Mentoring Team):

"Cyberbullying defined herein includes the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technology, including, but not limited to, email, blogs, social websites (e.g., MySpace, Facebook), chat rooms, instant messaging, and like instruments of electronic communication." (FLDOE, 2009h, p. 2)

District F (Non-member State Mentoring Team):

" 'Cyberbullying' is the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone, pager, text messages, instant messaging (IM), personal web

sites, and online personal pooling web sites, whether on or off school campus, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to threaten or harm others, or which causes emotional distress to an individual to substantially disrupt or interfere with the operation of a school or an individual student's ability to receive an education. The Board recognizes that cyberbullying can be particularly devastating to young people because:

1. cyberbullies more easily hide behind the anonymity that the Internet provides;

2. cyberbullies spread their hurtful messages to a very wide audience with remarkable speed;

3. cyberbullies do not have to own their own action, as it is usually very difficult to identify cyberbullies because of screen names, so they do not fear being punished for their actions; and

4. the reflection time that once existed between the planning of a prank - or a serious stunt - and its commission is all but been erased when it comes to cyberbullying activity.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to the following: posting slurs or rumors or other disparaging remarks about a student on a web site or on a web blog; sending e-mail or instant messages that are mean or threatening, or so numerous as to drive up the victim's cell phone bill; using a camera phone to take and send embarrassing photographs of students; posting misleading or fake photographs of students on web sites. The physical location or time access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated." (FLDOE, 2009i, p. 2-3)

Section B, Reporting and Responding to Bullying Incidents

The mean score for Section B, Reporting and Responding to Bullying Incidents, for the six school districts was 7.8 and the median was eight. The range was three with District A receiving the highest score of nine and District F receiving the lowest score of six; out of a total of 11 points. A score of one or zero could be earned for each statement indicating either the presence or absence of specific qualities. Table 9 details the school district's scores for Section B.

Table 9 Summary Results for Section B, Reporting and Responding to Bullying Incidents

Item	Question	*Member* *State Mentoring Team*			*Non-Member* *State Mentoring Team*		
		District A	District B	District C	District D	District E	District F
1	State what victims of bullying should do (e.g. tell a teacher, should clearly apply to victims/students who experience bullying)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying (should specifically mention bullying, and be more specific than just 'deal promptly')?	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	Clearly mentioned the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, etc) if they know of bullying? (More than simply referring to 'all staff')?	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Clearly mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying (this can include knowing if their child has a behavior problem if bullying is included elsewhere)?	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 9

Item	Question	Member State Mentoring Team			Non-member State Mentoring Team		
		District A	District B	District C	District D	District E	District F
5	Clearly mention the responsibilities of students (e.g. bystanders) if they know of bullying?	1	1	1	1	1	1
6	State whether sanctions applied for bullying can vary (e.g. by type or severity of incident)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	Mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?	1	0	0	0	0	0
8	Discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists?	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Suggest how to support the victim (more than just 'we will support victims')?	1	1	1	1	1	0
10	Suggest how to help the students doing the bullying to change their behavior (apart from sanctions and more than just 'we will support...')?	1	1	1	1	1	0
11	Discuss if, when or how parents will be informed ('parents will be informed' is sufficient if it clearly refers to bullying)?	1	1	1	1	1	0

All six districts received one point for statements 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6. Five of the six school districts (with the exception of District F) received one point for statements 9, 10, and 11. District F did not receive scores for these statements as the policy only contained phrases like 'consequences and remedial actions' and 'referral for intervention and prevention support' to address the aforementioned statements.

Also notable, no district received a point for statements 3 and 8:

Clearly mentioned the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, etc) if they know of bullying? (More than simply referring to 'all staff') (Question 3)

Discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists? (Question 8)

This was because all six of the policies used phrases like 'all staff members' and/or 'all school district employees' to address the responsibilities of other school staff. Similarly, for statement 8, no district directly addressed what actions would be taken if bullying persisted; just initial intervention measures were discussed.

Last, only District A received one point for statement 7: 'Mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?' This statement was supported by the following clause in District A's policy:

"On-going Reporting to Target's Parents/Guardians. Following an appropriate investigation, Principals or designees will report to the target's parents what steps have been taken to protect the student. Follow-up reports will be designed based on the success of the interventions and will continue in a fashion that is deemed necessary by the Principal. Notification will be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)." (FLDOE, 2009d, p. 12)

Section C, Recording Bullying, Communicating, and Evaluating the Policy

All six school district policies received three out of four points for Section C,

Recording Bullying, Communicating, and Evaluating the Policy. A score of one or zero

could be earned for each statement indicating either the presence or absence of specific

qualities. Table 10 details the school district's scores for Section C.

Table 10 Summary Results for Section C, Recording Bullying, Communicating, and
Evaluating the Policy

Item	Question	Member State Mentoring Team			Non-member State Mentoring Team		
		District A	District D	District B	District E	District C	District F
1	Say reports of bullying will be recorded?	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Say who is responsible for coordinating the recording system?	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	Show how records or survey data will be used to know whether the policy is working or not?	1	1	1	1	1	1
4	Mention period review and updating of policy?	0	0	0	0	0	0

Full points were earned for statements 1, 2, and 3. The basis for giving credit for the three statements included a similar clause contained in all six policies. From the District B policy:

Data Collection/Reporting

"The procedure for including incidents of bullying and/or harassment in the school's report of safety and discipline data is required under F.S. 1006.09(6). The report must include each incident of bullying and/or harassment and the resulting consequences, including discipline, interventions, and referrals. In a separate section, the report must include each reported incident of bullying and/or harassment that does not meet the criteria of a prohibited act under this policy, with recommendations regarding said incident.The School District will utilize Florida's School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) Statewide Report on School Safety and Discipline Data, which includes bullying/harassment as an incident code as well as bullying-related element code." (FLDOE, 2009e, p. 8)

No school district earned a point for statement 4, 'Mention period review and updating of policy?'

Section D, Strategies for Preventing Bullying

The average score for Section D, Strategies for Preventing Bullying, was 4.3 and the median was 4.5; out of six total points. A score of one or zero could be earned for each statement indicating either the presence or absence of specific qualities. Table 11 details the school district's scores for Section D.

Table 11 Summary Results for Section D, Strategies for Preventing Bullying

Item	Question	Member State Mentoring Team			Non-member State Mentoring Team		
		District A	District D	District B	District E	District C	District F
1	Mention any encouraging cooperative behavior, rewarding good behavior, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment?	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?	1	1	1	1	1	0
3	Discuss advice for parents about bullying (beyond B4)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
4	Mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors?	0	0	1	1	1	0
5	Discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; students with learning difficulties)?	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or happening outside school?	1	1	1	1	1	1

All six districts received one point for statements 1, 3, and 6. To be noted, District

F clearly defined the parameters of statement six within their policy:

> "This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property or while enroute to or from school-sponsored activities and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. This policy also applies to activities that take place off-campus if the activities cause emotional distress to an individual that substantially disrupts or interferes with the operation of a school or an individual student's ability to receive an education. The Board expects students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner for their respective levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment." (FLDOE, 2009i, p.1)

Five of the six school district policies (with the exception of District F), received

one point for statement 2, 'Discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?'

Additionally, the school districts were evenly split (3/3) as to earning a point for

statement 4, 'Mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime

supervisors?' Last, no school district policy addressed statement 5, 'Discuss issues of

inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; students with learning difficulties)?'

Analysis of Bullying Policy Contents Checklist Evaluations

Overall, the mean score for the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist was 24.8 and

the median was 25; out of a total of 34 points. Districts A and E earned the highest

scores with 26 points and District F earned the lowest score with 22 points. Additionally,

all six school districts earned full credit for 20 statements on the instrument. Broken

down by section, Section A, Definition of Bullying Behavior, had the highest scores with

9 of out of 13 statements; Section B, 5 out of 11 statements; Section C, 3 out of 4

statements; and Section D, 3 out of 6 statements. Conversely, the six school districts did

not earn full credit for six total statements on the instrument. As potential areas of

concern, those items were (by section):

Mention homophobic bullying? (Section A)

Mention bullying due to disabilities? (Section A)

Clearly mentioned the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, etc) if they know of bullying? (More than simply referring to 'all staff') (Section B)

Discuss what action will be taken if bullying persists? (Section B)

Mention periodic review and updating of policy? (Section C)

Discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; students with learning disabilities)? (Section D)

However, addressing the specific purpose of this study, all six school districts

addressed cyberstalking and five out of the six explicitly defined cyberbullying.

Additionally, the mediums through which cyberbullying occurs were also stated in those

policies. Equally important, one policy went as far to state that the physical location or

time access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any

disciplinary action initiated.

Research Question Two

To answer research question two, "To what extent, if any, is there a mean

difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for

middle school principals in school districts that are members of the state mentoring team

against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school

districts that are not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and

harassment?" four independent *t* tests were conducted. To control for the increased

probability of a Type I error, the Bonferroni adjustment was applied. Thus and alpha of .0125 (.05/4) was applied. The null hypothesis was that the subscale means would be equal for each group.

Subscale One: General Assessment

The assumption of normality for both groups was tested for the first subscale, General Assessment. Examination of skewness (-.028) and kurtosis (-1.500) statistics for *members of the state mentoring team* suggested that the dependent variable may be normally distributed. However, review of the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality (W=.822, p=.010) and the Q-Q plot indicated some non-normality. This was anticipated given the small sample size. The box plot did not indicate any potential outliers.

General Assessment for *non-members of the state team* suggested that the dependent variable may be normally distributed after review of both the skewness (-.318) and kurtosis (-1.243) statistics. However, like the members of the state mentoring team, review of the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality (W=.880, p=.018) and the Q-Q plot indicated that non-normality was also a consideration for this group. Additionally, the box plot did not indicate any potential outliers.

Although the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality was statistically significant for both groups and the Q-Q plots suggested some non-normality, the researcher decided to proceed with the analysis since independent *t*-tests are relatively robust to violations of the normality with two-tailed tests (Lomax, 2001). Levene's test indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met (F=4.216, p=.048). The test was not statistically significant, t (31.8) = -1.855, p=.073 as the results reported are those for variances not assumed. There was no evidence to support the hypothesis that a mean

difference in General Assessment subscale score existed between *members of the state mentoring team* against bullying and harassment (n=14, *M*=.745, *SD*= .150), as compared to *non-members* (n=20, *M*=.621, *SD*=.238).

The 95% confidence interval for the difference between means was -.259 to .012. The effect size was calculated by eta squared and found to be .12. This indicated that approximately 12% of the variance in score for the general assessment subscale was accounted for by whether or not the survey respondent was located in a school district that was either a member or non-member of the state mentoring team. When converted to Cohen's *d*, the effect size was interpreted to be large (*d*=.74), yet a power analysis suggested a magnitude of only .56. Hence, having no statistical significance was likely due to the small sample as there was not sufficient power to detect differences between the groups.

The results revealed that there was no statistical significance between the groups. However, measures of practical significance revealed differences. The large effect size suggested there was something systematic occurring between *members* and *non-members* of the state mentoring team regarding General Assessment subscale scores. More specifically, Cohen's *d* suggested that there was approximately ¾ of one standard deviation unit difference in General Assessment subscale score between *members* and *non-members* of the state mentoring team.

Policy, Subscale Two

For the second subscale, Policy, review of the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality (*W*=.639, *p*=.000) for *members of the state team* as well as the kurtosis (-2.241) statistic indicated non-normality for the dependent variable. Review of the Q-Q plot also

126

indicated slight non-normality. However, the box plot did not indicate any potential outliers and the skewness statistic (-.325) suggested normality.

Review of the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality (*W*=.742, *p*=.000) for *non-members of the state team* as well as the kurtosis (4.434) statistics also indicated non-normality for this group. Additionally, examination of the Q-Q plot indicated non-normality and the box plot did reveal one outlier; however, the skewness statistic (-1.824) did suggested normality. Since independent *t*-tests are relatively robust to violations of the normality with two-tailed tests (Lomax, 2001), the researcher decided to proceed with the analysis.

Levene's test indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met (*F*=1.569, *p*=.219). The test was not statistically significant, *t* (29.76) = -1.410, *p*=.169 as the results reported are those for variances not assumed. There was no evidence to support the hypothesis that a mean difference in Policy subscale score existed between *members of the state mentoring team* against bullying and harassment (n=14, *M*=.914, *SD*= .103), as compared to *non-members* (n=20, *M*=.840, *SD*=.201).

The 95% confidence interval for the difference between means was -.182 to .033. The effect size was calculated by eta squared and found to be .059. This indicated that approximately just less than 6% of the variance in score for the policy subscale was accounted for by whether or not the survey respondent was located in a school district that was either a member or non-member of the state mentoring team. Converted to Cohen's *d*, the effect size was interpreted to be moderate (*d*=.50), yet a power analysis suggested a magnitude of only .28. Hence, having no statistical significance was likely

due to the small sample as there was not sufficient power to detect differences between the groups.

The results revealed that there was no statistical significance between the groups. However, measures of practical significance revealed differences. The moderate effect size suggested there was something systematic occurring between *members* and *non-members* of the state mentoring team regarding Policy subscale scores. More specifically, Cohen's *d* suggested that there was approximately ½ of one standard deviation unit difference in Policy subscale score between *members* and *non-members* of the state mentoring team.

Response, Subscale Three

Subscale three, Response, normality was indicated for *members of the state team* against bullying and harassment and slight non-normality for the *non-members*. More specifically, for *members of the state team* Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality (*W*=.876, *p*=.052) in addition to skewness (-.436) and kurtosis (-.812) statistics indicated normality was a reasonable assumption for this group. However, review of the Q-Q plot did indicate slight non-normality and was anticipated given the small sample size. The box plot did not show any potential outliers.

For *non-members of the state team*, examination of skewness (-.119) and kurtosis (-1.469) statistics suggested that the dependent variable may be normally distributed. However, review of the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality (*W*=.865, *p*=.010) and the Q-Q plot indicated some non-normality. Notably, the box plot did not reveal any outliers.

Although the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality was statistically significant for *non-members of the state team* and the Q-Q plots suggested some non-normality, the

128

researcher decided to proceed with the analysis since independent *t*-tests are relatively robust to violations of the normality assumption with two-tailed tests (Lomax, 2001). Levene's test indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met (*F*=3.185, *p*=.084). The test was not statistically significant, *t* (31.6) = -.934, *p*=.357 as the results reported are those for variances not assumed. There was no evidence to support the hypothesis that a mean difference in Response subscale score existed between *members of the state mentoring team* against bullying and harassment (n=14, *M*=.827, *SD*= .150), as compared to *non-members* (n=20, *M*=.771, *SD*=.193).

The 95% confidence interval for the difference between means was -.175 to .065. The effect size was calculated by eta squared and found to be .027. This indicated that approximately just less than 3% of the variance in score for the Response subscale was accounted for by whether or not the survey respondent was located in a school district that was either a member or non-member of the state mentoring team. When converted to Cohen's *d*, the effect size was interpreted to be small to moderate (*d*=.33), and a power analysis suggested a magnitude of .16. Hence, having no statistical significance was likely due to the small sample as there was not sufficient power to detect differences between the groups.

The results revealed that there was no statistical significance between the groups. However, measures of practical significance revealed potential differences. The small to moderate effect size suggested there was something systematic occurring between *members* and *non-members* of the state mentoring team regarding general assessment subscale scores. More specifically, Cohen's *d* suggested that there was approximately

1/3 of one standard deviation unit difference in general assessment subscale score between *members* and *non-members* of the state mentoring team.

Legal Aspects, Subscale Four

The Legal Aspects subscale also revealed slight non-normality for both groups. Examination of skewness (-.692) and kurtosis (-.252) statistics for *members of the state mentoring team* suggested that the dependent variable may be normally distributed. However, review of the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality (W=.758, p=.002) and the Q-Q plot indicated some non-normality. The box plot did not indicate any potential outliers.

For *non-members of the state team*, review of Shapiro-Wilk's (W=.868, p=.013) and the Q-Q plot indicated that non-normality was also a consideration for this group. However, the box plot did not indicate any potential outliers and the skewness (.182) and kurtosis (-.475) statistics were normal.

Although the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality was statistically significant for both groups and the Q-Q plots suggested some non-normality, the researcher decided to proceed with the analysis since independent *t*-tests are relatively robust to violations of the normality assumption with two-tailed tests (Lomax, 2001). Levene's test indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met (F=1.127, p=.297). The test was statistically significant, t (30.9) = -3.10, p=.004 as the results reported are those for variances not assumed. There was evidence to support the hypothesis that a difference in Legal Aspects subscale score existed between *members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment* (n=14, M=.810, SD= .215), as compared to *non-members* (n=19, M=.544, SD=.277).

The 95% confidence interval for the difference between means was -.441 to -.091. The effect size was calculated by eta squared and found to be .23. This indicated that approximately 23% of the variance in score for the Legal Aspects subscale was accounted for by whether or not the survey respondent was located in a school district that was either a member or non-member of the state mentoring team. When converted to Cohen's *d*, the effect size was interpreted to be very large (*d*= 1.1), and a power suggested a magnitude of .87.

The results revealed that there was both statistical and practical significance between the groups. Both the effect size and power analysis strongly suggested that something systematic was occurring between *members* and *non-members* of the state mentoring team. Thus, the results provided evidence to support the conclusion that there was a difference between the groups for the Legal Aspects subscale score.

Research Question Two – Ancillary Data

An independent *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a mean difference in the overall survey scores for *members of the state mentoring team* against bullying and harassment as compared to *non-members of the state mentoring team* against bullying and harassment. A composite survey score was calculated by the researcher by adding the scores and then dividing by four (the number of subscales). To control for the increased probability of a Type I error, the Bonferroni adjustment was applied. Thus and alpha of .0125 (.05/4) was applied. The alternative hypothesis was that the subscale means would not be equal for each group.

The assumption of normality was tested and met for the distributional shape of the dependent variable for both groups; *members* and *non-members* of the state mentoring

team. More specifically, review of the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality ($W=.957$, $p=.674$), skewness (-.631) and kurtosis (.765) statistics indicated that normality was a reasonable assumption for *members of the state mentoring team*. Review of the Q-Q plot indicated slight non-normality however this was expected given the small sample size. The box plot did indicate one potential outlier; however it was not removed.

For *non-members of the state mentoring team*, review of the Shapiro-Wilk's test for normality ($W=.978$, $p=.909$), skewness (.280) and kurtosis (-.688) statistics indicated that normality was a reasonable assumption. Additionally, review of the Q-Q plot indicated slight non-normality however, like the prior group this was expected given the small sample size. The box plot did not indicate any potential outliers.

Levene's test revealed that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met ($F=4.186$, $p=.049$). The test was statistically significant, $t(31.6) = -3.12$, $p=.004$ as the results reported are those for variances not assumed. Hence, there is a difference in Overall Composite subscale score between *members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment* (n=14, $M=.824$, $SD=.097$) as compared to *non-members* (n=20, $M=.6874$, $SD=.158$).

The 95% confidence interval for the difference between means was -.226 to -.047. The effect size was calculated by eta squared and found to be .23. This indicated that approximately 23% of the variance in score for the Overall Composite subscale score was accounted for by whether or not the survey respondent was located in a school district that was either a member or non-member of the state mentoring team. When converted to Cohen's *d*, the effect size was interpreted to be very large ($d=1.1$) and a power analysis suggested a magnitude of .87.

The results revealed that there was both statistical and practical significance between the groups. Both the effect size and power analysis strongly suggested that something systematic was occurring between members and non-members of the state mentoring team. Thus, the results provided evidence to support the conclusion that there was a difference between the groups for the Overall Composite subscale score.

<div align="center">Research Question Three</div>

For Research Question three, "To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?" a logistic regression was performed. It should be noted that while the sample size (N=34) was insufficient to conduct a logistic regression, the analysis was conducted regardless as it was proposed initially. The reader needs to interpret the results with caution.

Data Screening and Testing of Assumptions

Prior to analysis, total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students for the schools where the survey respondents were located were examined for accuracy in data entry, missing values, and the extent to which multivariate assumptions were met. The variables were examined separately for the nineteen who reported *having* have a campus specific cyberbullying policy and the fifteen who reported *not having* a campus specific cyberbullying policy (N=34). Frequency distributions of the independent variables suggested that the range of values were within what was to be expected. There were no missing cases.

In terms of normality, the independent variables were examined using histograms, skewness and kurtosis statistics, normal Q-Q plots, box plots, and Shapiro-Wilk's tests for normality. For both groups, review of Shapiro-Wilk's tests for normality in addition to skewness and kurtosis statistics indicated that normality was a reasonable assumption for all three predictor variables. Additionally, review of the Q-Q plots indicated some non-normality however this was expected given the small sample size. None of the box plots indicated any potential outliers. Table 12 details the results of the normality tests for each group by predictor variable.

Table 12: Results of Testing of Assumptions for Predictor Variables

Predictor Variable	Campus Specific Cyberbullying Policy: YES				Campus Specific Cyberbullying Policy: NO			
	W	p	Skewness	Kurtosis	W	p	Skewness	Kurtosis
Total Student Population	.958	.541	.003	-1.132	.969	.841	.146	-1.011
Total Percentage of non-White Students	.923	.127	.851	.372	.960	.688	.233	.249
Total Percentage of Students Receiving Free/Reduced Lunch	.981	.949	.331	-.181	.939	.367	-.033	-1.125

In terms of the absence of multicollinearity, scatterplots suggested multicollinearity was likely not evident. The lack of mutlicollinearity was also confirmed by the lack of substantial overlap between independent variables based on a correlation

134

matrix. All correlations were under $r = .609$. VIF values of 1.082, 1.603, and 1.707 in addition to tolderance values of .924, .624, and .586 provided further evidence that multicollinearity was not an issue.

Logistic Regression Analysis

Logistic regression analysis was then conducted to determine whether the three predictors (total student population, total percentage of non-White students, and total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch) could predict having a campus specific cyberbullying policy. Good model fit was evidenced by non-statistically significant results on the Hosmer and Lemeshow test, X^2 (8 $N= 34$) $=5.856$, $p< .662$, and small to moderate effect size indices using Cohen (1988) (Cox and Snell $R^2=.083$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .112$). These results suggest that the predictors, as set, reliably distinguished between those who had a campus specific cyberbullying policy and those who did not. Table 13 presents the results for the model including the regression coefficients, Wald statistics, odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals for the odds ratios. Table 14 presents the group means and standard deviations of each of the predictors for both groups.

Table 13: Logistic Regression Results

	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	95.0% C.I. for EXP(B)	
						Lower	Upper
Total Student Population	.000	.001	.127	.722	1.000	.998	1.003
Total Percentage of Non-White Students	.028	.025	1.230	.267	1.028	.979	1.081
Total Percentage Free/Reduced Lunch	.009	.025	.143	.706	1.009	.961	1.060
Constant	-1.851	1.646	1.265	.261	.157		

Table 14: Group Means (Standard Deviations) of Predictors

Predictor	Campus Specific Cyberbullying Policy: YES	Campus Specific Cyberbullying Policy: NO
Total Student Population	921.21 (396.48)	899.07 (280.48)
Total Percentage of Non-White Students	52.07 (20.24)	41.60 (16.47)
Total Percentage of Students Receiving Free/Reduced Lunch	47.69 (369.38)	40.11(18.46)

The results of the logistic regression indicated that none of the variables, total student population, total percentage of non-White students, and total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch were statistically significant predictors of having a campus specific cyberbullying policy. The logistic model accurately predicted 61% of the schools having a campus specific cyberbullying policy and was more likely to

classify correctly schools that had a campus specific policy (79% of those with a campus specific policy and 40% of those who do not).

Research Question Four

To answer Research Question four, "What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?" a constant comparison analysis was used. Figure 9 illustrates the two major themes and the six sub-themes that emerged as a result of the analysis:
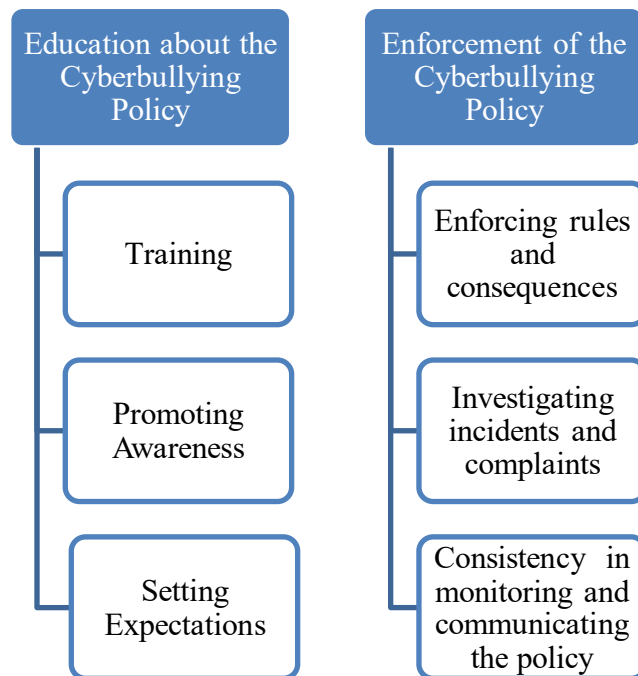
Figure 5: Major Themes and Subthemes for Research Question Four

To be more specific, 33 responses were categorized into two major themes: (1) education about the cyberbullying policy and (2) enforcement of the cyberbullying policy. Regarding education, three subthemes emerged: (a) training, (b) promoting awareness, and (c) setting expectations. With the most mentions, training of students,

staff, parents, and other vested stakeholders was stated thirteen times and supported by statements like, 'Supervisor to make sure appropriate training and information is provided to staff, students, and parents' and 'Information should be presented in the beginning of the year and made clear by the principal it will not be tolerated.' Promoting awareness and close derivatives thereof, was cited eleven times and corroborated by statements like, 'Providing a general awareness to all stakeholders' and 'Setting policy and informing all stakeholders.' With the least mentions, setting expectations was stated five times to include responses such as, 'Maintain behavioral expectations for students.'

Regarding enforcement, three subthemes emerged: (a) enforcing rules and consequences, (b) investigating incidents and complaints, and (c) consistency in monitoring and communicating the policy. Stated the most, enforcing rules and consequences of cyberbullying policies was cited eleven times. This conjecture was supported by statements like, 'By making sure there are consequences for those who chose to participate in cyberbullying.' Next, mentioned four times each were consistency in monitoring and communicating the policy and investigating incidents and complaints. These inferences are supported by statements such as 'Insistence on consistency in monitoring the policy' and 'We communicate the policy with parents, staff, and the SRO on campus.'

<div align="center">Research Question Five</div>

To answer Research Question five, "What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?" a constant comparison analysis was used. Figure 10 illustrates the two major themes and the five sub-themes that emerged as a result of the analysis:
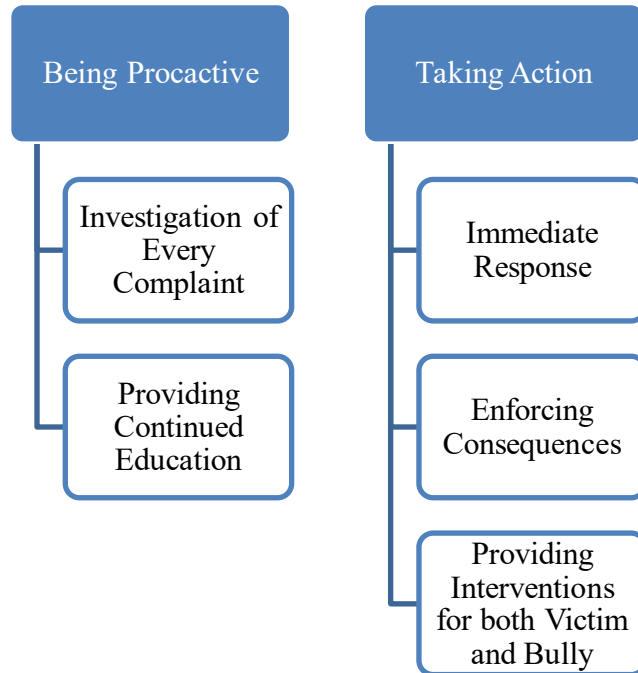
Figure 6: Major Themes and Subthemes for Research Question Five

To explain, 31 responses were categorized into two major themes: (a) being proactive and (b) taking action to respond to (potential) cyberbullying complaints and/or incidents. For 'Being Proactive', two subthemes emerged: investigating every complaint and providing continued education. More specifically, investigating both potential and actual incidents of cyberbullying was stated by survey respondents nine times and supported with statements like, 'Thorough investigation of every complaint.' Regarding continued education, terms like 'training', 'communicating,' and 'awareness' were used by the respondents and reported five times.

The second major theme, 'Taking Action', was reported consistently and was found in over one third of the statements provided by the respondents; as either their sole response or in combination with other themes. There were three subthemes: immediate

response, enforcing consequences, and providing interventions for both victims and bullies. Mentioned the most, immediate response to both potential and actual cyberbullying incidents was recorded eleven times and supported by statements like, 'Take action immediately when cyberbullying takes place.' Mentioned nine times was enforcing the consequences for violating cyberbullying policies; and stated four times was providing interventions for both victims and bullies. Follow-up and/or counseling for both victims and bullies were stated three of the four times as a way to intervene and address cyberbullying.

Summary

The results of the data collected were presented in this chapter. Connections were made between the analyses conducted and the proposed research questions. More specifically, the development and distribution of the of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey was detailed; pertinent district-level and school level demographic variables in relation to where the survey respondents were located were described; and a frequency distribution of survey responses were reviewed. More importantly, inferences about the data were made using a content analysis, four independent t tests, a logistic regression, and two constant comparison analyses.

Chapter Five provides a discussion and interpretation of the analyses presented in this chapter. Chapter Five also includes recommendations for future research as well as implications for both policy and practice in addressing student cyberbullying.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion and interpretation of the analyses presented in chapter four. More specifically, connections are made between the data produced from this study with those presented in the literature. It also includes recommendations for future research as well as implications for both policy and practice in addressing student cyberbullying.

Statement of the Problem

"All students are potential victims of electronic bullying" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 148). Therefore, it is imperative that school officials take an active role in developing interventions targeted at preventing and controlling it. However, according to Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara (2008) a minimal amount of research has been conducted that examines the content of school anti-bullying policies. In fact, they suggested that existing policies may be deficient in important areas, such as cyberbullying. Accordingly, Li (2007) earlier considered socioeconomic status as a major factor in explaining cyberbullying in schools. However, the findings of his research indicated "that merely considering SES could not explain this phenomenon" (p. 1790). Li suggested that one possible explanation was school climates. More specifically, Li surmised that there was a lack of official policies that effectively addressed bullying or that policies against bullying and harassment were adopted but not followed. Li also stated, "Another explanation may be that bullying is becoming increasingly severe in terms of scope and the extent in large cities" (p. 1786). These

suggestions indicated the need for further investigation of bullying and harassment

policies as well as potential demographics that may have an influence on the extent to

which students experience cyberbullying. More importantly, there was a void in the

research regarding principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to

cyberbullying incidents.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

> 1. What are selected Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?
>
> 2. To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts that are members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts that are not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment?
>
> 3. To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?
>
> 4. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?
>
> 5. What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?

Conclusions

Summary Statistics of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey

The summary statistics of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal

Survey revealed several important findings as they related to the literature. To be more

specific, there were six items on the survey of which 100% of respondents replied 'yes.'

These included:

I know what cyberbullying is.

My school district has a clear policy regarding cell phones and other portable electronic devices.

My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

My staff members know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

It is clear to students that the inappropriate use of technology will not be tolerated by school administration.

My staff and I take ACTUAL incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

Further analysis of the survey responses revealed that over 80% (27) of the respondents answered 'yes' to an additional six questions, accounting for over half (12 out 22) of the survey. Perhaps this could be interpreted to mean that middle school principals in Florida were: (a) generally aware of the seriousness of cyberbullying; and (b) enforced both technology and bullying and harassment policies to prevent and respond to student cyberbullying; either by their own initiative or as directed by the school districts.

These findings also answered what Li (2007) surmised as a lack of official policies that effectively address bullying; or that anti-bullying programs were adopted but not followed. However, it should be noted that in three years there has been a significant amount of legislation that has been directed toward the states in developing cyberbullying legislation, including Florida, which has changed how educators and policy makers dealt with this issue (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b). Also, it is important to consider that the results of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey were limited to the perceptions of middle school principals and did not take into account the perceptions of

the entire school community (students, faculty, and parents) which could have produced differing results.

Also of particular importance were the survey respondents' answers to questions regarding their knowledge of the number of victims and bullies involved in cyberbullying incidents that occurred on their campuses or during school hours during the 2008-2009 school year. Just over 55% (19) replied 'yes' to knowing the number of victims and exactly 50% (17) reported knowing the number of cyberbullies. In fact, the average number of cybervictims was 12 per school; the lowest being two and the highest being 123. Regarding the number of cyberbullies, the average number per school was four; with the lowest reported number being two and the highest being 13. Related, it was found that a higher percentage of survey respondents reported being aware that a majority of cyberbullying incidents occurred off their campuses during the 2008-2009 school year. Also interesting, nearly 80% (25) of the survey respondents did not believe that cyberbullying was a significant problem at their schools.

These results corroborated the findings of both Hinduja and Patchin (2009a) and Willard (2007c) regarding the anonymity and pseudonymity of cyberbullying. The survey respondents' knowledge of the number of cybervictims was much higher compared to their knowledge of the number of cyberbullies. Additionally, these results supported the research of Li who found that just over 40% of adolescents who had been cyberbullied had no idea who cyberbullied them. These results also strengthened the research of Burgess-Proctor, Hinduja, and Patchin (2009) which found that of 1,203 adolescent girls who were self-identified cybervictims just over 35% told nobody and 24.5% reported doing nothing at all when cyberbullied; thus, leaving little to no

144

opportunity for adult intervention. Hence, it could be surmised that Florida middle

school principals were sensitive to the fact that students at their schools have been

cybervictims, cyberbullies, or both; and that a majority of these activities occurred off-

campus. However, perhaps cyberbullying was not perceived to be a significant issue due

to a low number of formal student complaints.

Research Question One

What are selected Florida school districts' policies regarding student cyberbullying?

A content analysis of six selected school district's anti-bullying policies, using the

Bullying Policy Contents Checklist, was conducted. Overall, the average score on the

instrument was 24.8 out of a total of 34 points. Additionally, all six school districts

earned full credit for 20 statements on the instrument. Separated by section, Section A,

Definition of Bullying Behavior, received the highest scores. Conversely, the six school

districts did not earn full credit for six total statements on the instrument. As potential

areas of concern, those items were:

Mention homophobic bullying?

Mention bullying due to disabilities?

Clearly mentioned the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, etc) if they know of bullying? (More than simply referring to 'all staff')

Discuss what action will be taken if bullying persists?

Mention periodic review and updating of policy?

Discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; students with learning disabilities)?

It is also important to note that the results of the analysis both supported and

contradicted prior research conducted by Smith, Smith, Osborn and Samara (2008). To

be more specific, comparable to what was reported by Smith et. al., responses for this analysis were low for making it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behavior; mentioning homophobic bullying; and discussing the preventative role of playground supervisors or lunchtime supervisors as well as issues of inclusiveness. However, scores improved with the current analysis for reporting and responding to bullying incidents as well as recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating policy; all of which received low mentions in the research of Smith et al. Most notable, all six school districts received full credit for including statements regarding who is responsible for coordinating the recording system and for showing how the information from the records would be used.

Addressing the specific purpose of this study, all six school districts addressed cyberstalking and five out of the six explicitly defined cyberbullying; which received low mentions according to the research of Smith et al. Additionally, the mediums through which cyberbullying occurs were also stated in those policies. Equally important, one policy went as far to state that the physical location or time access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated. These conclusions further reinforce the fact that there has been a significant amount of legislation has been directed toward the states in developing cyberbullying legislation in the past three years which has changed how educators and policy makers deal with this issue (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009b).

To what extent, if any, is there a mean difference in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts that are members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment as compared to middle school principals in school districts that are not members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment?

Four independent *t* tests were conducted to determine if there were mean differences in general assessment, policy, response, and legal aspects subscale scores for middle school principals in school districts that were either members or non-members of the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment. It was found that there were no significant differences between the groups for the first three subscales; however, a large effect size was found for subscale one, general assessment, and moderate to large effect size for subscale two, Policy. There was a significant difference for the groups for the legal aspects subscale. The three statements included in this subscale were:

> I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus.

> I am familiar with major court decisions related to student speech on the Internet.

> I am familiar with the school district's civil liability for failure to prevent cyberbullying incidents or improper response to cyberbullying incidents.

While there are no specific connections that can be made to the previous literature, it can be surmised that regardless of membership status, selected Florida middle school principals were well informed regarding the seriousness of cyberbullying as well as policies and response measures in place targeted at preventing and controlling it. A step in the right direction, these results perhaps counteract what was reported by Agatston, Kowalski, and Limber (2007), that students did not perceive school district personnel as helpful resources when dealing with cyberbullying.

To what extent, if any, can a prediction be made regarding whether or not a middle school has a campus specific cyberbullying policy based upon total student population, total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, and total percentage of non-white students?

When examining the issue of cyberbullying Li (2007), indicated that considering socioeconomic status in isolation could not explain this phenomenon. He postulated that maybe bullying was becoming more severe in terms of scope within large cities. Considering other potential demographics, Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found that Whites and non-Whites were as likely to experience cyberbullying as a victim or offender. Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton, and Scheidt (2001) also found no significant differences in bullying or victimization among African American, Hispanic, and White students in the United States. Additionally, Hinduja and Patchin (2008a) found that older youth were more likely to report both victimization and offense; and the average age of respondents was 14.8.

In accordance with these findings, a logistic regression was performed to determine if total student population, total percentage of non-White students, and total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch were accurate predictors of whether or not a middle school would have a campus specific cyberbullying policy. The results of the regression indicated that none of the variables were statistically significant predictors. However, these findings should be interpreted with caution as a small sample size was used and the results may not be robust.

Such results indicate that examining factors that influence school climates as Li (2007) suggested, rather than student demographics, could better explain the extent to which students experience cyberbullying and thus the creation of school specific

cyberbullying policies. Additionally, individual characteristics, such as parental involvement, computer proficiency, and participation in high risk behaviors (interpersonal violence and substance abuse) are perhaps also more accurate predictors of cyberbullying.

<center>Research Questions Four and Five</center>

What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in preventing student cyberbullying?

And,

What do Florida middle school principals perceive their role to be in responding to student cyberbullying?

It was found that there was a void in the research regarding principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying incidents at their schools. To fill this void, survey respondents were asked:

1. What role do you perceive the principal serves in preventing cyberbullying?

And,

2. What role do you perceive the principal serves in responding to cyberbullying?

Results of the analyses for both questions revealed similar themes. First, to prevent cyberbullying, principals conveyed that education about and enforcement of cyberbullying policies was important. Regarding education, principals stated that providing training, promoting awareness, and setting expectations were the most common ways in which they informed vested stakeholders. Concerning enforcement, principals asserted that it was vital to apply existing rules and consequences for cyberbullying as well as investigate incidents and complaints upon immediate notification. It was also expressed that consistency in monitoring and communicating the policy was imperative.

To respond to cyberbullying, principals stated that being proactive and taking action to respond to cyberbullying complaints and/or incidents was crucial. In fact, the words 'taking action' was reported consistently and was found in over one third of the statements provided by the principals; as either their sole response or in combination with other themes. Also mentioned consistently were 'immediate response,' 'enforcing consequences,' and providing interventions for both victims and bullies. These responses provide a connection to the 87 students surveyed by Li. More specifically, 67% of the students believed that adults in schools tried to stop cyberbullying when informed.

Implications

There are numerous implications that can be derived from this research study. Every school district in the state of Florida had an anti-bullying and harassment policy as required by state law (FLDOE, 2009). Of the six reviewed, all were found to be comprehensive in addressing the definitions of bullying behaviors, to include cyberbullying, as well as for reporting and responding to bullying incidents. It can also be surmised that selected Florida middle school principals were not only aware of these policies but monitored and enforced them as well regardless of membership status on the state mentoring team against bullying and harassment. However, there were areas in which improvements could be made. Knowledge of the number of cybervictims and cyberbullies, more reflective of what students have reported in prior research tends to be elusive to educators, especially for those who do not handle disciplinary matters on a daily basis (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, 2008a; Li, 2007; Slone & Smith, 2007). Additionally, continuing education is needed regarding when principals (or designees in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that occur off-campus so

they do not infringe upon the students' First and Fourth Amendments rights. Perhaps periodic evaluating and up-dating of bullying policies as well as a more clearly defined protocol for dealing with off-campus cyberactivties should be created. However, despite these precautions, as postulated by Willard (2007b), management by school personnel may remain difficult as students continue to embrace rapid developments in Internet and mobile communication technologies.

<u>Recommendations for Future Research</u>

There are two primary recommendations for future research. First, it is recommended that this study be replicated using a much larger sample. Secondly, separate the study into two independent studies for richer data. In other words, the content analysis should be a separate study from the Cyberbullying Policy and Response Principal Survey.

To be more specific, it is recommended that the content analysis be conducted examining all 67 Florida school districts. The same instrument, the Bullying Policy Contents Checklist, should be used. To establish interrater reliability, it is suggested to have three to four raters scoring the policies. To be national in scope, it is recommended to explore individual state policies concerning student cyberbullying for content and comparisons.

With respect to the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey, it is recommended to use membership status on the state mentoring team as a sampling strategy again since statistical significance was found for both the Legal Aspects subscale as well as for the Overall Composite Score. Further investigation is also needed since moderate to large effect sizes were found for three of the four subscale scores in addition

to the Overall Composite Score. Accordingly, if possible, conduct a pilot study to establish both content validity and reliability since there were no known studies that have verified these measures. Additionally, it is recommended to examine factors known to influence school cultures when attempting to predict the existence of campus specific cyberbullying policies since total student population, total percentage of non-White students, and total percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch were not significant factors in this study.

Lastly, it is recommended that the questions regarding the principals' perceptions of their roles to prevent and respond to student cyberbullying be removed from the survey. Rather, they should be asked either through formal interviews or small focus groups to elicit clearer, more detailed responses. A case study would also be a viable option. The questions could also be altered to obtain how decisions are made by the principal to prevent and respond to cyberbullying since perceptions are difficult to operationalize.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Policy and Practice</div>

<div align="center">Policy</div>

Bullying and harassment policies should be comprehensive to address all types of bullying behaviors to include cyberbullying. More specifically, policies should: (a) clearly define cyberbullying, (b) outline the mediums through which it occurs, (c) identify both interventions and disciplinary measures for cyberbullying, and (d) establish a protocol for handling off-campus cyberactivities that compromise students' safety and learning. Additionally, confirmed incidents of cyberbullying should receive a separate disciplinary code for reporting while remaining under the umbrella of bullying. In effect,

disciplinary codes for reporting bullying could be delineated to include all of those that apply: physical, verbal, relational, material, racial, disability, sexual, religious, and cyberbullying. Equally important, it would be prudent to make reporting of both suspected and actual incidents of cyberbullying mandatory on behalf of all school staff.

Practice

Both at the district and school levels it is recommended to create a culture conducive to student, parent, and faculty reporting of both suspected and actual incidents of cyberbullying. This can be done by providing training, promoting awareness, and setting expectations for all vested stakeholders. Both victims and bystanders of cyberbullying should feel comfortable telling a responsible adult without fear of reprisal. Also, everyone should be fully aware of the policy as well as sanctions applied by type and severity of the incident. Also crucial, counseling and remediation should be provided for victims and offenders as well as follow-up to see if interventions were effective.

Summary

There is a better understanding of what selected Florida school districts' policies were regarding student cyberbullying. Policies examined were comprehensive and targeted the components crucial to preventing and controlling it. However, improvements could be made concerning periodic review and updating of bullying policies as well as addressing issues of inclusiveness. Additionally, data from the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey provided evidence that selected Florida middle school principals had both adopted and implemented cyberbullying policies in their schools. However, it remains uncertain as to what factors influence whether or not a school had a campus specific cyberbullying policy. Lastly, principals

153

conveyed that education about and enforcement of cyberbullying policies was imperative. It was presumed that ultimately educators can take an integral role in confronting this type of adolescent aggression both on and off-campus as well as take the first of many steps toward improving student safety in cyberspace.

APPENDIX A: FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MODEL POLICY AGAINST BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Florida Department of Education
Model Policy Against Bullying and Harassment

a. Statement prohibiting bullying and harassment:

It is the policy of the _____ School District that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The district will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited.

b. Definition of bullying and a definition of harassment:

Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:
1. Teasing
2. Social Exclusion
3. Threat
4. Intimidation
5. Stalking
6. Physical violence
7. Theft
8. Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
9. Public humiliation
10. Destruction of property

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:
1. Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school

Bullying and **harassment** also encompasses:
1. Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment.

Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.

2. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
   a. Incitement or coercion
   b. Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system
   c. Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment

Cyberstalking as defined in s. 784.048(1)(d), F.S., means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

**Please note: Districts have the flexibility to add additional specific categories of students to which bullying and harassment is prohibited in excess of what is listed. Example(s) of approved district policies with additional categories will be available at www.fldoe.org/family.

c. Description of the type of **behavior expected** from each student and school employee of a public K-12 educational institution:

The _____ School District expects students to conduct themselves as appropriate for their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

The school district believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents/legal guardians, staff, and community members producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers will demonstrate appropriate behavior, treat others with civility and respect, and refuse to tolerate bullying or harassment.

The school district upholds that bullying or harassment of any student or school employee is prohibited:
   a) During any education program or activity conducted by a public K-12 educational institution;
   b) During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;

c) On a school bus of a public K-12 educational institution; or

d) Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a public K-12 education institution.

The policy shall also:

A. Describe student responsibilities, including the requirements for students to conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior; respect the person, property, and rights of others; obey constituted authority; and respond to those who hold that authority

B. Address appropriate recognition for positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship, and academic success

C. Explain student rights

D. Identify disciplinary sanctions and due process

---

d. Consequences for a student or employee of a public K-12 educational institution who commits an act of bullying or harassment:

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have committed an act of bullying or harassment may be disciplined in accordance with district policies, procedures, and agreements. Additionally, egregious acts of harassment by certified educators may result in a sanction against an educator's state issued certificate. (See State Board of Education Rule 6B-1.006, FAC., *The Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida*.) Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have committed an act of bullying or harassment shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

e. Consequences for a student or employee of a public K-12 educational institution who is found to have **wrongfully and intentionally accused** another of an act of bullying or harassment:

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another as a means of bullying or harassment range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused

another as a means of bullying or harassment may be disciplined in accordance with district policies, procedures, and agreements. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another as a means of bullying or harassment shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

f. A **procedure for reporting an act** of bullying or harassment, including provisions that permit a person to anonymously report such an act.

At each school, the principal or the principal's designee is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or the principal's designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents/legal guardians, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy anonymously or in-person to the principal or principal's designee.

The principal of each school in the district shall establish and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians, how a report of bullying or harassment may be filed either in-person or anonymously and how this report will be acted upon. The victim of bullying or harassment, anyone who witnessed the bullying or harassment, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying or harassment has taken place may file a report of bullying or harassment. A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/legal guardian or other persons who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying or harassment to the appropriate school official and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in the district policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or harassment will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or working environment, or work assignments.

Any written or oral reporting of an act of bullying or harassment shall be considered an official means of reporting such act(s). Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

g. A **procedure for the prompt investigation** of a report of bullying or harassment and the persons responsible for the investigation. The investigation of a reported act of bullying or harassment is deemed to be a school-related activity and begins with a report of such an act:

At each school in the district, the Procedures for Investigating Bullying and/or Harassment include:

- The principal or designee selects a designee(s), employed by the school, trained in investigative procedures to initiate the investigation. The designee(s) may not be the accused perpetrator (harasser or bully) or victim.
- Documented interviews of the victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses are conducted privately, separately, and are confidential. Each individual (victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses) will be interviewed separately and at no time will the alleged perpetrator and victim be interviewed together.
- The investigator shall collect and evaluate the facts including, but not limited to:
  o Description of incident(s) including nature of the behavior; context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred, etc.;
  o How often the conduct occurred;
  o Whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;
  o The relationship between the parties involved;
  o The characteristics of parties involved (i.e., grade, age, etc.);
  o The identity and number of individuals who participated in bullying or harassing behavior;
  o Where the alleged incident(s) occurred;
  o Whether the conduct adversely affected the student's education or educational environment;
  o Whether the alleged victim felt or perceived an imbalance of power as a result of the reported incident; and
  o The date, time, and method in which the parents/legal guardians of all parties involved were contacted.
- Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances and includes:
  o Recommended remedial steps necessary to stop the bullying and/or harassing behavior; and
  o A written final report to the principal.
- The maximum of 10 school days shall be the limit for the initial filing of incidents and completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of bullying and/or harassment, and the investigative procedures that follow.

h. A process to investigate whether a reported act of bullying or harassment is within the **scope of the district** school system and, if not, a process for **referral** of such an act to the appropriate jurisdiction:

A principal or designee will assign a designee(s) that is trained in investigative procedures to initiate an investigation of whether an act of bullying or harassment is within the scope of the school district.

The trained designee(s) will provide a report on results of investigation with recommendations for the principal to make a determination if an act of bullying or harassment falls within the scope of the district.

- If it is within scope of district, move to Procedures for Investigating Bullying and/or Harassment.
- If it is outside scope of district, and determined a criminal act, refer to appropriate law enforcement.
- If it is outside scope of district, and determined not a criminal act, inform parents/legal guardians of all students involved.

i. A procedure for providing **immediate notification to the parents/legal guardians** of a victim of bullying or harassment and the parents/legal guardians of the perpetrator of an act of bullying or harassment as well as, notification to all local agencies where criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator:

The principal, or designee, shall promptly **report via telephone, personal conference, and/or in writing, the occurrence of any incident of bullying or harassment as defined by this policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved** on the same day an investigation of the incident(s) has been initiated. Notification must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

If the bullying incident results in the perpetrator being charged with a crime, the principal, or designee, shall by telephone or in writing by first class mail, inform parents/legal guardian of the victim(s) involved in the bullying incident about the Unsafe School Choice Option (No Child Left Behind, Title IX, Part E, Subpart 2, Section 9532) that states "...a student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, as determined by State law, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school."

Once the investigation has been completed and it has been determined that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, all appropriate local law enforcement agencies will be notified by telephone and/or in writing.

j. A procedure to **refer** victims and perpetrators of bullying or harassment for **counseling:**

A district referral procedure will establish a protocol for intervening when bullying or harassment is suspected or when a bullying incident is reported. The procedure shall include:

- A process by which the teacher or parent/legal guardian may request informal consultation with school staff (specialty staff, e.g., school counselor,

school psychologist, etc.) to determine the severity of concern and appropriate steps to address the concern (the involved students' parents or legal guardian may be included).

- A referral process to provide professional assistance or services that includes:
  - A process by which school personnel or parent/legal guardian may refer a student to the school intervention team (or equivalent school-based team with a problem-solving focus) for consideration of appropriate services. (Parent or legal guardian involvement is required at this point.)
  - If a formal discipline report or formal complaint is made, the principal or designee must refer the student(s) to the school intervention team for determination of counseling support and interventions. (Parent or legal guardian involvement is required at this point.)
- A school-based component to address intervention and assistance as determined appropriate by the intervention team that includes:
  - Counseling and support to address the needs of the victims of bullying or harassment
  - Research-based counseling/interventions to address the behavior of the students who bully and harass others (e.g., empathy training, anger management)
  - Research-based counseling/interventions which includes assistance and support provided to parents/legal guardians, if deemed necessary or appropriate

k. A procedure for including incidents of bullying or harassment in the school's report of data concerning school safety and **discipline data** required under s. 1006.09(6), F.S. The report must include each incident of bullying or harassment and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals. The report must include, in a separate section, each reported incident of bullying or harassment that does not meet the criteria of a prohibited act under this section with recommendations regarding such incidents:

The school district will utilize Florida's School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) Statewide Report on School Safety and Discipline Data, which includes **bullying/harassment** as an incident code as well as **bullying-related** as a related element code. The SESIR definition of bullying/harassment is unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment, cause discomfort or humiliation, or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation.

If a bullying and/or harassment incident occurs then it will be reported in SESIR with the **bullying/harassment** code. If the bullying/harassment results in any of the following SESIR incidents the incident will be coded appropriately using the relevant

incident code AND the related element code entitled **bullying-related** code. Those incidents are:

- Arson
- Battery
- Breaking and Entering
- Disruption on Campus
- Major Fighting
- Homicide
- Kidnapping
- Larceny/Theft
- Robbery
- Sexual Battery
- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Offenses
- Threat/Intimidation
- Vandalism
- Weapons Possession
- Other Major (Other major incidents that do not fit within the other definitions)

Discipline and referral data will be recorded in Student Discipline/Referral Action Report and Automated Student Information System.

The district will provide bullying incident, discipline, and referral data to the Florida Department of Education in the format requested, through Survey 5 from Education Information and Accountability Services, and at designated dates provided by the Department.

l. A procedure for **providing instruction** to students, parents/legal guardians, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers on identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying or harassment:

The district ensures that schools sustain healthy, positive, and safe learning environments for all students. It is important to change the social climate of the school and the social norms with regards to bullying. This requires the efforts of everyone in the school environment – teachers, administrators, counselors, school nurses other non-teaching staff (such as bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, and/or school librarians), parents/legal guardians, and students.

Students, parents/legal guardians, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers shall be given instruction at a minimum on an annual basis on the district's Policy and Regulations against bullying and harassment. The instruction shall include evidence-based methods of preventing bullying and harassment, as well as how to effectively identify and respond to bullying in schools.

m. A procedure for **regularly reporting to a victim's parents/legal guardians** the actions taken to protect the victim:

The principal or designee shall by telephone and/or in writing report the occurrence of any incident of bullying as defined by this policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved on the same day an investigation of the incident has been initiated. According to the level of infraction, parents/legal guardians will be notified by telephone and/or writing of actions being taken to protect the child; the frequency of notification will depend on the seriousness of the bullying or harassment incident. Notification must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

n. A **procedure for publicizing** the policy which must include its publication in the code of student conduct required under s. 1006.07(2), F.S., and in all employee handbooks:

At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent or designee shall, in writing, inform school staff, parents/legal guardians, or other persons responsible for the welfare of a student of the district's student safety and violence prevention policy.

Each district school shall provide notice to students and staff of this policy through appropriate references in the code of student conduct and employee handbooks, and/or through other reasonable means. The Superintendent shall also make all contractors contracting with the district aware of this policy.

Each school principal shall develop an annual process for discussing the school district policy on bullying and harassment with students in a student assembly or other reasonable format. Reminders of the policy and bullying prevention messages such as posters and signs will be displayed around each school and on the district school buses.

APPENDIX B: CYBERBULLYING POLICIES AND RESPONSE
PRINCIPAL SURVEY 1.0

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. This survey is directed toward middle school principals and their work experiences with student cyberbullying. Your participation is important.

You must have been the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year in order to complete this survey. If not, please exit the survey now.

The survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. Please answer each of the following questions according to your best judgment or knowledge. Thank you.

1. Please enter your principal access code provided.

By entering this access code, you are providing your consent to participate in this research study as you were informed by email. You may exit this survey at any time and withdraw freely from the study without consequence.

2. Were you the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year?

○ Yes

○ No

Page 2

Please answer each of the following questions according to your best judgment or knowledge. You do not need to answer any question that you do not wish to answer.

3. I know what cyberbullying is and in what forms it can occur.

○ Yes

○ No

4. I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, please provide how many students (informed estimates are acceptable):

5. I know how many students have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, please provide how many students (informed estimates are acceptable): [____]

6. I am aware that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

7. I am aware that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

8. I believe cyberbullying is a significant problem at my school.

○ Yes

○ No

9. My school district has a clear cyberbullying policy.

○ Yes

○ No

10. My school has a clear set of cyberbullying guidelines specific to our campus to further address cyberbullying concerns.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, what year did your school adopt those guidelines?
[_____]

11. My school district has a clear policy regarding cell phones and other portable electronic devices.

○ Yes

○ No

12. My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

○ Yes

○ No

13. My staff members know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

○ Yes

○ No

14. It is clear to students that the inappropriate use of technology will not be tolerated by the school administration.

○ Yes

○ No

15. My staff and I take suspected incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

○ Yes

○ No

16. My staff and I take actual incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

○ Yes

○ No

17. My staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of cyberbullying.

○ Yes

○ No

18. My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents.

○ Yes

○ No

19. My school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.

○ Yes

○ No

20. I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus.

○ Yes

○ No

21. I am familiar with major court decisions related to student speech on the Internet.

○ Yes

○ No

22. I am familiar with how the school district's civil liability for failure to prevent cyberbullying incidents or improper response to cyberbullying incidents.

○ Yes

○ No

23. What type of cyberbullying instruction have the STUDENTS received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year?

24. What type of cyberbullying instruction have the FACULTY received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year?

25. What role do you perceive the principal serves in PREVENTING cyberbullying?

26. What role do you perceive the principal serves in RESPONDING to cyberbullying?

27. Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal?

○   1-3 years

○   4-6 years

○   7-9 years

○   10+ years

28. Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal at your current school?

○   1-3 years

○   4-6 years

○   7-9 years

○   10+ years

29. What is your gender?

○   Male

○   Female

30. What is your ethnicity?

○   White

○   Black

○   Hispanic

○   Asian

○   American Indian

○   Multi-Racial

○   Other (please specify)

31. Would you like to receive a copy of the published results upon completion of this study?

○   Yes

○   No

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION TO USE AND MODIFY MATERIALS FROM CYBERBULLYING.US

Webmail   jmgators@embarqmail.com

Permission to use materials from cyberbullying.us

From :	MAGGIE GARDNER <jmgators@embarqmail.com>	Tue, May 05, 2009 03:03 PM
Subject :	Permission to use materials from cyberbullying.us	
To :	resources@cyberbullying.us	

Dr. Hinduja and Dr. Patchin,

I am Maggie Gardner, a doctoral student at the University of Central Florida in the department of educational research, technology, and leadership. I would like to request written permission from both of you to use a modified version of the "Cyberbullying Report Card" on www.cyberbullying.us. It is my intent to use the report card to survey middle school principals in the state of Florida to assess their knowledge of policies regarding cyberbullying at their schools as part of my dissertation. More specifically, I would like to use the following questions:

1. We know how many students at our school have been victims of cyberbullying.
2. We know how many students at our school have cyberbullied others.
3. Cyberbullying is not a significant problem in our school.
4. Our school has a clear cyberbullying policy.
5. Our cyberbullying policy includes language about off-campus behaviors being subject to discipline.
6. Our school has a clear policy regarding cell phones and other portable electronic devices.
7. Students know our policy regarding technology.
8. Parents know our policy regarding technology.
9. Signage about acceptable computer use and Internet use is posted in school computer labs.
10. We have Web site-blocking and content-monitoring software/hardware installed on our network to ensure age-appropriate Web browsing and communications.
11. We avoid putting student information on the district Web site.
12. We are (and stay) familiar with the relevant major court decisions related to student speech using computers and the Internet.
13. We are familiar with the ways in which the school district might be civilly liable for negligently preventing or improperly responding to cyberbullying incidents, and we work to avoid them.

I would greatly appreciate your consideration in this matter. If you choose to grant permission by mail, I will send a self addressed envelope to a designated address of your preference. If you would like to speak with me personally, you may contact me at 352-735-2364. Thank you!
Maggie Gardner

Re: Permission to use materials from cyberbullying.us

From :	Sameer Hinduja <hinduja@fau.edu>	Tue, May 05, 2009 07:06 PM
Subject :	Re: Permission to use materials from cyberbullying.us	
To :	MAGGIE GARDNER <jmgators@embarqmail.com>	

Hi Maggie,
No problem. Just cite us - cite our book:

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2009). Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard:
Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
Publications (Corwin Press). ISBN: 1412966892.

Please send your permission letter to my colleague Justin, whose address is
on our contact page - I will be on the road this summer and not able to
receive your mail.

Thanks and good luck with your dissertation - and keep in touch as we'd love
to hear of your findings,
Sameer

Webmail

RE: Permission to use materials from cyberbullying.us

From :	Justin W. Patchin <PATCHINJ@UWEC.EDU>	Thu, May 07, 2009 11:28 AM
Subject :	RE: Permission to use materials from cyberbullying.us	
To :	MAGGIE GARDNER <jmgators@embarqmail.com>	
Cc :	Sameer Hinduja <hinduja@fau.edu>	

Maggie – You have our permission to use the instrument. Please cite our book—where it was originally published (Bullying beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying). If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Justin Patchin

Justin W. Patchin, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice
Department of Political Science
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
105 Garfield Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004
Phone: 715.836.4058
Email: patchinj@uwec.edu
www.cyberbullying.us

APPENDIX D: INITIAL CONTACT LETTER

PRINCIPAL INITIAL CONTACT LETTER

PROFESSIONAL LETTERHEAD

<div align="right"><DATE></div>

<SCHOOL NAME>
<ADDRESS>
<CITY STATE ZIP>

Dear Principal,

I am writing to invite you to participate in an important study as part of my dissertation research on principals' perceptions of cyberbullying policies in Florida middle schools. I am a full-time doctoral student in the Department of Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology at the University of Central Florida. I am working closely with my faculty advisor, Dr. Rosemarye Taylor, and Co-chair Dr. Debbie Hahs-Vaughn. It is my hope that your responses will fill the void in the research regarding principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying incidents. Your responses will also help to determine relationships between selected school demographics and student cyberbullying policies.

In the next few days, you will receive an email requesting your participation in the study. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your input is important and greatly appreciated.

I hope that you will find the survey both relevant and informative.

Best Regards,

Maggie Gardner
Doctoral Candidate
University of Central Florida

APPENDIX E: PRINCIPAL EMAIL, INFORMED CONSENT, AND
SURVEY LINK

Dear Principal,

Thank you for taking time to participate in an important study about cyberbullying policies in Florida middle schools. You are a part of a select number of middle school principals asked to participate. It is intended that 103 middle school principals from six Florida school districts will be surveyed. **The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.**

The study is confidential. To help ensure the confidentiality of your identity, you will be assigned a numeric principal access code. The surveys are coded only to track which principals have completed and returned the survey. This code along with all the information gathered through the use of the survey instrument will be held confidential and discarded upon completion of the study. Demographic data will be asked only for the purpose of entering the responses into the database for statistical analysis.

The results of this study may be published. However, the data obtained from you will be combined with data from others in the publication. The published results will not include your name or any other information that would personally identify you or your school.

There is no penalty for not participating. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at anytime without consequence. Additionally, there is no compensation for participating in the study.

There are no anticipated risks or direct benefits by participating in this study. However, you may benefit indirectly. It is intended that your responses will fill the void in the research regarding principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying incidents. Your responses will also help to determine relationships between selected school demographics and student cyberbullying policies.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at (352) 735-2364 or by email at jmgators@embarqmail.com. My faculty advisors will also be available for questions. Dr. Rosemarye Taylor may be contacted at (407) 823-1469 or by email at rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu. Dr. Debbie Hahs-Vaughn may be contacted at (407) 823-1762 or by email at dhahs@mail.ucf.edu.

Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to UCF Institutional Review Board Office at the University of Central Florida, Office of Research and Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246. The phone numbers are (407) 823-2901 or (407) 882-2276.

By clicking on the survey link, entering the principal access code, and answering the survey, you are providing your informed consent. Please remember that you are free to withdraw your consent to participate at anytime without consequence and you do not have to answer any question that you do not wish to answer.

The survey may be accessed at the following link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=wyZLpqFKJvBqg1k8NT_2f5kw_3d_3d

Your principal access code is: XXXX

Please complete the survey by **October 15, 2009.**

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this survey. Your time and effort in helping me gather information for my dissertation is greatly appreciated.

Best Regards,

Maggie Gardner
Doctoral Candidate
University of Central Florida

APPENDIX F: THANK YOU POSTCARD

<DATE>

<SCHOOL NAME>
<ADDRESS>
<CITY STATE ZIP>

Thank you once again for completing the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. Your time and effort in helping me gather information for my dissertation is greatly appreciated. If you requested to receive a copy of the published results of this study, they will be sent out in approximately six months. Thank you!

Maggie Gardner
Doctoral Candidate
University of Central Florida

APPENDIX G: COGNITIVE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND
INFORMED CONSENT

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey

A. Introduction

Thank you for allowing me to come here today. I am Maggie Gardner, a doctoral candidate at the University of Central Florida, in the Department of Educational Research, Technology, and Leadership. As part of my research, I plan to survey selected middle school principals regarding their work experiences with student cyberbullying. I anticipate that this study will fill the void in the research regarding principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying incidents. It is also my expectation that their responses will help to determine relationships between selected school demographics and student cyberbullying policies. Your role will be to evaluate the content and visual presentation of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey.

(Hand the respondent the informed consent)

B. Informed Consent

First, I would like for you to read this consent form. This interview is voluntary. The statement I am asking you to read indicates that you have volunteered for this interview. I assure you that all of your information will be kept confidential.

C. Procedure

In a moment, I am going to ask you to click on a link that will take you to the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. I would like for you to fill out the survey. However, as you look at it and fill it out, I would like for you to share your thoughts out loud. Please tell me everything you are thinking about the survey as you fill it out. For instance, share any thoughts you have whether the survey instructions were clear or unclear; whether you like the way it looks or not; whether any questions are unclear or irrelevant; or anything else that comes to mind as you read and answer the questions.
Please open the survey. For question one, please enter a principal access code of 1234. For question two, "Were you the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year?" please answer yes. From right now until you have completed the survey, please tell me everything you are thinking.

D. Probes

The following are probes that may be used during the interview:

What are you thinking right now?

Remember to read aloud for me.

Can you tell me more about that?

Could you describe that for me?

Relevant comments, errors, hesitations, and other indicators of potential problems during the interview will be noted.

E. Debriefing

The following questions will asked of the respondents upon completion of the survey:

1. Were all of the questions easy to understand? If no, please state which questions were not easy to understand and why?

What would you recommend to improve those questions?

2. Were there any questions you felt were not appropriate for this survey? If yes, which ones?

What would you recommend to improve those questions?

3. Is there anything about the overall appearance of the survey that you liked? If yes, what?

4. Is there anything about the overall appearance of the survey that you did not like? If so, what?

5. Is there anything else about this survey that you think needs to be improved?

6. Do you have any other thoughts or recommendations?

F. Conclusion

That is all of the questions I have for you. Thank you very much for your time and thoughts.

INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for taking time to participate in an important study about cyberbullying policies in selected Florida middle schools. Your role will be to evaluate the content and visual presentation of the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. **The interview should take approximately 20-25 minutes.**

Your interview will be recorded. The recording and everything you type on the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey is confidential. You will be identified only by your general title/position.

There are no anticipated risks or direct benefits by participating in this interview. Your input will help me to create a valid and reliable instrument from which to gain a better understanding of principals' perceptions of their role to prevent and respond to cyberbullying incidents. It is also my expectation that their responses will help to determine relationships between selected school demographics and student cyberbullying policies.

If you have any questions about this study after the interview, please contact me at (352) 735-2364 or by email at jmgators@embarqmail.com. My faculty advisors will also be available for questions. Dr. Rosemarye Taylor may be contacted at (407) 823-1469 or by email at rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu. Dr. Debbie Hahs-Vaughn may be contacted at (407) 823-1762 or by email at dhahs@mail.ucf.edu.

Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to UCF Institutional Review Board Office at the University of Central Florida, Office of Research and Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246. The phone numbers are (407) 823-2901 or (407) 882-2276.

By clicking on the survey link, entering the principal access code, and answering the survey, you are providing your informed consent. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at anytime without consequence.

Thank you for taking the time to evaluate this survey. Your time and effort in helping me gather information for my dissertation is greatly appreciated.

Best Regards,

Maggie Gardner
Doctoral Candidate
University of Central Florida

APPENDIX H: PERMISSION TO USE BULLYING POLICY CONTENTS CHECKLIST

Subject : Re: Permission to use materials from research study, A content analysis of school anti-bullying policies: progress and limitations

To : MAGGIE GARDNER <jmgators@embarqmail.com>, p smith <p.smith@gold.ac.uk>

Cc : rtaylor <rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu>, dhahs <dhahs@mail.ucf.edu>

Dear Maggie

you are welcome to use this along the lines you have stated.

the n=31 version is attached, but last year we developed a slightly extended/revised version (n=34) also attached, we are analysing data from this currently - again you are welcome to use with acknowledgement, and I would be interested in any findings you get

best wishes

Peter Smith

--On 02 October 2009 14:15 -0400 MAGGIE GARDNER <jmgators@embarqmail.com> wrote:

> Dr. Smith,
>
> I am Maggie Gardner a doctoral student in the Department of Educational
> Research, Technology, and Leadership in the College of Education at the
> University of Central Florida in Orlando, Florida. As part of my
> dissertation research on student cyberbullying policies, I am conducting
> a content analysis of seven Florida schools districts' anti-bullying
> policies. The 31 item scoring scheme you and your colleagues developed
> to analyze 142 schools anti-bullying policies in England would be an
> ideal instrument for me to use in my own research.
>
> I would like to ask permission to use and modify your instrument. Minor
> modifications would be made to focus more on cyberbullying; the
> definition of and strategies for preventing and responding to
> cyberbullying incidents. Credit would be given to you and your colleagues
> and your work would be cited appropriately. I would greatly appreciate
> your consideration.
>
>
> If you have any questions, please contact me at (352) 735-2364 or by

> email at jmgators@embarqmail.com. My faculty advisors will also be
> available for questions. Dr. Rosemarye Taylor may be contacted at (407)
> 823-1469 or by email at rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu. Dr. Debbie Hahs-Vaughn may
> be contacted at (407) 823-1762 or by email at dhahs@mail.ucf.edu.
>
> Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you soon.
>
> Best Regards,
>
> Maggie Gardner
>
>

_____
Peter K Smith (Professor)
Head, Unit for School and Family Studies
Department of Psychology
Goldsmiths, University of London
New Cross
London SE14 6NW
England

tel: +44-20-7919-7898
fax: +44-20-7919-7873

unit for school and family studies website:
http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/psychology/research/usfs.php
COST Action IS0801 on Cyberbullying website
http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/is0801/
rtn website on grandparenting:
http://www.gold.ac.uk/research/rtn
anti-bullying alliance website:
http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/
connect website on violence in schools:
http://www.gold.ac.uk/connect
understanding children's development 4th edition:
http://wip.blackwellpublishing.com/ucd/book.htm

****

APPENDIX I: BULLYING POLICY CONTENTS CHECKLIST

CONTENT ANALYSIS FOR SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES [MAY 2008 rev]

School: .... No of pages of policy: .... Rater: ....Date: ....

Type of school: Primary Middle Secondary FE-college   **CODE NUMBER**

A: Definition of bullying behaviour (13 points)	Score	Comments
1 have a definition of bullying?		
2 does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour?		
3 mention physical bullying (hits, kicks)?		
4 mention direct verbal bullying (threats, insults, nasty teasing)?		
5 mention relational bullying (rumours, social exclusion)?		
6 mention material bullying (damage to belongings, extortion of money)?		
7 mention cyberbullying (email, text messages)?		
8 mention homophobic bullying?		
9 mention racial bullying (or harassment)?		
10 mention sexual bullying (or harassment)?		
11 as well as pupil-pupil bullying, discuss the issue of adult/teacher-pupil bullying or vice versa?		
12 mention bullying due to disabilities?		
13 mention bullying because of faith or religious beliefs?		
B: Reporting and responding to bullying incidents (11 points)		
1 state what victims of bullying should do (e.g. tell a teacher; should clearly apply to victims/ pupils who experience bullying)?		
2 say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying (should specifically mention bullying, and be more specific than just 'deal promptly')?		
3 clearly mention the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors etc) if they know of bullying? (more than simply referring to 'all staff')		
4 clearly mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying (this can include knowing if their child has a behaviour problem if bullying is included elsewhere)?		
5 clearly mention the responsibilities of pupils (e.g. bystanders) if they know of bullying?		
6 state whether sanctions applied for bullying can vary (e.g. by type or severity of incident?		
7 mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?		
8 discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists?		
9 suggest how to support the victim? (more than just 'we will support victims')		
10 suggest how to help the pupil(s) doing the bullying to change their behaviour (apart from sanctions)? (more than just 'we will support ...')		
11 discuss if, when or how parents will be informed? ('parents will be informed' is sufficient if it clearly refers to bullying)		
C: Recording bullying, communicating and evaluating the policy (4 points)		
1 say reports of bullying will be recorded?		
2 say who is responsible for co-ordinating the recording system?		
3 show how records or survey data will be used to know whether the policy is working or not?		
4 mention periodic review and updating of the policy?		
D: Strategies for preventing bullying (6 points)		
1 mention any of encouraging co-operative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment?		
2 discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?		
3 discuss advice for parents about bullying (beyond B4)?		
4 mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors?		
5 discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; pupils with learning difficulties)?		
6 mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or happening outside school?		
TOTAL SCORE: (34 points)		

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW RESULTS, ROUNDS 1-3

COGNITIVE INTERVIEW RESULTS

RESPONDENT REACTIONS

<u>ROUND 1</u>

RESPONDENT 1

Title/Position: Director of Middle School Programs, Brevard County Public Schools, Florida
Date of Interview: August 20, 2009

Respondent 1 was interviewed in person on August 20, 2009. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and suggestions (in summary form):
1. All of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 3, 4, 5, 10, and 17.
Question 3: "I know what cyberbullying is and in what forms it can occur."
It was suggested to break question 3 into two separate statements: (a) "I know what cyberbullying is" and (b) "I know in what forms cyberbullying can occur." It was also suggested that if a participant answers no to the statement, "I know what cyberbullying is" that they be forced to exit the survey.
Questions 4 and 5:
Question 4: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school years."
Question 5: "I know how many students at my school have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school years."
The respondent suggested that a statement be included in the survey directions advising the principal to have access to current disciplinary records or be in close contact with a designee in charge of discipline while taking the survey. The respondent felt that would assist the researcher in gathering more accurate data for questions 4 and 5. Otherwise, respondent 1 felt that most principals would have difficulty answering both questions since most principals do not directly handle disciplinary infractions on a daily basis.
Question 10: "My school has a clear set of cyberbullying guidelines specific to our campus to further address cyberbullying concerns."
The respondent expressed the need to further clarify or delineate the difference between school and district policies. More specifically, according to respondent 1, question 10 seemed to imply that an individual school may have their own set of cyberbullying guidelines in addition to the district policy on bullying and harassment. The respondent felt that this question may confuse the participants or perhaps lead them to answer 'no' because most principals err on deferring to district policy. When

probed by the interviewer on how to improve the question, it was suggested to add the phrase, "In addition to the district policy," to the beginning of question. The revised question would read, "In addition to the district policy, my school has a clear set of cyberbullying guidelines specific to our campus to further address cyberbullying concerns."

Question 17: "My staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of cyberbullying."

Again, the respondent expressed the need to further clarify or delineate the difference between school and district policies. It was suggested to add the phrase, "In addition to the district policy," to the beginning of question 17. The revised question would read, "In addition to the district policy, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of cyberbullying."

4. An additional suggestion was made to provide the researcher's contact information at the end of the survey for further comments and questions on behalf of the participants once completing the survey. The respondent noted that perhaps after taking the survey, participants would have a better idea of what the study is about and what questions they may have regarding the results.

RESPONDENT 2

Title/Position: Administrative Coordinator, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Lake County Public Schools, Florida
Date of Interview: August 26, 2009

Respondent 2 was interviewed in person on August 26, 2009. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and suggestions (in summary form):

1. Most of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 4, 5, 19, 22, 23, and 24.

Questions 4 and 5:
Question 4: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Question 5: "I know how many students at my school have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 2 expressed concern for accurate responses from the participants regarding questions 4 and 5. Respondent 2 felt that principals would be forced to answer 'no' for both questions for two reasons: (a) most principals are not involved with the day-to-day handling of discipline referrals, and (b) if they do have access to disciplinary data, discipline referrals in Lake County only require the teacher and/or administrator to check the type and level of infraction, such as bullying/harassment. A description of the incident can be made in the 'Other Comments' section of the

referral. Consequently, a principal may be able to provide how many students were victims or perpetrators of a bullying incident while on campus or during school hours, however, a distinction most likely would not be made between bullying and cyberbullying.

Question 19: "My school has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal."

Respondent 2 commented that this is a good question to ask because having an anonymous reporting system for each school district is a new requirement and mandated by state law. For Lake County Public Schools, there is the Speak Out Hotline.

Question 22: "I am familiar with how the school district's civil liability for failure to prevent cyberbullying incidents or improper response to cyberbullying incidents."

Respondent 2 felt that the word choice for this question was confusing. Respondent 2 recommended that the question be restated as, "I am familiar with how the school district may be civilly liable for failure to prevent cyberbullying incidents or improper response to cyberbullying incidents."

Question 23: "What type of cyberbullying instruction have the students received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year?"

Respondent 2 commented from personal experience with survey research that providing a list of possible responses will help increase the response rate for this type of question. Respondent 2 was concerned that the researcher would get no responses or responses too lengthy to decipher. As a result of this discussion, respondent 2 provided a list of possible responses for the types and modes of cyberbullying instruction students may receive. The participants would be asked to 'check all of those that apply':

1. Coverage of the student code of conduct
2. General assembly
3. Classroom presentation
4. Curriculum infusion
5. Closed-circuit TV or power point presentation
6. None
7. Other

Question 24: "What types of cyberbullying instruction have the faculty received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year?"

Respondent 2 expressed again the concern that the researcher would get no responses or responses too lengthy to decipher. Similar to question 23, respondent 2 provided a list of possible responses for the types and modes of cyberbullying instruction faculty may receive. The participants would be asked to 'check all of those that apply':

1. Department meetings
2. Team meetings
3. Faculty meeting presentation
4. Faculty memo
5. Faculty handbook
6. Closed-circuit TV or power point presentation
7. Professional development course

8. None
9. Other

RESPONDENT 3

Title/Position: Middle School Principal, Orange County Public Schools, Florida
Date of Interview: August 28, 2009

Respondent 3 was interviewed in person on August 28, 2009. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and suggestions (in summary form):
1. All of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 4, 5, 8, 10, and 17.
Questions 4 and 5:
Question 4: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."
Question 5: "I know how many students at my school have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."
Respondent 3 commented that it would be difficult for principals to answer questions 4 and 5. The respondent explained that most principals do not handle disciplinary issues; rather they delegate that responsibility to an assistant principal and only intervene when the infractions are at the most serious level.
Question 8: "I believe cyberbullying is a serious issue at my school."
Respondent 3 paused after reading this question and then proceeded to read it two more times before answering 'yes'. The respondent explained that choosing 'yes' was not a reflection of knowing how many students may have been victims or perpetrators of cyberbullying; instead being aware of the prevalence and seriousness of cyberbullying by watching the news. The respondent explained that there is an underlying assumption that cyberbullying is a significant issue even if he/she could not put a number on it.
Question 10: "My school has a clear set of cyberbullying guidelines specific to our campus to further address cyberbullying concerns."
Respondent 3 commented that the researcher may have a large number of principals respond 'no' to this question. The respondent explained that most school districts have an 'Acceptable Use Policy' regarding technology included in the Student Code of Conduct which both parents and students are responsible for reading and signing. The respondent assumed that a majority of principals would defer to district policy and choose not to have additional school-specific policies. Respondent 3 explained that principals tend to adhere closely to district policies and opt to not to create school-level guidelines for fear of reprimand by district-level administrators; especially if the policy involves potential risks for civil liability.

Question 17: "My staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of cyberbullying."

Like question 10, respondent 3 believes that the researcher will have a large number of principals respond 'no' to this question. The respondent explained that in Orange County, the school district requires school administrators, or designated staff members in charge of discipline follow a standard, general process for formal investigations of all students. Again, respondent 3 explained that principals tend to adhere closely to district policies and opt to not to create school-level guidelines for fear of reprimand by district-level administrators; especially if the policy involves potential risks for civil liability.

4. An additional comment was made regarding the time it took to complete the survey. Respondent 3 noted that it took more like 15 minutes to complete rather than 10.

<p style="text-align:center">ROUND 2</p>

RESPONDENT 4

Title/Position: Elementary School Principal, Lake County Public Schools, Florida
Date of Interview: August 31, 2009

Respondent 4 was interviewed in person on August 31, 2009. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and suggestions (in summary form):

1. All of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 5, 6, 12, 13, 27, and 28.

Questions 5 and 6:

Question 5: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Question 6: "I know how many students at my school have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 4 expressed concern that it would be difficult for principals to answer questions 4 and 5. The respondent explained that principals more often than not choose to delegate discipline to an assistant principal. However, respondent 4 conceded that the principal is ultimately responsible for serious disciplinary infractions especially when it comprises a student's safety.

Question 12: "My school district has a clear policy regarding cell phones and other portable electronic devices."

Respondent 4 stated that more clarification is needed by providing examples of what exactly a 'portable electronic device' is.

Question 13: "My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology."

Respondent 4 commented that he/she expects that the researcher will receive a large number of principals answering 'yes' to this question. The respondent explained that a majority of school districts in the state of Florida require students to sign an 'Acceptable Use Policy' regarding technology as part of their Student Code of Conduct.

Questions 27 and 28:

Question 27: "What role do you perceive the principal serves in PREVENTING cyberbullying?"

Question 28: "What role do you perceive the principal serves in RESPONDING to cyberbullying?"

Respondent 4 suggested that since principals do not handle disciplinary infractions on a day-to-day basis that it may be more appropriate to substitute 'school administration' for ' the principal' in both questions. The suggested change would be: "What role do you perceive school administration serves in PREVENTING cyberbullying?" and "What role do you perceive school administration serves in RESPONDING to cyberbullying?"

RESPONDENT 5

Title/Position: Consultant, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Marion County Public Schools, Florida

Date of Interview: August 31, 2009

Respondent 5 was interviewed in person on August 31, 2009. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and suggestions (in summary form):

1. All of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 16, 17 and 19.

Question 4: "I know in what forms cyberbullying can occur."

Respondent 5 suggested that the question be restated as, "I know the delivery methods that one student can cyberbully another." Respondent 5 stated that the use of the words 'delivery methods' would make it clearer to the participants that the researcher is looking for how students cyberbully each other – text message, email, blogs, etc.

Question 5: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

Respondent 5 suggested that the researcher underline the phrase 'either while on campus or during school hours' to further clarify what is being asked of the participant.

Question 6: "I know how many students have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 5 suggested again that the researcher underline the phrase 'either while on campus or during school hours' to further clarify what is being asked of the participant.

Question 7: "I am aware that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 5 suggested that the researcher underline the phrase 'while off campus' to further clarify what is being asked of the participant.

Question 8: "I am aware that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 5 suggested again that the researcher underline the phrase 'while off campus' to further clarify what is being asked of the participant.

Question 11: In addition to the district policy, my school has a clear set of cyberbullying guidelines specific to our campus to further address cyberbullying concerns."

Respondent 5 recommended that the researcher add '/rules' to cyberbullying guidelines to further clarify the question. The revised question would be: "In addition to the district policy, my school has a clear set of cyberbullying guidelines/rules specific to our campus to further address cyberbullying concerns."

Questions 16 and 17:

Question 16: "My staff and I take suspected incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school."

Question 17: "My staff and I take actual incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school."

Respondent 5 suggested that the researcher capitalize 'suspected' in question 16 and 'actual' in question 17 to emphasize the difference between the two questions.

Question 19: My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents."

Respondent 5 recommended adding a question eliciting whether or not parents are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents. The additional question would read: "Parents are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents."

RESPONDENT 6

Title/Position: Supervisor, Safe and Healthy Schools, Duval County Public Schools, Florida

Date of Interview: September 3, 2009

Respondent 6 was interviewed over the phone on September 3, 2009. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and suggestions (in summary form):

1. All of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 19.

Question 5 and 6:
Question 5: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.
Question 6: "I know how many students have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 6 expressed concern for getting accurate answers from principals for these two questions for multiple reasons. First, the respondent explained that most principals delegate the responsibility of student discipline to an assistant principal. Second, the discipline referral form for Duval County Public Schools does not differentiate between bullying and cyberbullying; both infractions would receive the same code. The same is true for the SEISR. When reporting to the state, school districts are not required to differentiate between bullying and cyberbullying. Third, respondent 6 commented that 'either while on campus or during school hours' does not address school-sponsored activities that occur off campus and/or outside of school hours. Respondent 6 also stated that the question fails to stipulate whether or not school district equipment is used to cyberbully another student.
Questions 7 and 8:
Question 7: "I am aware that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."
Question 8: "I am aware that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 6 again expressed concern for getting accurate answers from principals for these two questions. The respondent explained that the word 'aware' implies that the principal should 'know exactly' how many students are cyberbullied off campus; and consequently most principals would answer 'no' to both questions. The respondent suggested rewording the questions to state: "I am sensitive to the fact that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year" and "I am sensitive to the fact that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."
Question 10: "My school district has a clear cyberbullying policy."

Respondent 6 postulated that most principals would answer 'no' to this question for two reasons. First, the *Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up For All Students Act* is so recent that most principals are just now receiving bullying training at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year; and cyberbullying is one of many components of that training. Second, each school district was required to adopt either the state model policy against bullying/harassment and/or develop their own; and again, cyberbullying is one of many components of the policy. Respondent 6 believes that no school district would have a separate policy for cyberbullying; instead it would be addressed in the general policy against bullying and harassment.
Questions 13 and 14:
Question 13: "My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology."
Question 14: "My staff members know the school district policy regarding the use of technology."

Respondent 6 assumes that most principals would answer 'yes' to both of these questions for two reasons. First, a majority of principals require students to sign and return an 'Acceptable Use Policy' for technology as part of their Student Code of Conduct and staff members also sign and return and 'Acceptable Use Policy' for technology as part of their staff handbook. Respondent 6 also stated that it would be interesting to know if parents know the school district policy regarding technology.
Questions 16 and 17:
Question 16: "My staff and I take suspected incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school."
Question 17: "My staff and I take actual incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school."

Respondent 6 suggested that the word 'suspected' in question 16 and the word 'actual' in question 17 be put in all caps to further clarify each question.
Question 18: "In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of cyberbullying."

Respondent 6 suggested that the question be restated as: "In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of bullying and harassment that includes cyberbullying."
Question 19: "My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents."

Respondent 6 suggested that the question be restated as: "My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for bullying and harassment incidents that also includes cyberbullying."

ROUND 3

RESPONDENT 7

Title/Position: District SAFE Counselor, Orange County Public Schools, Florida
Date of Interview: September 10, 2009

Respondent 7 was interviewed over the phone on September 10, 2009. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and suggestions (in summary form):
1. All of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 20, and 22.
Question 4: "I know in what forms cyberbullying can occur."

Respondent 7 recommended that the researcher clarify the forms of cyberbullying. The respondent questioned whether or not a principal would truly know that cyberbullying can be inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices. The respondent suggested including a text box to allow the principal to list the ways in which he/she knows cyberbullying can occur.

Questions 5 and 6:
Question 5: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.
Question 6: "I know how many students have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 7 commented that in Orange County this type of information is obtained from each of the school's annual climate survey that includes a section on school safety as well as through a Bully Prevention Survey distributed district-wide. The respondent believes because cyberbullying is so difficult to identify and track the number of students the principals provide will be much lower than reality.

Questions 7 and 8:
Question 7: "I am aware that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."
Question 8: "I am aware that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 8 expressed concern for the phrase 'I am aware' in both questions. The respondent believes that most principals would consider 'aware' the same as 'knowing' and it would be difficult for a principal to know what takes place off campus during non-school hours. The respondent speculates that most principals would assume that their students are being cyberbullied or cyberbullying others while off campus as just a "sign of the times."

Question 20: "My school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal."

Respondent 8 commented that this is an excellent question and every principal should answer 'yes' since it is required by Florida state law.

Question 22: "I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus."

Respondent 8 stated that this is an important question to ask because many do not know if when they can intervene. Respondent 8 commented that most cyberbullying incidents occur off campus.

RESPONDENT 8

Title/Position: Bullying Prevention/Intervention Coordinator, Palm Beach County Public Schools, Florida
Date of Interview: September 11, 2009

Respondent 8 was interviewed over the phone on September 11, 2009. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and suggestions (in summary form):
1. All of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 18, and 20.

Questions 5 and 6:

Question 5: "I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

Question 6: "I know how many students have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 8 questioned whether or not principals review discipline referrals on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis to even be able to answer these two questions. The respondent assumes that most principals are unaware of most discipline issues unless they become serious and demand the attention of the principal. The respondent also remarked that the questions fail to differentiate between the uses of school district equipment versus personal digital devices.

Questions 7 and 8:

Question 7: "I am aware that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Question 8: "I am aware that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year."

Respondent 8 postulated that most principals are aware that students at their schools are victims of cyberbullying and/or are cyberbullying others. However, the respondent believes that the main source of this information is through local and national data provided by the morning and evening news.

Question 11: "In addition to the district policy, my school has implemented additional guidelines specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying."

Respondent 8 suggested inserting the word 'standards' after guidelines to further clarify the question. The revised question would read: "In addition to the district policy, my school has implemented additional guidelines/standards specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying."

Question 13: "My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology."

Respondent 8 recommended that the question be further clarified by describing what 'technology' may include by listing school district equipment and personal digital devices.

Question 18: "In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of bullying and harassment including cyberbullying."

Respondent 8 believes that most principals in Palm Beach County would answer 'no' to this question. The respondent explained that principals are trained to strictly follow district procedures. The district always 'errs on the side of caution' and does not want an employee to 'mess up' a potential law enforcement investigation. The respondent further explained that most principals are sensitive to violations of a student's First Amendment freedoms as well as search and seizure rights.

RESPONDENT 9

Title/Position: Parent Liaison for Association of Parents and Teachers, Lake County
Public Schools, Florida
Date of Interview: September 11, 2009

Respondent 9 was interviewed in person on September, 2009. Informed consent
was obtained from the respondent and the cognitive interview protocol was closely
followed. The results of the interview rendered the following comments and
suggestions (in summary form):
1. All of the questions were easy to understand and were appropriate for the survey.
2. The visual presentation of the survey was acceptable.
3. Relevant comments were made for questions 19 and 20.
Question 19: "My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for
cyberbullying incidents."
Respondent 9 recommended adding a question eliciting whether or not parents are
aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents. The
question would read: "Parents are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences
for cyberbullying incidents."
Question 20: "My school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow
students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal."
Respondent 9 suggested adding an additional question to determine whether or
not a school has its own anonymous reporting system in addition to the district's
system. The respondent then suggested putting 'school district' and 'my school' in all
caps to distinguish between the two questions.

APPENDIX K: CYBERBULLYING POLICIES AND RESPONSE
PRINCIAPL SURVEY 2.0

MODIFIED DOCUMENT

Page 1
Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey 2.0
Exit this survey >>

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. This survey is directed toward middle school principals and their work experiences with student cyberbullying. Your participation is important.

You must have been the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year in order to complete this survey. If not, please exit the survey now. It would also be helpful to have access to disciplinary data for the 2008-2009 school year, however, it is not required. You will not be 'timed out' of the survey.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please answer each of the following questions according to your best judgment or knowledge. Thank you.

1. Please enter your principal access code provided.

By entering this access code, you are providing your consent to participate in this research study as you were informed by email. You may exit this survey at any time and withdraw freely from the study without consequence.

[   ]

2. Were you the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year?

○ Yes

○ No

Page 2

Please answer each of the following questions according to your best judgment or knowledge. You do not need to answer any question that you do not wish to answer.

3. I know what cyberbullying is.

○ Yes

○ No

4. I know in what forms cyberbullying can occur.

○ Yes

○ No

205

5. I know how many students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, please provide how many students (informed estimates are acceptable):

[   ]

6. I know how many students have cyberbullied others, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

⦿ Yes

○ No

If YES, please provide how many students (informed estimates are acceptable):

[   ]

7. I am aware that students at my school have been victims of cyberbullying while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, how were you made aware of these incidents (hearsay, rumors, parent complaint, etc)?

[   ]

8. I am aware that students at my school have cyberbullied others while off campus during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, how were you made aware of these incidents (hearsay, rumors, parent complaint, etc)?

[   ]

9. I believe cyberbullying is a significant problem at my school.

○ Yes

○ No

10. My school district has a clear policy against bullying and harassment that also addresses cyberbullying.

○ Yes

○ No

11. In addition to the district policy, my school has a clear set of bullying and harassment guidelines specific to our campus that further addresses cyberbullying concerns.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, what year did your school adopt those guidelines?

[   ]

12. My school district has a clear policy regarding cell phones and other portable electronic devices.

○ Yes

○ No

13. My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

○ Yes

○ No

14. My staff members know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

○ Yes

○ No

15. It is clear to students that the inappropriate use of technology will not be tolerated by the school administration.

○ Yes

○ No

16. My staff and I take suspected incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

○ Yes

○ No

17. My staff and I take actual incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

○ Yes

○ No

18. In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of cyberbullying.

○ Yes

○ No

19. My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents.

○ Yes

○ No

20. My school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.

○ Yes

○ No

21. I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus.

○ Yes

○ No

22. I am familiar with major court decisions related to student speech on the Internet.

○ Yes

○ No

23. I am familiar with how the school district's civil liability for failure to prevent cyberbullying incidents or improper response to cyberbullying incidents.

○ Yes

○ No

24. What type of cyberbullying instruction have the STUDENTS received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year?

25. What type of cyberbullying instruction have the FACULTY received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year?

26. What role do you perceive the principal serves in PREVENTING cyberbullying?

27. What role do you perceive the principal serves in RESPONDING to cyberbullying?

28. Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal?

○ 1-3 years

○ 4-6 years

○ 7-9 years

○ 10+ years

29. Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal at your current school?

○   1-3 years

○   4-6 years

○   7-9 years

○   10+ years

30. What is your gender?

○   Male

○   Female

31. What is your ethnicity?

○   White

○   Black

○   Hispanic

○   Asian

○   American Indian

○   Multi-Racial

○   Other (please specify)

[   ]

32. Would you like to receive a copy of the published results upon completion of this study?

○   Yes

○   No

APPENDIX L: CYBERBULLYING POLICIES AND RESPONSE
PRINCIPAL SURVEY 3.0

Page 1
Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey 3.0
Exit this survey >>

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. This survey is directed toward middle school principals and their work experiences with student cyberbullying. Your participation is important.

You must have been the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year in order to complete this survey. If not, please exit the survey now. It would also be helpful to have access to disciplinary data for the 2008-2009 school year, however, it is not required. You will not be 'timed out' of the survey.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please answer each of the following questions according to your best judgment or knowledge. Thank you.

1. Please enter your principal access code provided.

By entering this access code, you are providing your consent to participate in this research study as you were informed by email. You may exit this survey at any time and withdraw freely from the study without consequence.

2. Were you the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year?

○ Yes

○ No

Page 2

Please answer each of the following questions according to your best judgment or knowledge. You do not need to answer any question that you do not wish to answer.

3. I know what cyberbullying is.

○ Yes

○ No

4. I know in what forms cyberbullying can occur.

○ Yes

○ No

5. I know how many students at my school have been VICTIMS of cyberbullying, <u>either while on campus or during school hours</u>, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, please provide how many students (informed estimates are acceptable):

[   ]

6. I know how many students at my school have CYBERBULLIED others, <u>either while on campus or during school hours</u>, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

◉ Yes

○ No

If YES, please provide how many students (informed estimates are acceptable):

[   ]

7. I am aware that students at my school have been VICTIMS of cyberbullying <u>while off campus</u> during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, how were you made aware of these incidents (hearsay, rumors, parent complaint, etc)?

[   ]

8. I am aware that students at my school have CYBERBULLIED others <u>while off campus</u> during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, how were you made aware of these incidents (hearsay, rumors, parent complaint, etc)?

[   ]

9. I believe cyberbullying is a significant problem at my school.

  ○ Yes

  ○ No

10. My school district has a clear policy against bullying and harassment that includes cyberbullying.

  ○ Yes

  ○ No

11. In addition to the district policy, my school has implemented additional guidelines specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying.

  ○ Yes

  ○ No

If YES, what year did your school adopt those guidelines?

12. My school district has a clear policy regarding cell phones and other portable electronic devices.

  ○ Yes

  ○ No

13. My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

  ○ Yes

  ○ No

If YES, how do you know that they are aware of the policy?

14. My staff members know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, how do you know that they are aware of the policy?

15. It is clear to students that the inappropriate use of technology will not be tolerated by the school administration.

○ Yes

○ No

16. My staff and I take SUSPECTED incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

○ Yes

○ No

17. My staff and I take ACTUAL incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

○ Yes

○ No

18. In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of bullying and harassment including cyberbullying.

○ Yes

○ No

19. My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents.

○ Yes

○ No

20. My school district has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.

○   Yes

○   No

21. I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus.

○   Yes

○   No

22. I am familiar with major court decisions related to student speech on the Internet.

○   Yes

○   No

23. I am familiar with how the school district is civilly liable for the failure to prevent cyberbullying incidents or the improper response to cyberbullying incidents.

○   Yes

○   No

24. What type of cyberbullying instruction have the STUDENTS received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year?

25. What type of cyberbullying instruction have the FACULTY received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year?

26. What role do you perceive the principal serves in PREVENTING cyberbullying?

27. What role do you perceive the principal serves in RESPONDING to cyberbullying?

[text box]

28. Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal?

○ 1-3 years

○ 4-6 years

○ 7-9 years

○ 10+ years

29. Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal at your current school?

○ 1-3 years

○ 4-6 years

○ 7-9 years

○ 10+ years

30. What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

31. What is your ethnicity?

○ White

○ Black

○ Hispanic

○ Asian

○ American Indian

○ Multi-Racial

○ Other (please specify)

[text box]

32. Would you like to receive a copy of the published results upon completion of this study?

○ Yes

○ No

APPENDIX M: CYBERBULLYING POLICIES AND RESPONSE
PRINCIPAL SURVEY 4.0

Page 1
Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey 4.0
Exit this survey >>

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete the Cyberbullying Policies and Response Principal Survey. This survey is directed toward middle school principals and their work experiences with student cyberbullying. Your participation is important.

You must have been the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year in order to complete this survey. If not, please exit the survey now. It would also be helpful to have access to disciplinary data for the 2008-2009 school year, however, it is not required. You will not be 'timed out' of the survey.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please answer each of the following questions according to your best judgment or knowledge. Thank you.

1. Please enter your principal access code provided.

By entering this access code, you are providing your consent to participate in this research study as you were informed by email. You may exit this survey at any time and withdraw freely from the study without consequence.

[ ]

2. Were you the principal at your current middle school during the 2008-2009 school year?

○ Yes

○ No

PAGE 2

Please answer each of the following questions according to your best judgment or knowledge. You do not need to answer any question that you do not wish to answer.

3. I know what cyberbullying is.

○ Yes

○ No

4. I know the mediums through which cyberbullying occurs.

○   Yes

○   No

If YES, please provide the mediums you are aware of:

_____

5. I know how many students at my school have been VICTIMS of cyberbullying, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

○   Yes

○   No

If YES, please provide how many students (informed estimates are acceptable): _____

6. I know how many students at my school have CYBERBULLIED OTHERS, either while on campus or during school hours, that resulted in a reported school incident during the 2008-2009 school year.

●   Yes

○   No

If YES, please provide how many students (informed estimates are acceptable):

_____

7. I am aware that students at my school have been VICTIMS of cyberbullying WHILE OFF CAMPUS during the 2008-2009 school year.

○   Yes

○   No

If YES, how were you made aware of these incidents (hearsay, rumors, parent complaint, etc)?

_____

8. I am aware that students at my school have CYBERBULLIED OTHERS WHILE OFF CAMPUS during the 2008-2009 school year.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, how were you made aware of these incidents (hearsay, rumors, parent complaint, etc)?

[text box]

9. I believe cyberbullying is a significant problem at my school.

○ Yes

○ No

10. My school district has a clear policy against bullying and harassment that includes cyberbullying.

○ Yes

○ No

11. In addition to the district policy, my school has implemented additional guidelines specific to our campus to further address bullying and harassment concerns including cyberbullying.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, what year did your school adopt those guidelines?

[text box]

12. My school district has a clear policy regarding cell phones and other portable electronic devices.

○ Yes

○ No

13. My students know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

○   Yes

○   No

If YES, how do you know they are aware of the policy?

> [ ]

14. My staff members know the school district policy regarding the use of technology.

○   Yes

○   No

If YES, how do you know they are aware of the policy?

> [ ]

15. It is clear to students that the inappropriate use of technology will not be tolerated by the school administration.

○   Yes

○   No

16. My staff and I take SUSPECTED incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

○   Yes

○   No

17. My staff and I take ACTUAL incidents of cyberbullying seriously at our school.

○   Yes

○   No

18. In addition to the district policy for handling disciplinary infractions, my staff and I have developed a formal procedure specific to our campus for investigating incidents of bullying and harassment including cyberbullying.

○ Yes

○ No

Why or why not?

[ ]

19. My students are aware of a continuum of disciplinary consequences for cyberbullying incidents.

○ Yes

○ No

20. My SCHOOL DISTRICT has an anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, in what ways are the students able to report (drop box, phone/tip line, email, text)?

[ ]

21. In addition to the school district's system, MY SCHOOL has its own anonymous reporting system to allow students to report incidents of cyberbullying without fear of reprisal.

○ Yes

○ No

If YES, in what ways are the students able to report (drop box, phone/tip line, email, text)?

[ ]

22. I know when I (or designated staff members in charge of discipline) can intervene in cyberbullying incidents that originate off campus.

○ Yes

○ No

23. I am familiar with major court decisions related to student speech on the Internet.

○ Yes

○ No
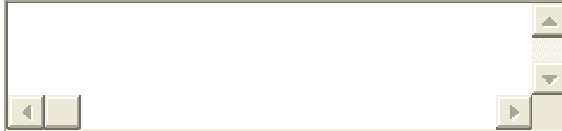
24. I am familiar with the school district's civil liability for failure to prevent cyberbullying incidents or improper response to cyberbullying incidents.

○ Yes

○ No
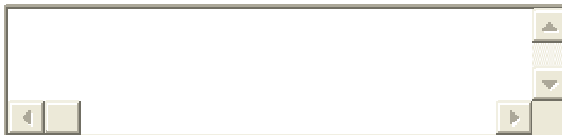
25. What type of cyberbullying instruction have the STUDENTS received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year? (A bulleted list is acceptable).

26. What type of cyberbullying instruction have the FACULTY received to date or will receive during the 2009-2010 school year? (a bulleted list is acceptable).

27. What role do you perceive the principal serves in PREVENTING cyberbullying?

28. What role do you perceive the principal serves in RESPONDING to cyberbullying?

29. Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal?

○ 1-3 years

○ 4-6 years

○ 7-9 years

○ 10+ years

30. Including the current year, how many years have you been a principal at your current school?

○ 1-3 years

○ 4-6 years

○ 7-9 years

○ 10+ years

31. What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

32. What is your ethnicity?

○ White

○ Black

○ Hispanic

○ Asian

○ American Indian

○ Multi-Racial

○ Other (please specify)

[ ]

33. Would you like to receive a copy of the published results upon completion of this study?

○ Yes

○ No

APPENDIX N: BULLYING POLICY CONTENTS CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS A, B, C, D, E, AND F

CONTENT ANALYSIS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES

School District: A   No of pages of policy: 13   Rater: M. Gardner
Membership Status: Member of the State Mentoring Team Against Bullying and Harassment

Date: January 2010

A: Definition of bullying behaviour (13 points)	Score	Comments
1 have a definition of bullying?	1	P. 2, P. 4
2 does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour?	0	Defined bullying and harassment
3 mention physical bullying (hits, kicks)?	1	P. 2
4 mention direct verbal bullying (threats, insults, nasty teasing)?	1	P. 2
5 mention relational bullying (rumours, social exclusion)?	1	P. 2
6 mention material bullying (damage to belongings, extortion of money)?	1	P. 2
7 mention cyberbullying (email, text messages)?	1	P. 1, P. 3; Defined both cyberstalking and cyberbullying
8 mention homophobic bullying?	0	
9 mention racial bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 2
10 mention sexual bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 2
11 as well as pupil-pupil bullying, discuss the issue of adult/teacher-pupil bullying or vice versa?	1	P. 1
12 mention bullying due to disabilities?	0	
13 mention bullying because of faith or religious beliefs?	1	P. 2
B: Reporting and responding to bullying incidents (11 points)		
1 state what victims of bullying should do (e.g. tell a teacher; should clearly apply to victims/ pupils who experience bullying)?	1	P. 8
2 say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying (should specifically mention bullying, and be more specific than just 'deal promptly')?	1	P. 8
3 clearly mention the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors etc) if they know of bullying? (more than simply referring to 'all staff')	0	Used terms 'all school employees'
4 clearly mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying (this can include knowing if their child has a behavior problem if bullying is included elsewhere)?	1	P. 8
5 clearly mention the responsibilities of pupils (e.g. bystanders) if they know of bullying?	1	P. 1, P. 8
6 state whether sanctions applied for bullying can vary (e.g. by type or severity of incident)?	1	P. 6
7 mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?	1	P. 12
8 discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists?	0	Mentioned only consequences and 'remedial actions'
9 suggest how to support the victim? (more than just 'we will support victims')	1	P. 11
10 suggest how to help the pupil(s) doing the bullying to change their behaviour (apart from sanctions)? (more than just 'we will support ...')	1	P. 11
11 discuss if, when or how parents will be informed? ('parents will be informed' is sufficient if it clearly refers to bullying)	1	P. 10
C: Recording bullying, communicating and evaluating the policy (4 points)		
1 say reports of bullying will be recorded?	1	P. 9
2 say who is responsible for co-ordinating the recording system?	1	P. 9
3 show how records or survey data will be used to know whether the policy is working or not?	1	P. 12

4 mention periodic review and updating of the policy?	0	
D: Strategies for preventing bullying (6 points)		
1 mention any of encouraging co-operative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment?	1	P. 1, P. 6
2 discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?	1	P. 11
3 discuss advice for parents about bullying (beyond B4)?	1	P. 11
4 mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors?	0	Used terms faculty and staff
5 discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; pupils with learning difficulties)?	0	
6 mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or happening outside school?	1	P. 1, P. 5; Provided a clear statement of the general applicability of the policy.
TOTAL SCORE: (34 points)	26	

CONTENT ANALYSIS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES

School District: B   No of pages of policy: 8   Rater: M. Gardner
Membership Status: Member of the State Mentoring Team Against Bullying and Harassment

Date: January 2010

A: Definition of bullying behaviour (13 points)	Score	Comments
1 have a definition of bullying?	1	P. 1-2
2 does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour?	0	Defined bullying and harassment
3 mention physical bullying (hits, kicks)?	1	P. 1-2
4 mention direct verbal bullying (threats, insults, nasty teasing)?	1	P. 1-2
5 mention relational bullying (rumours, social exclusion)?	1	P. 1-2
6 mention material bullying (damage to belongings, extortion of money)?	1	P. 1-2
7 mention cyberbullying (email, text messages)?	1	P. 2; Defined both cyberstalking and cyberbullying
8 mention homophobic bullying?	0	
9 mention racial bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 1
10 mention sexual bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 1
11 as well as pupil-pupil bullying, discuss the issue of adult/teacher-pupil bullying or vice versa?	1	P. 1
12 mention bullying due to disabilities?	0	
13 mention bullying because of faith or religious beliefs?	1	P. 1
B: Reporting and responding to bullying incidents (11 points)		
1 state what victims of bullying should do (e.g. tell a teacher; should clearly apply to victims/ pupils who experience bullying)?	1	P. 3
2 say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying (should specifically mention bullying, and be more specific than just 'deal promptly')?	1	P. 3
3 clearly mention the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors etc) if they know of bullying? (more than simply referring to 'all staff')	0	Used terms 'all school employees'
4 clearly mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying (this can include knowing if their child has a behavior problem if bullying is included elsewhere)?	1	P. 3, P. 7
5 clearly mention the responsibilities of pupils (e.g. bystanders) if they know of bullying?	1	P. 7
6 state whether sanctions applied for bullying can vary (e.g. by type or severity of incident?	0	Stated to be outlined in the Student Code of Conduct
7 mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?	1	Mentions only consequences and interventions
8 discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists?	0	Mentions only consequences and interventions
9 suggest how to support the victim? (more than just 'we will support victims')	1	P. 6
10 suggest how to help the pupil(s) doing the bullying to change their behaviour (apart from sanctions)? (more than just 'we will support ...')	1	P. 6
11 discuss if, when or how parents will be informed? ('parents will be informed' is sufficient if it clearly refers to bullying)	1	P. 5, P. 7
C: Recording bullying, communicating and evaluating the policy (4 points)		
1 say reports of bullying will be recorded?	1	P. 6
2 say who is responsible for co-ordinating the recording system?	1	P. 6

3 show how records or survey data will be used to know whether the policy is working or not?	1	P. 6-7
4 mention periodic review and updating of the policy?	0	
D: Strategies for preventing bullying (6 points)		
1 mention any of encouraging co-operative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment?	1	P. 7-8
2 discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?	1	P. 6, P. 7
3 discuss advice for parents about bullying (beyond B4)?	1	
4 mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors?	1	P. 7-8
5 discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; pupils with learning difficulties)?	0	
6 mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or happening outside school?	1	P. 1, P. 3; "This policy applies to all activities in the District,..."
TOTAL SCORE: (34 points)	26	

CONTENT ANALYSIS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES

School District: C **No of pages of policy: 8** **Rater: M. Gardner**
Membership Status: Member of the State Mentoring Team Against Bullying and Harassment

Date: January 2010

A: Definition of bullying behaviour (13 points)	Score	Comments
1 have a definition of bullying?	1	P. 1
2 does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour?	0	Defined bullying and harassment
3 mention physical bullying (hits, kicks)?	1	P. 1
4 mention direct verbal bullying (threats, insults, nasty teasing)?	1	P.1
5 mention relational bullying (rumours, social exclusion)?	1	P. 1
6 mention material bullying (damage to belongings, extortion of money)?	1	P. 1
7 mention cyberbullying (email, text messages)?	0	Defined only cyberstalking and bullying via "a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system."
8 mention homophobic bullying?	0	
9 mention racial bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 1
10 mention sexual bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 1
11 as well as pupil-pupil bullying, discuss the issue of adult/teacher-pupil bullying or vice versa?	1	P. 2
12 mention bullying due to disabilities?	0	
13 mention bullying because of faith or religious beliefs?	1	P. 1
B: Reporting and responding to bullying incidents (11 points)		
1 state what victims of bullying should do (e.g. tell a teacher; should clearly apply to victims/ pupils who experience bullying)?	1	P. 3; Save-A-Friend Hotline
2 say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying (should specifically mention bullying, and be more specific than just 'deal promptly')?	1	P. 3
3 clearly mention the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors etc) if they know of bullying? (more than simply referring to 'all staff')	0	Used terms 'all school employees'
4 clearly mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying (this can include knowing if their child has a behavior problem if bullying is included elsewhere)?	1	P. 3
5 clearly mention the responsibilities of pupils (e.g. bystanders) if they know of bullying?	1	P. 3
6 state whether sanctions applied for bullying can vary (e.g. by type or severity of incident?	1	P. 5
7 mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?	0	Mentioned only consequences and 'remedial actions'
8 discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists?	0	Mentioned only consequences and 'remedial actions'
9 suggest how to support the victim? (more than just 'we will support victims')	1	P. 6
10 suggest how to help the pupil(s) doing the bullying to change their behaviour (apart from sanctions)? (more than just 'we will support ...')	1	P. 6
11 discuss if, when or how parents will be informed? ('parents will be informed' is sufficient if it clearly refers to bullying)	1	P. 5

C: Recording bullying, communicating and evaluating the policy (4 points)		
1 say reports of bullying will be recorded?	1	P. 3-4
2 say who is responsible for co-ordinating the recording system?	1	P. 3-4
3 show how records or survey data will be used to know whether the policy is working or not?	1	P. 6-7
4 mention periodic review and updating of the policy?	0	
D: Strategies for preventing bullying (6 points)		
1 mention any of encouraging co-operative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment?	1	P. 2; P. 7-8
2 discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?	1	P. 6
3 discuss advice for parents about bullying (beyond B4)?	1	P. 7-8
4 mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors?	1	P. 8
5 discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; pupils with learning difficulties)?	0	
6 mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or happening outside school?	1	P. 2-3; Mentioned acts of bullying/ harassment during any education program sponsored by the school district; when in route to and from school on a bus; and through the use of data or computer software maintained by the school district.
TOTAL SCORE: (34 points)	25	

CONTENT ANALYSIS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES

School District: D   **No of pages of policy: 10**   **Rater: M. Gardner**

Membership Status: Non-Member of the State Mentoring Team Against Bullying and Harassment

Date: January 2010

A: Definition of bullying behaviour (13 points)	Score	Comments
1 have a definition of bullying?	1	P. 1-2
2 does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behavior?	0	Defined bullying and harassment
3 mention physical bullying (hits, kicks)?	1	P. 1-2
4 mention direct verbal bullying (threats, insults, nasty teasing)?	1	P. 1-2
5 mention relational bullying (rumours, social exclusion)?	1	P. 1-2
6 mention material bullying (damage to belongings, extortion of money)?	1	P. 1-2
7 mention cyberbullying (email, text messages)?	1	P. 2; Defined both cyberstalking and cyberbullying
8 mention homophobic bullying?	0	
9 mention racial bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 1
10 mention sexual bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 1
11 as well as pupil-pupil bullying, discuss the issue of adult/teacher-pupil bullying or vice versa?	1	P. 2
12 mention bullying due to disabilities?	0	
13 mention bullying because of faith or religious beliefs?	1	
B: Reporting and responding to bullying incidents (11 points)		
1 state what victims of bullying should do (e.g. tell a teacher; should clearly apply to victims/ pupils who experience bullying)?	1	P. 4-5
2 say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying (should specifically mention bullying, and be more specific than just 'deal promptly')?	1	P. 4
3 clearly mention the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors etc) if they know of bullying? (more than simply referring to 'all staff')?	0	Used terms 'members of the school community and/or other agents'
4 clearly mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying (this can include knowing if their child has a behavior problem if bullying is included elsewhere)?	1	P. 2-3; P. 4
5 clearly mention the responsibilities of pupils (e.g. bystanders) if they know of bullying?	1	P. 4
6 state whether sanctions applied for bullying can vary (e.g. by type or severity of incident?	1	P. 3; Stated to be outlined in the Student Code of Conduct
7 mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?	0	Mentioned only consequences and 'remedial actions'
8 discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists?	0	Mentioned only consequences and 'remedial actions'
9 suggest how to support the victim? (more than just 'we will support victims')	1	P. 7
10 suggest how to help the pupil(s) doing the bullying to change their behaviour (apart from sanctions)? (more than just 'we will support ...')	1	P. 7
11 discuss if, when or how parents will be informed? ('parents will be informed' is sufficient if it clearly refers to bullying)	1	P. 6, P. 9

C: Recording bullying, communicating and evaluating the policy (4 points)		
1 say reports of bullying will be recorded?	1	P. 5, P. 8
2 say who is responsible for co-ordinating the recording system?	1	P. 5
3 show how records or survey data will be used to know whether the policy is working or not?	1	P. 8
4 mention periodic review and updating of the policy?	0	
D: Strategies for preventing bullying (6 points)		
1 mention any of encouraging co-operative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment?	1	P. 9
2 discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?	1	P. 7
3 discuss advice for parents about bullying (beyond B4)?	1	P. 7, P.9
4 mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors?	0	Did mention the role of 'other agents'
5 discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; pupils with learning difficulties)?	0	
6 mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or happening outside school?	1	P. 1, P. 5
TOTAL SCORE: (34 points)	25	

CONTENT ANALYSIS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES

School District: E   No of pages of policy: 16   Rater: M. Gardner
Membership Status: Non-Member of the State Mentoring Team Against Bullying and Harassment

Date: January 2010

A: Definition of bullying behaviour (13 points)	Score	Comments
1 have a definition of bullying?	1	P. 2
2 does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour?	0	Defined bullying and harassment
3 mention physical bullying (hits, kicks)?	1	P.2, P. 4
4 mention direct verbal bullying (threats, insults, nasty teasing)?	1	P. 2, P. 4
5 mention relational bullying (rumours, social exclusion)?	1	P. 2, P. 4
6 mention material bullying (damage to belongings, extortion of money)?	1	P.2, P. 4
7 mention cyberbullying (email, text messages)?	1	P. 3-5; Defined both cyberstalking and cyberbullying
8 mention homophobic bullying?	0	
9 mention racial bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 2
10 mention sexual bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 2
11 as well as pupil-pupil bullying, discuss the issue of adult/teacher-pupil bullying or vice versa?	1	P. 4, 5
12 mention bullying due to disabilities?	0	
13 mention bullying because of faith or religious beliefs?	1	P. 2
B: Reporting and responding to bullying incidents (11 points)		
1 state what victims of bullying should do (e.g. tell a teacher; should clearly apply to victims/ pupils who experience bullying)?	1	P. 7
2 say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying (should specifically mention bullying, and be more specific than just 'deal promptly')?	1	P. 12
3 clearly mention the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors etc) if they know of bullying? (more than simply referring to 'all staff')	0	Used terms 'all school employees'
4 clearly mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying (this can include knowing if their child has a behavior problem if bullying is included elsewhere)?	1	P.14
5 clearly mention the responsibilities of pupils (e.g. bystanders) if they know of bullying?	1	P. 7
6 state whether sanctions applied for bullying can vary (e.g. by type or severity of incident?	1	P. 5-6
7 mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?	0	Only mentioned enforcement and degree of consequences
8 discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists?	0	Only mentioned consequences and interventions
9 suggest how to support the victim? (more than just 'we will support victims')	1	P. 12
10 suggest how to help the pupil(s) doing the bullying to change their behaviour (apart from sanctions)? (more than just 'we will support ...')	1	P. 12
11 discuss if, when or how parents will be informed? ('parents will be informed' is sufficient if it clearly refers to bullying)	1	P. 10-12
C: Recording bullying, communicating and evaluating the policy (4 points)		
1 say reports of bullying will be recorded?	1	P. 8-10

2 say who is responsible for co-ordinating the recording system?	1	P. 9
3 show how records or survey data will be used to know whether the policy is working or not?	1	P. 13-14
4 mention periodic review and updating of the policy?	0	
D: Strategies for preventing bullying (6 points)		
1 mention any of encouraging co-operative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment?	1	P. 14
2 discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?	1	P. 12, P. 14
3 discuss advice for parents about bullying (beyond B4)?	1	P. 12, P. 14
4 mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors?	1	P. 14
5 discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; pupils with learning difficulties)?	0	
6 mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or happening outside school?	1	P 1; Mentioned acts of bullying/ harassment during any education program sponsored by the school district; when in route to and from school on a bus; and through the use of data or computer software maintained by the school district.
TOTAL SCORE: (34 points)	26	

School District: F   **No of pages of policy: 11**   **Rater: M. Gardner**

Membership Status: Non-Member of the State Mentoring Team Against Bullying and Harassment

Date: January 2010

A: Definition of bullying behavior (13 points)	Score	Comments
1 have a definition of bullying?	1	P. 2
2 does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behavior?	1	P. 2-4; Defined aggressive behavior, relational aggression, hazing, intimidation, and menacing.
3 mention physical bullying (hits, kicks)?	1	P. 2
4 mention direct verbal bullying (threats, insults, nasty teasing)?	1	P. 2
5 mention relational bullying (rumors, social exclusion)?	1	P. 2
6 mention material bullying (damage to belongings, extortion of money)?	1	P. 2
7 mention cyberbullying (email, text messages)?	1	P. 3; Defined both cyberstalking and cyberbullying
8 mention homophobic bullying?	0	
9 mention racial bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 3
10 mention sexual bullying (or harassment)?	1	P. 3
11 as well as pupil-pupil bullying, discuss the issue of adult/teacher-pupil bullying or vice versa?	0	
12 mention bullying due to disabilities?	0	
13 mention bullying because of faith or religious beliefs?	1	P. 3
B: Reporting and responding to bullying incidents (11 points)		
1 state what victims of bullying should do (e.g. tell a teacher; should clearly apply to victims/ pupils who experience bullying)?	1	P. 5; SpeakOut Hotline
2 say how teaching staff should respond to a report of bullying (should specifically mention bullying, and be more specific than just 'deal promptly')?	1	P. 5
3 clearly mention the responsibilities of other school staff (teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors etc) if they know of bullying? (more than simply referring to 'all staff')	0	Used terms 'every staff member and/or school board employees'
4 clearly mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying (this can include knowing if their child has a behavior problem if bullying is included elsewhere)?	1	P. 5
5 clearly mention the responsibilities of pupils (e.g. bystanders) if they know of bullying?	1	P. 5
6 state whether sanctions applied for bullying can vary (e.g. by type or severity of incident?	1	P. 7-8
7 mention follow-up to see whether the sanctions were effective?	0	Mentioned only consequences and 'remedial actions'
8 discuss what action will be taken if the bullying persists?	0	Mentioned only consequences and 'remedial actions'
9 suggest how to support the victim? (more than just 'we will support victims')	0	Mentioned only referral for 'intervention and prevention

		support'
10 suggest how to help the pupil(s) doing the bullying to change their behaviour (apart from sanctions)? (more than just 'we will support ...')	0	Mentioned only referral for 'intervention and prevention support'
11 discuss if, when or how parents will be informed? ('parents will be informed' is sufficient if it clearly refers to bullying)	1	P. 8
C: Recording bullying, communicating and evaluating the policy (4 points)		
1 say reports of bullying will be recorded?	1	P. 5-6, P. 9
2 say who is responsible for co-ordinating the recording system?	1	P. 5-6
3 show how records or survey data will be used to know whether the policy is working or not?	1	P. 9
4 mention periodic review and updating of the policy?	0	
D: Strategies for preventing bullying (6 points)		
1 mention any of encouraging co-operative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving school climate, or creating a safe environment?	1	P. 1
2 discuss general issues of peer support (beyond B5)?	0	
3 discuss advice for parents about bullying (beyond B4)?	1	P. 11
4 mention the preventative role of playground activities or lunchtime supervisors?	0	
5 discuss issues of inclusiveness (e.g. non English speakers; pupils with learning difficulties)?	0	
6 mention the issue of bullying on the way to school or happening outside school?	1	P. 1, P. 5, P. 7; Mentioned acts of bullying/ harassment during any education program sponsored by the school district; when in route to and from school on a bus; and through the use of data or computer software maintained by the school district.
TOTAL SCORE: (34 points)	22	

APPENDIX O: UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD OUTCOME LETTER

University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901, 407-882-2012 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Notice of Exempt Review Status

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board**
          FWA00000351, Exp. 10/8/11, IRB00001138

To: **Margaret Gardner**

Date: **August 19, 2009**

IRB Number: **SBE-09-06388**

Study Title: **Principals' Perceptions of Cyberbullying Policies in Selected Florida Middle Schools**

Dear Researcher:

Your research protocol was reviewed by the IRB Vice-chair on 8/18/2009. Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.101, your study has been determined to be **minimal risk for human subjects and exempt** from 45 CFR 46 federal regulations and further IRB review or renewal unless you later wish to add the use of identifiers or change the protocol procedures in a way that might increase risk to participants. Before making any changes to your study, call the IRB office to discuss the changes. **A change which incorporates the use of identifiers may mean the study is no longer exempt, thus requiring the submission of a new application to change the classification to expedited if the risk is still minimal.** Please submit the Termination/Final Report form when the study has been completed. All forms may be completed and submitted online at https://iris.research.ucf.edu.

The category for which exempt status has been determined for this protocol is as follows:

2. Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey or interview procedures, or the observation of public behavior, so long as confidentiality is maintained.

    (i)   Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that the subject cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subject, **and/or**

    (ii)   Subject's responses, if known outside the research would not reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability or reputation.

The IRB has approved a **waiver of documentation of consent** for all subjects. Participants do not have to sign a consent form, but the IRB requires that you give participants a copy of the IRB-approved consent form, letter, information sheet. For online surveys, please advise participants to print out the consent document for their files.

NOTE: You may not begin research until you have obtained written permission from the appropriate Florida County Public Schools office to conduct research with their school personnel. As you receive signed permission from a county, please contact the IRB office so that the documentation can be properly uploaded to your study in iRIS.

All data, which may include signed consent form documents, must be retained in a locked file cabinet for a minimum of three years (six if HIPAA applies) past the completion of this research. Any links to the identification of participants should be maintained on a password-protected computer if electronic information is used. Additional requirements may be imposed by your funding agency, your department, or other entities. Access to data is limited to authorized individuals listed as key study personnel.

On behalf of Joseph Bielitzki, M.S., DVM, UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 08/19/2009 01:21:25 PM EDT

Joanne Muratori

IRB Coordinator

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