

BATH LOCAL SCHOOLS

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Dear Bath School Community,

On Friday, October 17, 2014, the Bath Local School District will be kicking off a districtwide program to address bullying and improve the culture of our schools. Although we have found our students to generally be very well behaved, like any other school, our students go through growth periods and experience learning curves not only academically, but also socially. In decades past, our society has taken a passive approach to behavior stemming from this social learning curve on the assumption that our children would work through it on their own and come out the other side stronger. This is the case for many children; however for a growing number of children, emotional damage from this behavior is having a profoundly negative and sometimes permanent impact on their lives.

In an effort to create the absolute best learning and social environment possible, the Bath School Team has decided to implement what is arguably the most effective bullying prevention program in the world, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. For an overview of the program, I give you an excerpt from the official Olweus website <http://www.violencepreventionworks.org/public/index.page> :

Backed by thirty-five years of research and successful, worldwide implementation, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is a long-term, system-wide program for change involving program components at four levels:

School-Level Components

- Establish a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee.
- Conduct committee and staff trainings.
- Administer the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire school-wide.
- Hold staff discussion group meetings.
- Introduce the school rules against bullying.
- Review and refine the school's supervisory system.
- Hold a school kick-off event to launch the program.
- Involve parents.

Classroom-Level Components

- Post and enforce school-wide rules against bullying.
- Hold regular class meetings.
- Hold meetings with students' parents.

Individual-Level Components

- Supervise students' activities.
- Ensure that all staff intervene on the spot when bullying occurs.
- Hold meetings with students involved in bullying.
- Hold meetings with parents of involved students.
- Develop individual intervention plans for involved students.

Community-Level Components

- Involve community members on the Bullying

Prevention Coordinating Committee.

- Develop partnerships with community members to support your school's program.
- Help to spread anti-bullying messages and principles of best practice in the community.

As we begin implementation of the program, I encourage you as members of the Bath School Community to help us reinforce principles of respect and good citizenship at home and in the community. We will be including information in our newsletter and on our school website on different ways you might be able to support us in our efforts. As always, I am honored to be a part of such fine community and I look forward to seeing you at our school and community events.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dale E. Lewellen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dale E Lewellen, Superintendent
Bath Local Schools