

**WEST MIFFLIN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BULLYING PREVENTION**

West Mifflin Area School District

The mission of the West Mifflin Area School District is to create a bully free environment in our schools, youth sports, communities and anywhere in our neighborhoods or electronically.

The District has several initiatives from the new Safe2Say program which has been launched by the state, to the Districts overall “See Something – Say Something” awareness program. Through these programs, we are providing the assurance that the Administration is able to review every reportable bullying and cyberbullying incident at all levels no matter where they may occur.

Below is the list of school-level programs that are taking place for the 2021 – 2022 school year.

**West Mifflin Area High School
Grades 9 – 12**

West Mifflin Area High School strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in our school. Our team defines bullying as intentional behavior, which is typically repeated, that hurts, harms, or humiliates a student, either physically or emotionally, and can happen while at school, in the community, or online. We have incorporated multiple programs and interventions to provide support to both the victims and offenders of bullying.

We have School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention/Support Team made up of staff and students. The goal of this team is to be proactive in establishing the behavioral supports and social culture needed to educate students to prevent bullying.

Currently we have several student organizations that help raise awareness and prevent stigma’s associated with bullying. Our “Stand Together” group is a student to student initiative to increase education, awareness and social inclusion for all students. Our “Gay Straight Alliance” group is also a student to student initiative. The GSA’s goal is to provide a safe place for students to meet, support each other and talk about issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. They also strive to build awareness as well as prevent discrimination and bullying in schools. Our “Youth Crime Watch” group is led by JROTC cadets. Youth Crime Watch encourages positive peer pressure among students to change attitudes and take pride in the school through action projects.

The Student Assistant Program (SAP) is a systematic team process used mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. We have implemented “Safe 2 Say”. “Safe 2 Say” allows students to submit secure and anonymous safety concerns to help identify and intervene with at risk individuals.

Any complaints of bullying/harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are substantiated.

West Mifflin Area Middle School

Grades 6 – 8

Over the last several years, the Olweus Bullying Prevention program has changed into our School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention/Support Program (SWPBIS). Our team defines bullying as when a student repeatedly and intentionally says or does mean or hurtful things to another person. From this definition, we have designed group lessons to educate all students on the negative aspects of bullying. Feedback from students is used to develop lessons, review anti-bullying strategies and actively address problems. The program is for all students, not just those who are being bullied or who are bullying others. A team of staff members and AIU support personnel work with the teachers and students in order to promote the “PRIDE (Participation, Responsibility, Integrity, Dedication, and Empathy.”

One of the ways the SWPBIS program decreases bullying is by identifying bullying and administering a series of consequences for those students who demonstrate bullying behaviors. We DO NOT tolerate bullying; however, if it occurs, students complete a Bullying Complaint Form. The form is then used along with the Bullying Rubric to administer a series of progressive disciplinary actions to those who bully. Consequences may include and not limited to parent conference/notification, conflict mediation, warning, detention, suspension, expulsion, and/or police referral and meetings with the local magistrate

Students are also encouraged to meet with a counselor or any adult to report negative behavior. If a referral is made we follow these steps: initial referral, identify alleged bully and witnesses, start the investigation/interview process, make-a-decision, notification to involved parties, start the sequence of interventions/consequences. We have also implemented an online anonymous reporting system through the Attorney General’s Office which has evolved into a state-wide initiative called Safe2Say Something. With this system, students, parents and all stakeholders can anonymously report negative behaviors, such as bullying, to school administrators. Say Something Anonymous Reporting System allows you to submit secure and anonymous safety concerns to help identify and intervene upon at-risk individuals before they hurt themselves or others to alleviate suicide and other depression type issues so students receive the help and assistance needed. Students, parents, staff members and administrators can do this by reporting observed threats, behaviors, actions and harassment. Here’s how it works:

- Submit an anonymous tip report through the Safe2SaySomething system
- Crisis center reviews, assesses and processes all submissions
- Crisis center sends all submissions to school administration and/or law enforcement for intervention
- If needed, crisis center may contact tipster anonymously through the app

WMAMS also supports various positive promoting programs. All middle school initiatives are listed below with a brief description of each program. These initiatives are used to decrease the incidents of bullying and/or harassment within the school system and promote a positive and inviting atmosphere among all students.

Initiative Name: Counseling Groups

Description: The WMMS Counseling department believes in the personal potential of each and every student. The counselors offer several small group counseling opportunities throughout the year to assist students to reach their full personal and academic potential. The groups are typically closed ended

groups, meaning that students are not added to existing groups (after the groups have begun) unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances and group dynamics allow for new members. All groups are confidential. Students are considered for group participation based on teacher/administrator recommendations and parent request.

There are several possible small group topics including the following:

- Peer Relations and Social Skills
- Self Esteem
- Anger Management
- Changing Families/Divorce
- Managing Stress & Anxiety and
- Transition to Middle School

Initiative Name: Expect/Respect

Description: Expect Respect is a research-informed violence prevention program that was created in 1988 by SafePlace. It provides socio-emotional learning for students who have experienced violence. Weekly support groups (gender specific) are led by trained facilitators that deal with communication and relationship skills, choosing equality and respect and recognizing abuse and becoming active proponents for safe and healthy relationships. The gender specific groups are intended to increase participants' sense of emotional safety and comfort and groups are held during the instructional day.

Initiative Name: Family Behavioral Resources (FBR)

Description: Our team of talented and dedicated clinicians and therapists provide world class mental health care to consumers of all ages. We work in local schools, serving children with diagnosed behavioral and mental health disorders. We also provide Outpatient Mental Health Therapy in numerous locations throughout Pennsylvania.

Initiative Name: Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)

Description: GSA wants every student, in every school, to be valued and treated with respect, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. GSA believes that all students deserve a safe and affirming school environment where they can learn and grow. GSA believes that such an atmosphere promotes a positive sense of self, which is the basis of educational achievement and personal growth. Since homophobia and heterosexism undermine a healthy school climate, GSA works to educate teachers, students and the public at large about the damaging effects these forces have on youth and adults alike.

Initiative Name: Girls Only Leadership Development (GOLD)

Description: West Mifflin Area Middle School has started a GOLD program: Girls Only Leadership Development. WM community members or WM graduates come and meet with our middle school girls. The GOLD program focuses on female empowerment and bringing girls together despite their social differences. The program is run on a monthly basis after-school, and 2 breakout sessions during each meeting: one learning and one physical.

Initiative Name: PBIS

Sponsor Name: Jason Tatrai

Description: The School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is a universal, school-wide prevention program that aims to establish a social culture within schools in which students expect and support appropriate behavior from one another— and thereby create school environments that are socially predictable, consistent, safe, and positive. The primary goals of SWPBIS are to reduce problem behaviors within schools that lead to office discipline referrals and suspensions, and to change perceptions of school safety.

Initiative Name: Police Academy

Description: The purpose of the Student Police Academy is to make students more aware of Pennsylvania laws as they relate to traffic, criminal offenses, and civil matters. It also provides a small example what type of training that Police Officers are required to go through in order to perform this often times dangerous profession and give students an understanding of why Police Officers react to certain situations. The Student Police Academy is open to all students grades 7 through 8 who may have an interest in pursuing a law enforcement career or who have a strong interest in knowing more about how our Justice system works. The course is taught by School Police Officers and includes guest speakers such as other Police Officers, Judges, and other personnel in the law enforcement field. It also includes field trips to the West Mifflin Borough Police Department, and the Allegheny County Jail in Pittsburgh, PA.

Initiative Name: Red Ribbon Week

Description: **Red Ribbon Week** is an alcohol, tobacco, and other [drug](#) and violence prevention awareness campaign observed annually in October in the United States. It began as a tribute to fallen DEA special agent [Enrique Camerena](#) in 1985. According to the United States [DEA](#), Red Ribbon Week is the nation's largest and longest-running drug awareness and prevention program. Today, the Red Ribbon serves as a catalyst to mobilize communities to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention activities.

Initiative Name: Student Ambassadors

Description: The purpose of the Student Ambassador Program is to have an active role in welcoming new students and creating and maintaining a positive student environment. The WMMS Student Ambassador Program is a group of student leaders who represent the school and help to make WMMS a

school where everyone feels welcome, safe and involved. Ambassadors act as a link between the school and visiting prospective students. For many of our incoming students, an Ambassador provides their first impression of WMMS. It is crucial therefore that their first impression be an extremely positive experience.

Initiative Name: Student Assistance Program - SAP

Description: The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a voluntary program that is available to offer supportive services for students. It is designed to assist students who are experiencing dramatic changes in their school performance that pose barriers to their school success. Students can be referred to the SAP by parents or guardians, school personnel, peers, community members, or self-referrals. Our SAP team is comprised of specially trained teachers, administrators, school counselors, and a mental health and/or drug and alcohol consultant.

Initiative Name: Second Step

Description: Middle school is a time of change. Second Step helps teach powerful skills and competencies—like handling strong emotions, setting and meeting goals, making good decisions, and forging positive relationships—while building the safe, supported learning environment middle schoolers need to succeed. The Second Step Middle School Program is a first-of-its-kind SEL curriculum that’s modern, web-based, and responsive to the needs of today’s students and educators. It’s underpinned by the latest research in adolescent brain development and social psychology, and it’s been refined through multiple pilot programs in classrooms across the country. The result is a program that doesn’t just help kids do better in school. It helps them do better in life.

Initiative Name: Small Seeds

Description: **Graduate G.R.E.A.T.** "Gifted, Resilient, Empowered, Advanced and Talented" will provide in-school support for students in grades 3rd to 8th and social and educational programming in the manner of a participatory enrichment course of study and training before, during and or after-school that supports and develops excellence as aligned with "Blooms Taxonomy Model" in an effort to reach the student’s full social and educational potential.

Graduate GREAT will prepare students to:

1. Improve educationally, physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally in stride with the demonstration of positive adolescent behavior
2. Process through direct methods of coaching, teaching and facilitation that is self-reflective and self-sustained once programming has ended
3. Reach their academic, social and leadership potential through which the individual progresses as a part of normal development
4. Enhance their life-learning skills through one-on-one and/or group engagement activities with additional school connections and supports
5. Engage in a process of attending school daily and becoming life-long learners

Initiative Name: Turtle Creek Valley Community Services

Description: TCV provides a continuum of services, care and support that empowers individuals, families and communities with behavioral, mental health, substance abuse and/or developmental issues to sustain their recovery and achieve the important possibilities in their lives.

West Mifflin Middle School
Grades 4/5

The West Mifflin Area Middle School utilizes multiple programs to support the effort of the West Mifflin area School District in providing a safe, bully-free environment for our students in the 4th and 5th grade.

Our SWPBIS program presents behavior lessons and an acknowledgment system through which staff have the ability to reward positive behaviors. Students are rewarded individually, as a classroom and with school-wide monthly activities for positive behavior. We also advertise our Safe-To-Say on-line reporting program for anonymous notification of bullying behavior to which principals are immediately notified of an event. All students are educated on Safe2Say Something program to prevent inappropriate acts within our community.

Our 4th and 5th grade classrooms engage in an eight-week program presented by the E.S.T.E.E.M group. The curriculum engages the students in dance, yoga, fitness and team building. The lessons encourage tolerance, respect, self-control, decision making, problem solving, and cooperation. As needed, students who have been identified with behavioral, emotional, social or academic needs may be referred to our Student Assistance Program (SAP) which provides team support, parent involvement, resources and assessment. In addition, our SAP team utilizes TCV Behavioral Health for mental health/community services through pre-assessments on students and direct parent contact as follow-up. In conjunction with the SAP team, we also provide a school-based therapy program provided by family Behavioral Resources (FBR) to provide on-site therapy for students who may need mental health support.

Our classroom teachers have access to on-line social skills/anti-bullying lessons through Flocabulary, a web-based program. Students receive instruction using the Second Step Anti-Bullying curriculum which teaches skills for social and academic success. Second Step is used to teach specific skill sets and small group interventions within the classroom and with the counselor. As students are identified by teachers, parents or administrators, the school counselor provides focus groups to improve self-image, behavior and communication skills, as well as encouraging peer support and friendship-building skills.

4th and 5th grade students participate in Red Ribbon Week and Anti-Bully week each year. The students participate in whole school activities, counselor led Anti-Bully and Kindness lessons, activities and daily announcements that promote anti-bullying and kindness.

Empathy and Kindness activities are sponsored by the Kindness Club throughout the school year. Any 4th and 5th grade student can join the Kindness Club. Meetings and activities occur monthly. The Kindness Club promotes a positive school climate by teaching our students about kindness, compassion, empathy, and generosity.

West Mifflin Area Elementary Programs

Clara Barton Elementary

All elementary students are taught to treat other people with kindness and respect. At Clara Barton Elementary, our School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support Team (SWPBIS), develops lessons for classroom teachers to build positive character traits and respectful behavior towards others. The team includes the principal, the guidance counselor, and several classroom teachers. Bullying is often a component of the lessons as we strive to teach students how to appropriately interact with others in multiple settings. We also teach students how to address a child who is mean or a bully. Students are taught safe and appropriate strategies to stop and report the misbehavior. Students are encouraged to report any “bullying” actions to the closest adult. The importance of “tattling” vs. “reporting” is an on-going social education process.

The focus of our K-3 Anti-Bullying Program is developing positive social relationships. Anti-Bullying is incorporated into our School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies at all grade levels. The school year starts with a kick-off assembly that includes music and skits that emphasize friendship and social skills concepts. The counselor, Mrs. Terry Whalen, continues with anti-bullying curricula in each classroom throughout the school year. Activities are designed to raise awareness of positive social behavior and include bibliotherapy, role plays to model positive social behavior, and poster contests. If incidents of bullying do occur, the school administration, school counselor and teachers employ mediation techniques to resolve the situation. Students are referred to small focus groups with the counselor that teach empathy, positive social interactions, anger management, and conflict resolution when bullying occurs. The incident is used as an opportunity to learn appropriate social behavior. Our goal is to make sure that students at Clara Barton Elementary are “Respectful, Responsible, and Ready to Learn.”

Homeville Elementary

Homeville Elementary School has “anti-bullying” lesson plans built into our School-Wide Positive Intervention and Supports (SWPBIS) program. The teachers spend time in the classroom making students aware of the definition of bullying, how to recognize the characteristics, and the measure to prevent and report incidents of bullying. This occurs several times a year as necessary. The beginning of the year has the most emphasis to lay the ground work for the program. Throughout the school year students are awarded “Homeville Hero Cards” when they are observed following the SWPBIS traits of responsible, respect, and ready to learn. These are collected weekly. Anti-bullying actions are recognized under this program. Students are encouraged to report any “bullying” actions to the closest adult. The importance of “tattling” vs. “reporting” is an on-going social education process.

Mrs. Stillwagon is charged with anti-bullying programs. She has an activity during this period whereby students cut out hands on orange construction paper and write an anti-bullying slogan. The hands are hung in the main hallway of the lobby for students and visitors to view. During the month of November students are encouraged to wear the color orange and prepare statements about anti-bullying measures. Mrs. Stillwagon goes into all 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms once a month to do a 30 to 45-minute whole class anti-bullying activity. The lessons focus on how to recognize, prevent and discourage bullying behavior. The activities explore the root causes of bullying, students understand the impact of negative behaviors and are encouraged to be kind and tolerant of each other. Students are empowered to stand up for themselves and others and to take an active role in creating a safe and bully-free environment at Homeville. Students are referred to small focus groups with the counselor that

teach empathy, positive social interactions, anger management, and conflict resolution when bullying occurs. Additionally, Homeville Elementary School has recently established a “kindness club” for our students. Bullying will be addressed as a primary focus for the students.

District Bullying Policy

The district is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The district recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Bullying of a student by another student is strictly prohibited on school property, in school buildings, on school busses, and at school-sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off campus. Bullying is when a student repeatedly and intentionally says or does mean or hurtful things to another person. Bullying shall mean unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student(s) that has the intent and effect of:

1. Physically harming a student (e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, and invading one’s personal space in an aggressive manner).
2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student’s personal property.
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm.
4. Placing a student in emotional unrest by spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships or environment, engaging in social exclusion, extortion, intimidation and ridicule.
5. Cyber-bullying: forms of verbal and psychological bullying may also occur on the Internet through e-mail, instant messaging, or personal profile websites including any and all forms of social media.
6. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.
7. Creating verbal statements or written remarks that are taunting, malicious, threatening or sexual.
8. Any form of intimidation or harassment through use of cell or telephones, including text message and or calling.

*Includes after school hours

Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:[1](#)[5](#)[9](#)

1. Counseling within the school.
2. Parental conference.
3. Loss of school privileges.
4. Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.
9. Counseling/Therapy outside of school.
10. Referral to law enforcement officials.