

October is VSBA Bullying Prevention Month

LCPS School Board Has Adopted New Policy on School Bullying

School Board members, teachers, parents, staff members, and the Superintendent of Schools can play a critical role in creating a climate where bullying is not tolerated. It has been proven when adults and children stand together, bullying ends. This is why the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) has declared October to be VSBA Bullying Prevention Month.

Childhood bullying is a significant problem nationwide. It can cause school absenteeism, mental and physical stress, poor school performance, poor self-esteem, and in some cases, school violence. Over 20% of all school-aged children are bullied each year-upwards of 13 million students.

Lunenburg County Public Schools agree to join together to stamp out bullying at our schools. We believe that everybody should enjoy our schools equally, and feel safe, secure and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, and nationality.

The School Board just recently adopted a new policy on School Bullying and will be working to addressing Bullying in our schools. One of the best approaches to addressing School Bullying is the collaborative efforts between parents and school staff to develop a culture which does not tolerate incidents of bullying, taunting, or picking on individuals and promoting appropriate behavior at school and away from school every day.

Lunenburg Superintendent Charles Berkley stated that all students deserve to feel respected in the school environment and all students will be expected to respect others. As of this writing, there are 1458 students enrolled in our schools. The school district will not tolerate harassment, intimidation, bullying, or discrimination of any kind. Students found to have engaged in discriminatory activity will be held accountable and may face serious disciplinary consequences. We do not feel we have a serious bullying problem in our schools but we also want to make sure we are doing everything we can to manage and control any incidents that could arise.

Some effective school practices to prevent bullying include:

- reduce conditions that contribute to bullying at school (e.g., unsupervised areas);**
- pursue school-wide approaches that establish a positive school culture and climate;**

- **build on the foundation of school-wide approaches in implementing classroom programs;**
- **intervene to turn bullies around by directly addressing motivational and developmental concerns related to individuals who bully and those who support bullying; and**
- **respond to any problems experienced by those who are bullied and those who witness bullying**

Bullying of any student simply cannot be tolerated in our schools. A school where children don't feel safe is a school where children struggle to learn. Every student deserves to thrive in a safe school and classroom free from bullying. Lunenburg County Public Schools will continue to strive and maintain a safe and learning atmosphere for all students and staff.