

**TRUMBULL PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**



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September, 2010

RALPH M. IASSOGNA
SUPERINTENDENT
EMAIL: superofc@trumbullps.org

Dear Trumbull Parents,

As you probably are aware, Connecticut's public schools, in accordance with our State's General Statutes, have been focusing on the critical issue of bullying. Board of Education policy (5131.911) further reinforces our commitment to address this issue.

The district takes seriously the tenet that all students have the right to attend a school that promotes a secure and safe school climate, an environment that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior.

In my staff opening day program, I asked them to join with me in achieving both a personal and district goal that I have established for 2010-11. That goal is the expansion of the bullying definition, even though I firmly believe we do an excellent job in addressing bullying as referenced in the State statute. I want to broaden our efforts in this area, however, as it sets the tone for academic and social growth of our students. Children should not learn and socialize in a hostile or uncomfortable environment, and **all** of us have an obligation to do what is right and appropriate to insure the dignity, safety, and feelings of worth among our students.

The Administrators and I also focused on this topic during the summer with pertinent information disseminated during two superb workshops, one of which was given by State Education Consultant and an expert in this field, JoAnne Freiberg. I gleaned from her remarks that in reality, bullying is not just one word, but should be viewed in a more encompassing term, taking in any mean spirited or hurtful words or actions. However minor, when these behaviors are mean and offensive, our mantra phrase, as coined by Connecticut Commissioner of Education, Mark McQuillan, will be, "if it's mean, intervene."

Freiberg emphasized that the key element in meeting the challenges of bullying is the educational climate we establish in our schools and classrooms and that must be based upon respect, understanding, compassion for others, and personal responsibility. As educators, we must invest time and attention to help all of our students acquire these perspectives and attributes. The district's commitment to strengthening school and classroom climate is key and a responsibility for each and every one of us in all schools and central office. We must insure

over, please

that bullying and other inappropriate behaviors or conduct have no place in the Trumbull Public Schools.

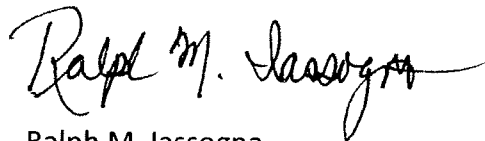
We are off to a good start as staff and students already have begun to concentrate on this initiative; however, to be more successful in this endeavor, WE NEED YOUR HELP! I am asking each family to discuss this expanded bullying topic as noted above with your child (ren) and reinforce the importance of appropriate conduct and sensitivity toward others.

I would suggest that a focal point of your discussion should emphasize that any form of bullying behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, including those not viewed as aggressive or threatening. Examples of such conduct can include ridicule, excessive teasing, humiliation, verbal taunting and put-downs. Please recognize that although our expanded emphasis on such behavior may not meet the State and legal definition of bullying, such conduct or actions are detrimental and must be addressed.

I am confident that working together, parents, students and staff can have a positive influence on increasing sensitivity toward others. Parental "connection" to your school is essential to achieving this core value goal. Additional information regarding our Board policy can be found on our website www.trumbullps.org.

Thank you for your anticipated support and cooperation!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph M. Iassogna". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ralph M. Iassogna

Superintendent