

Project 6

ILT 5650

Jennifer Jensen

Michelle Randolph

Edward Davis

Bonnie Young

July 3, 2003

Needs to be addressed

Reduction in the number of conflict incidents reported to the police, district, and school administration is the overall need to be addressed. "The key is to stop it at the elementary-grade level and reinforce the 'no bullying' policy right through high school." (Cromwell, 1999) To accomplish this, the staff and identified student must effectively communicate the 'no bullying' concepts about conflict resolution both within the district and the greater geographic region. Students and staff must be trained or mentored through use of online communication. This proposal states the need of teachers and students to maximize communication concerning student behavior issues. The initial schools cited in this proposal are already participating in a Bully Proofing program. The needs identified are related to reducing the current numbers of conflict incidents, even with the program in place.

Needs of all identified teachers

Teachers need access to experts, mentors, and other trained educators who can serve as resources. Teachers also need to receive weekly reports from the student mediators in their classrooms. Those reports must address the conflict incidents that have occurred during that specific week.

Needs of all identified students

The identified students are all students chosen by their schools to act as conflict mediators during non-instructional time each school day. Students range in age from 10 to 18 years of age. Older students act as online mentors. Davis (2002) recommends training small groups of decidedly interested high school students to work within their school and mentor elementary students. All identified students communicate behavior issues in weekly reports and exchange ideas used to reduce incidents, change students' behavior, and celebrate successes. The younger student population needs of older student mentors.

Goals and evaluation of results

- a. Reduce by 25% the number of reported incidents of conflict during the school day
- b. Train 30 students per school as conflict mediators to help students in conflict come to nonviolent resolutions
- c. Train 100% of our students how to solve problems without conflict

- d. Facilitate 25% increase in staff and student communication beyond represented districts
 - e. Train and/or mentor 100% of students in use of online communication tools
- The daily and weekly “Bully Proofing” reports from conflict mediators’ will continuously evaluate student progress, success of the program, and assess needs.

Research plan of action

Establishing an online community that augments our well-known “Bully Proofing” program is the objective in forming this plan. Our plan of action includes training, classroom instruction, mentoring, and several forms of online discussion. This allows us to provide support to individual classrooms, schools, and communities.

Initial Training

Daily instruction is given to our students in the classroom. The on site instruction focuses on skills that can be used to avoid conflict. Additional instruction is given to those students that are chosen as conflict mediators. They participate in smaller groups of intensive training in the skills necessary to help other students peacefully solve conflicts that do arise and successful use of online communication. Each elementary school conflict mediation group is assigned a mentor. Teachers or the school psychologist carefully select mentors, train them in student support skills, supervise them during facilitation, and evaluate them. Mentors are carefully selected by teachers or the school psychologist, trained in student support skills, supervised during the facilitation, and evaluated. Each mentor introduces themselves via e-mail before chats and online discussions begin. Students, in turn introduce themselves to their mentors via return e-mail. Teachers and students develop a structured report format to prepare for weekly discussions. (Ayersman 2003) This begins to establish a sense of in-school community.

Chat

The next essential step is establishing a sense of community with the online participants. The tool that works best helping students form a synchronous community is online chat because students are familiar with chat for recreational purposes and require very little training in its use. However, chat etiquette must be established and followed. Careful planning must occur to facilitate successful online discussion. Lieberman and Stovall (no date given) from the University of Illinois wrote a paper which describes uses of chat, management techniques, and strategies for instructors and their students. In that paper they reinforced the need to plan and establish etiquette, stating, “When used strategically with careful planning and focused discussions, chat can be a powerful learning tool.”

At the end of each week students conduct an online chat summarizing what they believe were the most important events that occurred at their school during the week. This activity helps students process the week’s events. Students get a perspective on experiences of other school populations and how it can be useful to them. It gives

teachers and conflict mediators insight to understand what parts of “Bully Proofing” have been effective and what needs to be taught more in depth. According to Illinois Online Network (2003), “The synergy generated through online dialog is the most important learning tool in the online environment and has an impact on defining the learning outcomes.” “Chat may also reduce the power of the teacher by removing from the discussion a clear leader who might otherwise silence or ignore certain voices.” Palmquist (2001) This must be carefully avoided.

Listserv

For creation of a larger community a listserv for the topic of anti-bullying needs to be established. Listserv allows delivery of messages to everyone on the list simultaneously. These messages are listed by topic and anyone in the list can read or respond to the message. The listserv allows the addressing of concerns, successful interventions, ideas to try, and questions can be addressed for the entire community. An example of this type of communication is available at [anti-bullying](#) or [bullying](#) where questions are asked of an expert who provides a response. Our students can use these sites to get an idea of how they can communicate in the listserv.

A study about anti-bullying work, done in Scotland showed that, “All around the country anti-bullying initiatives have sprung up and devolved distinctive forms suited to their environments and conditions. But all of them are closely related and dependent on each other for the fresh ideas and insights which allow them to flourish.” (Mellor, 1995) Allowing our students and teachers to exchange ideas through the use of the listserv provides for this type of exchange. This type of exchange also raises the level of awareness of all participants. What is happening at one location may not be happening at all locations, or it could be happening at different times. All users have exposure to those situations and can draw on their knowledge at the appropriate times. According to Mellor (1995), “There then needs to be time to reflect before the process of planning and implementing a policy can begin. Teachers, typically, are interested in practicable solutions to a difficult problem and want mainly to hear about strategies.” By providing a listserv, the participants have reflection time and a place to look for solutions to problems. Teachers can share lesson plans and strategies that have worked. Students post their weekly reports to the listserv allowing all users to track progress, ideas, and plans for improvement. One thing schools can do about bullying is talk with groups of students about bullying, and mobilize student support for action to reduce bullying--for example, by include victimized students in their activities. (Rigby, 1995) Having a listserv requires students to discuss the problems and solutions to the bullying. It involves the victims, teachers, and other students without revealing the identity of any of the individuals.

Key Pals

Key Pals (also referred to as ePALS) program needs to be established to allow students and teachers to network and ask questions of their peers, a. The [ePALS](#) web site was established in 1996. This program was designed “to create a place where teachers and their students could connect with other classes interested in using technology to assist collaborative learning.” Classroom Exchange (2003)

Key Pals allows the mentored students access to fellow qualified students who are also anti-bullying mentors in their own school. Key Pals is also be established for the teachers. This form of online communication allows the following to occur:

Students:

- Share ideas and strategies for certain bullying situations.
- Ask for advice on a specific bullying situation.
- Email an expert and/or older mentor student.

Teachers:

- Share ideas and strategies for certain bullying situations.
- Ask for advice on a specific bullying situation.
- Exchange lesson plan ideas & resources.

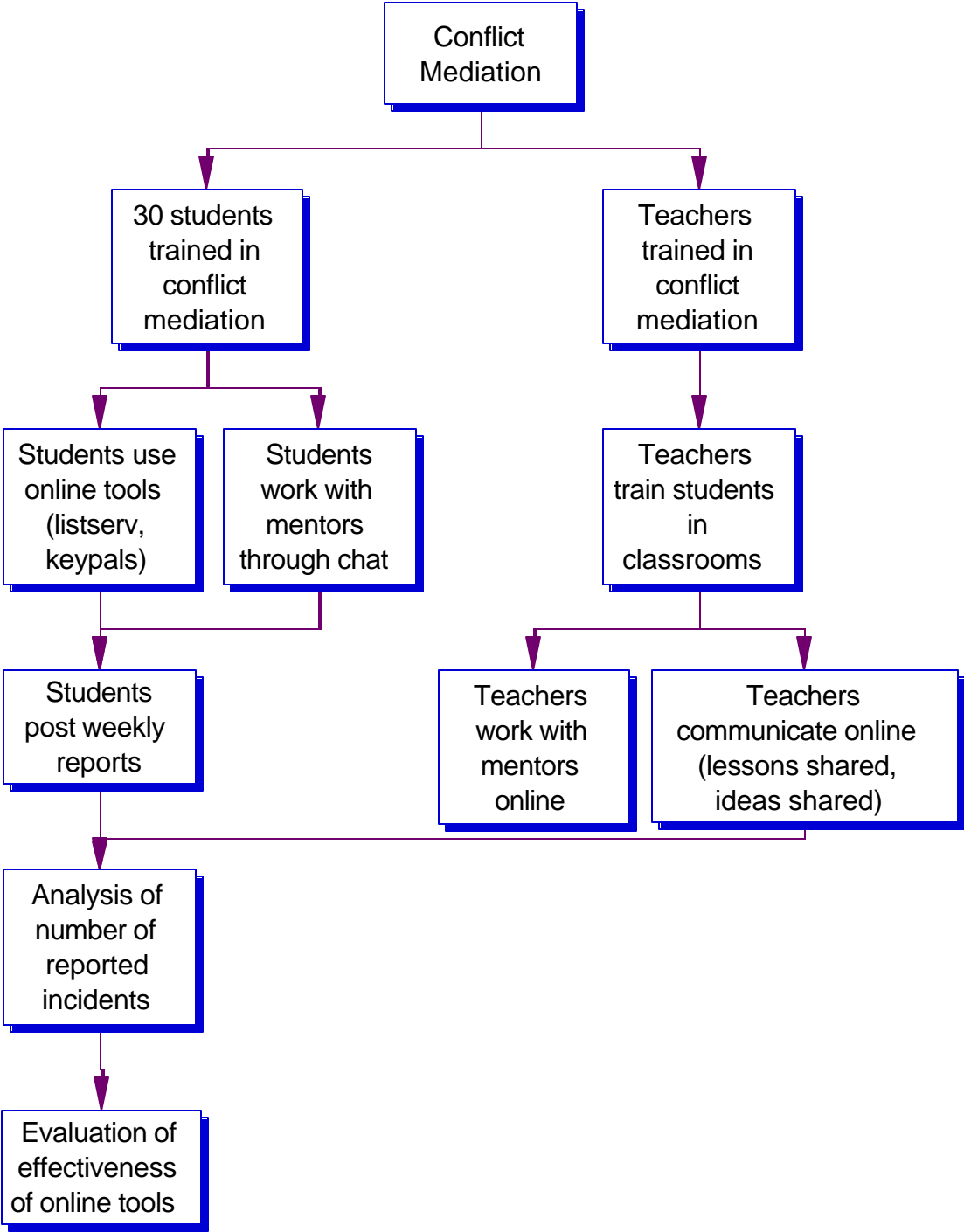
Key Pals not only serves as a valuable tool for students to communicate about anti-bullying issues, but students also develop their communication, language expression, and keyboarding skills. (Hopkins 1999) The use of key pals also eliminates any possible limits faced due to student disabilities or student appearances. (Hopkins 1999) This element of “anonymity” proves most valuable for our situation. Due to the fact that students communicate with other students pertaining to behavior situations, it is imperative that students remain anonymous and unidentifiable. The absence of limits also allows for a variety of students to participate in the mentoring program. The issues of race, learning disabilities, etc. do not come into play.

The Key Pals program offers students and teachers a “target audience.” Programs are usually established around a specific subject area, culture, or some other purpose. Due to the idea of targeted interests, students and teachers alike are able to better meet their bullying-specific needs.

Since Key Pals are an email version of pen pals via “snail mail” There is a hard copy of the correspondence that takes place. The contents of this correspondence can easily be used for future situations, and even be a part of the weekly report submitted to the teacher.

Teachers and students have a variety of key pal services to choose from. They may also decide to establish their own with school provided email addresses. Prior to key pals beginning, students need to be trained in email netiquette. A schedule or set of guidelines also needs to be established between the participating schools.

Implementation plan



Timeline

The calendar below outlines the implementation of the Action Plan.

Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Identify teachers and students to be trained in online communication tools and have them trained.	Teachers and students implement the use of online communication tools.	Teachers and students continue use of online communication tools. Weekly reports are being provided for teachers.							Evaluate the effectiveness of the Action Plan. Analyze the data collected from weekly reports and make recommendations for additions/changes to program for 2004-2005 school year.	

Measurements to gauge success

As previously mentioned, students submit weekly reports of behavior issues. The data contained within these weekly reports is analyzed and used to determine the overall success of the implementation program. Another gauge of success is how well the established goals are met:

- a. Decreases by 25% the number of reported conflict incidents
- b. Trains 30 students as conflict mediators to assist students in conflict
- c. 100% of the students learn how to solve problems without the use of conflict.
- d. Increases staff and student communication at a rate of 25% beyond the boundaries of our district.
- e. 100% of the students train in the use of the online communication tools.

References:

- Anti-Bullying Network, (1999). *Bully Box*. Retrieved June 22, 2003, <http://www.antibullying.net/index.html>
- Ayersman, D. (2003). *Frequently Asked Questions*. Retrieved June 21, 2003, http://www.wvu.edu/~itrc/webct/teaching_online.html
- Classroom Exchange, Inc. (2003). *Introducing ePALS*. Retrieved June 29, 2003, <http://www.epals.com/about/intro/>
- Cromwell, S. (1999). *Stop Bullying Before It Starts*. Retrieved June 22, 2003, http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin117.shtml
- Davis, S. (2002). *Stop Bullying Now*. Retrieved July 1, 2003, <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/index.htm>
- Hopkins, Gary (1999). *Getting Started on the Internet*. Retrieved June 29, 2003, http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr125.shtml
- Illinois Online Network (2003). *Synergy*. Retrieved June 28, 2003, <http://www.ion.illinois.edu/IONresources/conferencing/synergy.asp>
- Lieberman, J. and Stovall, I. (no date given). *Strategies for Using Chat as a Communication Tool*. Retrieved June 28, 2003, <http://as1.ipfw.edu/99tohe/presentations/lieberman2.htm>
- Palmquist, M. (2001). *Rationale and Benefits*. Retrieved June 30, 2003, http://writing.colostate.edu/references/teaching/olwc_guides/pop2c1.cfm
- Mellor, A. (1995). *Which way now? A progress report on action against bullying in Scottish schools*. Retrieved July 1, 2003, <http://www.scre.ac.uk/resreport/pdf/063.pdf>
- Rigby, K. (1995). *What schools can do about bullying*. The Professional Reading Guide for Educational Administrators. Vol. 17, No. 1, November, 1995. Retrieved July 1, 2003, http://www.education-world.com/a_admin/admin018.shtml

Appendix

Technologies in use for distance learning, communication, and collaboration Distance Learning in Aurora Public Schools

Technologies Used	Why that technology?	Improvements/Enhancements
Tele Video Courses	Convenient, affordable	Remove this type of program due to unregulated due dates, problems with contacting students. Use online systems.
Colorado Online Pilot	Curriculum put online by COL. Had grant monies to implement program.	Continue to expand this program to more schools and teachers. Share successes with entire staff. Build interest in program.
Teacher Online Pilot	Teacher expert in the content and has some technology skills. District did not pay for curriculum.	Provide time and money support to teachers in program. Seek out motivated students for maximum success.
District wide e-mail	Effective communication, affordable, quick	Provide netiquette type training for all staff. Incorporate collaborative types of use for e-mail.
District wide Intranet		
Remote online access to District e-mail	Provides anytime, anywhere access for all staff	Continue to expand. Consider access to student e-mail accounts. Consider access to enter grades remotely.
Remote online access to Substitute system	Provides anytime, anywhere access for all staff	Provide staff training to ease the use of this system.

Distance Learning in Douglas County Schools

Technologies Used	Why that technology?	Improvements/Enhancements
NovaNET	Convenient education for students who are "as risk" or are considered unconventional students	Continue to improve the quality and quantity of courses offered
CEO e-mail	Allowed staff to communicate and collaborate with each other	This program has been eliminated and a new e-mail provider will be established this month. Hopefully the new program will allow for improved collaboration
Internet Access	Teacher and student access the World Wide Web	Provide additional resources of how to integrate the Internet

Distance Learning in Jefferson County Schools

Technologies Used	Why that technology?	Improvements/Enhancements
Colorado Online	Consortium of Colorado schools sharing classes funded by Federal Grant	Expand program to more districts, schools and teachers Maintain state standards
JeffcoNet Academy	Serves full and part time students and provides classes for Colorado Online	Increase number of instructors and classes offered
PBS Teacherline	provides professional development, supportive learning community, and exemplary resources	More information and training for staff on use
JeffcoNet e-mail	Communication and collaboration	More use for needed communication within district and schools
District wide Intranet	Staff and student records and communication	Expand and more training for staff and more dependable programs
Online access to District e-mail	Access anytime, anywhere for all staff and students with accounts	Continue to provide dependability communication
Mathline	Provides resources for staff	Inform staff of availability