

Jim Dillon's Top 5 Culture-Changing Tips for Schools

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Jim Dillon

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THIRTY-ONE
SCHOOL BULLYING PREVENTION



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1. REFRAME BULLYING PREVENTION.

Bullying prevention shouldn't be just about solving another school problem. It's about improving how all members of the school community treat each other. People respond better to positive, aspirational goals than they do to a directive to stop a negative behavior. Bullying prevention is about strengthening community, so make that your goal!

2. START WITH AND STAND ON PRINCIPLES.

Bullying is more than a rule infraction. Bullying is about an abuse of power and the mistreatment of others. It's a violation of the values and social norms of the school. All members of the school community should develop principles to guide how people treat each other in situations not "covered" by the rules.

3. INVEST TIME AND ENERGY IN TRANSLATING PRINCIPLES INTO SPECIFIC WORDS AND ACTIONS.

Staff and students need to talk about what they can specifically say and do to make their school the type of place that reflects their core values and beliefs.

4. ADULTS SHOULD GO FIRST.

Bullying prevention shouldn't be just about changing student behavior. The adults in the school community need to model what they expect from students and make sure that their behavior is consistent with the school's guiding principles.

5. USE THE COMMUNITY TO BUILD COMMUNITY.

Change cannot be imposed on people from above. It should emerge from people learning together about what they want the change to be and about the process of changing. Learning together builds community.

ABOUT JIM DILLON

Jim Dillon is an author and school administrator with over 35 years of experience in education. While principal of Lynnwood Elementary in New York, he developed a program to decrease inappropriate behavior on school buses, and subsequently published *The Peaceful School Bus Program*. Jim is also the founder of The Center for Leadership and Bullying Prevention.

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