

# **Lyman Memorial High School**

## **LMHS School Climate Committee**

**Assistant Principal:** Ann Birrell

**School Counselor:** Laura Gerber

**Student Representatives:** Bethany Gifford, Gavin Holbrook

### **Faculty Members:**

Elizabeth Anastasio

John Cote

Megan Grogan

Cynthia Hisman

Shane Morse

## **Promoting a Safe School Climate**

There are many things the high school does to promote and ensure a safe, comfortable school climate at Lyman Memorial High School. Many of these things include but are not limited to:

- The administration meets with each grade level at the beginning of the school year to review student expectations, discuss what disciplinary actions are taken for violation of school rules, and to go over the importance of respect and tolerance of others.
- The Faculty meets with each student in their advisory group at the beginning of school to stress the importance of respect and tolerance and remind students of the consequences when a person does not follow school rules.
- Every year students participate in activities and lessons which incorporate the issues of bullying and teen dating violence within their advisory groups.
- Students may anonymously report an act of bullying or teen dating violence by leaving a note in the "office suggestion box" located in the main office.
- Each year the School Climate Committee conducts activities which focus on academic, civic and social success in and out of the classroom as well as activities that promote tolerance and respect for others.
- The high school has adopted a Code of Conduct which outlines appropriate student behaviors and responsibilities. The faculty promotes and enforces the Code of Conduct throughout the school.
- The faculty works with various student organizations (School Spirit Club, Student Council, GSA) on events such as pep rallies, fundraisers and volunteer opportunities to promote school spirit and foster a sense of community throughout the year, as well as planning activities that promote diversity and tolerance for all backgrounds and ways of life.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student in the same school district that: (a) causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property; (b) places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to the student's property; (c) creates a hostile

environment at school for such student; (d) infringes on the rights of the student at school; or (e) substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school. Public Act No. 11-232.

Teen dating violence means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening that occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in dating relationships.

### **Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Bullying or Teen Dating Violence**

Any student, parent/guardian of student, or employee of Lebanon Public Schools may report an incident he/she believes to be bullying or teen dating violence, intimidating, or harassing behavior. Written reports of bullying or teen dating violence shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the alleged conduct, the number of incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of potential witnesses. Forms to report suspected bullying or teen dating violence behaviors are available in the main office. Students may anonymously report an act of bullying to any school employee or by filling out the form and dropping it off in the "Office Suggestion Box" located in the main office. Reports may be filed with any building administrator and/or the Safe School Climate Specialist (i.e. building assistant principal) who are responsible for following up on the report. Reports may also be turned in to a school counselor, teacher, or staff member who can, in turn, turn it in to one of the building administrators.

- A. School employees who witness acts of bullying or teen dating violence or receive reports of such actions shall orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying or teen dating violence. The school employee shall then file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report.
- B. All incidents reported will be investigated. The Safe School Specialist shall be responsible for reviewing any anonymous reports of bullying or teen dating violence and shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and teen dating violence and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports. In order to allow the district to adequately investigate complaints filled by a student or parent/guardian, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied should be asked to provide consent to permit the release of that student's name in connection with the investigation process, unless the student and/or parent has requested anonymity.
- C. In investigating reports of bullying or teen dating violence, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will use multiple strategies, all of which will begin based on the information provided by the initial report. It could include interviewing the alleged

victim, the alleged perpetrator(s), and any other students, teachers, or staff that may have been witness to the incident(s) of bullying or teen dating violence. During the investigation, any person with knowledge of the situation will be interviewed and asked to give a written statement explaining what they saw and heard and any other pertinent information related to the incident. No person interviewed is required to give a statement in writing, but it is encouraged. The Safe School Climate Specialist will interview witnesses, as necessary, reminding the alleged perpetrator and other parties that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

#### **Responding to Verified Acts of Bullying or Teen Dating Violence**

- A. Following investigation, if acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will meet separately with the alleged perpetrator and victim to review the results of the investigation. If there are disciplinary consequences related to the incident, then they will be given at that time. The students will also be told how to act going forward to avoid any future problems. The Safe School Climate Specialist will notify the parents/guardians of the perpetrator and victim and explain the results of the investigation. If any disciplinary consequences have been assigned, they will be shared at that time. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also invite the parents/guardians of the student who commits any verified act of bullying or teen dating violence and parents/guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, to separate meetings to communicate the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student/victim and to prevent further acts of bullying.
- B. If bullying or teen dating violence is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall develop a student safety support plan for any student against whom an act of bullying or teen dating violence was directed. Such support plan will include safety measures to protect against further acts of bullying.
- C. A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying or teen dating violence against single individual or recurrently perpetrated incidents by the same individual. The written intervention plan may include counseling, discipline and other appropriate remedial actions as determined by the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee.

#### **Follow-Up**

- A. A follow-up will occur with the victim and his or her family afterwards to ensure that no further acts of bullying have occurred after the situation has been addressed by school

officials. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will contact both the victim and his or her family to verify nothing further has happened, including any retaliation, and that the student once again feels safe and comfortable at school. If, through the follow-up, it is determined that another incident has occurred, it will be addressed immediately.

#### **Documentation and Maintenance of Log**

- A. All incidents of reported bullying or teen dating violence whether or not the report becomes a bona fide act of bullying or teen dating violence will be recorded and filed. Any educational record containing personally identifiable student information pertaining to an individual student shall be maintained in a confidential manner.
- B. The Principal of each school shall maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. The log shall not contain any personally identifiable student information, or any information that alone or in combination would allow a reasonable person in the school community to identify the students involved. Accordingly, the log should be limited to basic information such as the number of verified acts, name of school and/or grade level and relevant date.

#### **Bullying Prevention and Teen Dating Violence Intervention Strategies**

Lyman Memorial High School is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe and thus free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. At the beginning of each and every year, the building Principal and Assistant Principal meet with all students by class to review school rules, procedures, and standards of conduct. During these assemblies, school officials explain the dangers of bullying and teen dating violence and how to report an incident of bullying and teen dating violence once it has occurred. This time with each class sets the tone of respect and establishes the importance of creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior.

Throughout the school year, Lyman Memorial High School schedules school wide activities and events to promote respectful communication and positive social interactions between students. Administrators, faculty and other professional employees will educate students about bullying to help eliminate bullying and teen dating violence behavior through advisory groups, class discussions, guest speakers and presentations, counseling, and reinforcement of socially-appropriate behavior.