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HANNA SKANDERA
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

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GOVERNOR

February 13, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: New Mexico School Superintendents and Charter School Administrators

FROM: Hanna Skandera
Secretary - Designate of Education 

RE: BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION ASSURANCE

The purpose of this memorandum is two-fold:

1. Requirement for implementing Bullying Prevention Programs in the Fall of 2012 and
2. Review Bullying Prevention Policies

Requirements for Implementing Bullying Prevention Programs:

Section 22-2-21, NMSA 1978 – Bullying Prevention Programs, requires every public school to implement a bullying prevention program by August 2012. In order to assure that your schools are in compliance with 22-2-21, I am requesting that you complete the enclosed assurance form no later than **April 30, 2012. Please submit the assurance form to:**

Daniel DePaula, School and Family Support Bureau
daniel.depaula@state.nm.us
505-827-1826 fax

Review Bullying Prevention Policies:

You will remember that as of April 1, 2007, all districts and charter schools were required to adopt and implement an anti-bullying policy that complies with 6.12.7 NMAC (<http://www.nmcpr.state.nm.us/nmac/parts/title06/06.012.0007.pdf>). The Public Education Department (PED) developed a guidance document to assist districts/charter schools with this policy (<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/sfsb/tools/dl10/Anti%20Bullying%20Policy%20Guidance%20Document.pdf>).

The United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Right (OCR), has issued a Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying (see attached). I am sending this letter for your review and action and to share with your school/community. I strongly encourage you to review and amend, if needed, your local bullying prevention policy to ensure that it complies with the mandates of the federal civil rights laws and other information contained in this federal guidance. This will ensure that the environment in all schools will allow all students and staff to feel safe in their respective school.

In addition to the online resources listed in the OCR letter, you may wish to also review the following:

U.S Education Secretary Highlights Best Practices in Bulling Policies (12-16-2010)

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-education-secretary-highlights>

Federal Task Force in Bullying Prevention Invites Public to Submit Ideas on Ways to Combat Bullying (12-10-2010)

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/federal-task-force-bullying>

I believe that it is important that school districts and charter schools make a concerted effort to engage parents of students that have been bullied, as well as community members and organizations with experience, expertise or knowledge in working with and serving bullied students. Therefore, I would encourage you to actively engage parents and community members as you 1) determine your bullying prevention programs for implementation, 2) review you local bullying prevention policy, and 3) determine ways in which you can evaluate your programs and policies.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure the safety of New Mexico students.

HS/KMM/WOB

Attachments (2)

cc: Paul Aguilar, Deputy Secretary, Finance and Operations
Christine Stavem, Chief of Staff
Denise Koscielniak, Director, Federal Programs Division
Kristine M. Meurer, Director, School and Family Support Bureau