

Dear WCSD Families,

Nationally and internationally, each calendar month celebrates and/or commemorates a specific theme. Amongst these themes, October is National Bullying Prevention Month, as well as America's Safe Schools Week (October 19–25, 2014).

Bullying has become a major epidemic affecting many of our schools and students. It would be great if we can make bullying go away instantaneously. However, as an entire community, we should be able to put all of our efforts to ensure that our students are safe, secure and feel confident as individuals in our community.

All of our schools will be providing students with Anti-Bullying prevention programs and assemblies during October. Our students need to understand that we can help to prevent bullying in our schools. It all begins with a concerted effort from everyone. I would encourage you to log on to the website, [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov). This website provides you with information and proactive ways to stop bullying.

A special recognition goes out to all of our schools:

*Brinckerhoff ES, Evans ES, Fishkill ES, Fishkill Plains ES, Gayhead ES, John Jay HS, Kinry Road ES, Myers Corners ES, Oak Grove ES, Orchard View AHS, Roy C. Ketcham HS, Sheafe Road ES, Van Wyck JHS, Vassar Road ES, and Wappingers JHS.*

I would also encourage you to continue to talk to your children about the importance of respecting others. We have a diverse community of students and everyone should be respected. Below are some very important points that you can share with your children:

- Communicate continuously with your children about their day in school
- Let your children know that they can trust you and/or an adult at school if they are being bullied
- There is no such thing as a tattletale when it comes to bullying
- Attempting to deal with bullying on your own can be more dangerous and the building principal, who is also the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) Coordinator, needs to know.

Although these are a few bullets that I have shared with you, I am sure that as parents you share much more advice and engage in meaningful conversations with your children.

To help improve behaviors and school culture, we have implemented, District-wide, PBIS. PBIS stands for Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports. PBIS, if done correctly, has proven to improve negative and disruptive behaviors in schools throughout the county. Tolerating negative behaviors is not negotiable. More importantly, we want to see everyone exhibit appropriate behaviors and respect towards one another.

Although there is an America's Safe Schools Week, our District promotes safety on a daily basis. All of our schools have a single point of entry. We conduct fire, bus, lockdown, hold in place and evacuation drills in accordance with New York State Regulations. Overall, we work very well with our local police agencies and they have commended our schools for their diligence to promote safety by successfully conducting these drills and having well trained, pro-active school safety teams. We take pride in our police agencies and we are thankful for their hands on support. The Board of Education and District are extremely appreciative to the Village of Fishkill, Town of Fishkill, Town of Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County Sheriff's Department and the New York State Police agencies.

Once again, our principals, teachers and staff who have collaborated to implement activities, events and or assemblies during anti-bullying month are to be highly commended. Of particular note, the month of October will not be the only time that we will continue to work on respect and help to stop bullying in our schools.

We have a mission that we believe in and continue to share with parents, staff, and our community as a whole:

*The mission of the Wappingers Central School District is to empower all of our students with the competencies and confidence to challenge themselves, to pursue their passions, and to realize their potential while growing as responsible members of their community.*

Regards,  
Jose Carrion