

**Elementary Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of the Olweus Bullying
Prevention Program**

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Abstract

The setting of this research study was the Haysville School District, a suburban school district of approximately 5,000 students located in Haysville, Kansas. Seventy-four elementary teachers completed a survey and six elementary principals were interviewed to determine their perceptions of the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program during the 2014-2015 school year. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceived that students and staff were using more effective strategies to stop bullying, the number of bullying incidents had been reduced, and the severity of bullying incidents had been reduced after the OBPP implementation. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceived they had a greater understanding of the bullying problem in their school, there was more stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems, and there was a more peaceful atmosphere in their school after the OBPP implementation. Additionally, the purpose of the study was to determine whether there was a difference in teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP between teachers whose school had a student leadership program and teachers whose schools did not have a student leadership program. The final purpose of the study was to determine, through interviews, elementary principals' perceptions of the OBPP.

A mixed method research design was implemented that involved collecting data to represent both quantitative and qualitative information. Quantitative findings revealed that the majority of elementary teachers perceived that students and staff were using more effective strategies to stop bullying and had a greater understanding of the bullying problem since implementing the OBPP. Qualitative findings revealed that the majority of

principals stated that their schools utilized many strategies to prevent and address bullying and have more clearly defined consequences for bullying behaviors as a result of the OBPP implementation. Several major findings from the current study were supported by both quantitative and qualitative data. Elementary teachers and principals perceived there is more community or stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems as a result of the OBPP implementation. It was also determined that elementary teachers and principals perceived that the number and severity of bullying incidents had decreased after the OBPP implementation. In addition, the majority of teachers and principals perceived that the atmosphere at school had been more peaceful or positive after implementation of the OBPP.

It is incumbent upon school districts to choose an anti-bullying program and implement it with fidelity. This mixed method study was designed to inform school officials in their decision-making process related to bullying prevention, specifically at the elementary level. The results of the current study provide data that may aid district leaders in the selection of an anti-bullying curriculum.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. To my wife, Stephanie, you made many sacrifices so I could continue my education. You are the strongest person I know, and will forever be my soul mate. To my father, Brad, you motivated me to be an educator, and helped me through life in countless ways. To my mother, Sara, you gave me the confidence to believe in myself, and inspired me to help others. Thank you for providing me with a strong foundation of love and support, and always encouraging me to be a lifelong learner. To my brother, Jared, you have been my best friend since the day I was born. Thank you for always having my back and supporting my aspirations. To my sister, Elizabeth, you are such a beautiful person inside and out. You are an amazing role model, and someone I will always admire. To my grandparents, D. A. and Janie Bartlett and Ike and Cleta Friesen, I have learned so much from each of you. And to my daughter, Georgie Rose, you will always be my ray of sunshine. I am extremely proud of you, and I feel very blessed to be your dad. I love you all.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Dedication	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Table of Contents	vii
List of Tables	xi
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Background	2
Statement of the Problem	6
Purpose of the Study	7
Significance of the Study	8
Delimitations	9
Assumptions	9
Research Questions	10
Definition of Terms	13
Overview of the Methodology	13
Organization of the Study	14
Chapter Two: Review of the Literature	15
Bullying Legislation	15
Federal Bullying Legislation	15
Kansas Law on Bullying	19
Types of Bullying	20
Verbal bullying	21

Physical bullying.....	22
Relational bullying.....	23
Cyberbullying	24
Bullying at the Elementary Level	25
School-Based Bullying Intervention Programs	27
Peaceful Schools	28
Steps to Respect	28
Bully-Proofing Your School	29
Bully Busters.....	30
Olweus Bullying Prevention Program	32
Effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program	33
Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of the OBPP	35
Student Leadership Programs	38
Safe School Ambassadors.....	39
Where Everyone Belongs	40
Summary	41
Chapter Three: Methods	43
Research Design.....	43
Population and Sample	44
Sampling Procedures	44
Instrumentation	45
Measurement.....	46
Validity and reliability	47

Data Collection Procedures.....	48
Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing	50
Limitations	57
Summary	57
Chapter Four: Results	59
Descriptive Statistics.....	59
Hypothesis Testing.....	60
Interview Analyses and Results	75
Summary	81
Chapter Five: Interpretation and Recommendations	82
Study Summary.....	82
Overview of the problem	82
Purpose statement and research questions	83
Review of the methodology	83
Major findings.....	84
Findings Related to the Literature.....	86
Conclusions.....	90
Implications for action	90
Recommendations for future research	91
Concluding remarks	92
References.....	94
Appendices.....	104
Appendix A. Survey Instrument Used in Current Study	105

Appendix B. Permission to Use Daugherty Survey Instrument	107
Appendix C. Permission to Conduct Study in HSD	109
Appendix D. Baker University IRB Form	111
Appendix E. Baker University IRB Approval	124
Appendix F. Cover Letter for Survey Instrument.....	126
Appendix G. Interview Consent Form.....	128

List of Tables

Table 1. 2014 Demographic Data for HSD Elementary Schools	4
Table 2. Teacher Participant Demographics	60
Table 3. Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 1	61
Table 4. Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 2	62
Table 5. Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 3	63
Table 6. Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 4	64
Table 7. Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 5	65
Table 8. Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 6	66
Table 9. Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 7	67
Table 10. Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 1	68
Table 11. Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 2	69
Table 12. Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 3	71
Table 13. Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 4	72
Table 14. Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 5	73
Table 15. Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 6	74
Table 16. Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 7	75

Chapter One

Introduction

Bullying is no longer considered a childhood rite of passage; it is a significant problem in schools across America (Poon, 2014). Victims of bullying have a higher rate of absenteeism in the school setting. Langan (2011) stated, “On any given day, approximately 160,000 kids skip school to avoid being picked on by their peers” (p. 9). Bullying has also been linked to many health problems in adolescents. According to the Centers for Disease Control (2012), students who experience bullying are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, sleep problems, and poor adjustment to school.

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2013), “On average, nearly 1 in 3 students (27.8%) report being bullied during the school year” (p. 15). Bullying can be a potentially deadly problem that has been linked to teen suicide in the United States. Youth victimized by their peers were over two times more likely to report suicidal ideation and over three times more likely to report a suicide attempt than youth who reported not being bullied (Espelage & Holt, 2013).

Smith-Heavenrich (2008) reported that the bully is often more hurt than the victim. Many negative consequences have been linked to students who bully their peers. According to the Southern California Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention (2008), “students who are recognized as bullies by age eight are six times more likely to commit a crime by the time they are twenty-four and five times more likely to have a serious criminal record by age thirty” (p. 46). Furthermore, students who bully others are at increased risk for substance abuse, violence, and academic problems later in adolescence and adulthood (Center for Disease Control, 2012). Leaders in education

must acknowledge and understand the magnitude of the bullying problem in order for changes to be made.

Over the past decade, numerous efforts have been made nationally to mandate the implementation of school-wide bullying intervention programs in American schools (Ross, 2009). School districts are being held accountable for addressing the bullying problem in education and must implement new anti-bullying policies and procedures. Currently, forty-nine states have implemented laws requiring schools to set up a policy to stop bullying (Clark, 2013). Because of these laws, anti-bullying programs are being implemented in schools across the nation.

Background

Kansas Statute 72-8256 (2013) requires the board of education of each school district to adopt and implement a plan to address bullying and clearly define district policy relating to bullying incidents. Plans must include training and education for staff members to raise awareness of bullying and develop strategies for prevention (Kansas State Department of Education [KSDE], 2013). In compliance with Kansas law, a district appointed steering committee from the Haysville School District (HSD) selected the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) in April of 2006 (Haysville School District, 2008).

The OBPP was developed in 1983 by Dan Olweus, a Norwegian professor of psychology who is acknowledged as a leading world expert on bullying and victimization. The authors of the OBPP conducted over 20 years of research on school-wide bullying and victimization prior to the development of the program (Olweus, 1993). The OBPP was intended to be a universal system-wide effort involving a variety of

stakeholders for successful implementation (Olweus & Limber, 2001). Kuykendall (2012) stated, “All adults who work with children should be trained in recognizing the signs of bullying, the definition of bullying, how to intervene effectively, and procedures for reporting” (p. 115). Furthermore, the OBPP was designed to promote empathy among staff and students and to stop preexisting practices that unintentionally promote bullying.

Many of the responsibilities for the OBPP are carried out by classroom teachers. Responsibilities are increased at the elementary level, as the students spend the majority of the day with one teacher. As reported by Olweus & Limber (2001), a major objective of the OBPP is integrating the essential components of the program into the framework of the teacher’s normal classroom activities. Teachers must be trained to differentiate bullying from normal childhood behaviors and have a solid understanding of child development in order to adapt the program to differing ages and grade levels (Olweus & Limber, 2009).

The OBPP features strategies that are used to raise awareness of bullying with the overall goal of reducing problem behaviors in schools (Olweus & Limber, 2001). The goal associated with the OBPP shares common ground with one of the missions of the HSD, which is to advance learning for all students by providing a safe and nurturing learning environment (Haysville School District, 2013). According to the HSD superintendent, “Reducing problem behaviors creates a safe and secure learning environment that advances learning for all” (J. Burke, personal communication, April 16, 2013).

In the fall of 2008, the six elementary schools in the HSD began implementing the OBPP. As of the 2014-2015 school year, all six elementary schools were continuing to implement the OBPP. For the 2014-2015 school year, each elementary school enrolled between 256 and 513 students, and employed between 16 and 24 certified elementary teachers and one principal. The elementary schools are identified throughout the study as School A, School B, School C, School D, School E, and School F. In 2010, School A began implementing an anti-bullying student leadership program to be used in addition to the OBPP. School demographics are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

2014-2015 Demographic Data for HSD Elementary Schools

	Enrollment	% Males	% Females	% Low SES	% White	% Other
School A	478	49	51	58	90	10
School B	256	45	55	58	82	18
School C	323	53	47	45	71	29
School D	489	51	49	70	78	22
School E	513	52	48	60	84	16
School F	405	52	48	54	68	32

Note. Adapted from USD 261 District K-12 Report Card 2014-2015 by KSDE. Retrieved from http://online.ksde.org/k12/organization.aspx?org_no=D0261

As reported in the OBPP teacher handbook, there are six main components of the OBPP and these components must be implemented with fidelity in order for the program to yield successful outcomes (Olweus & Limber, 2009). First, schools must form coordinating committees to plan and implement anti-bullying strategies. In the HSD, elementary schools established coordinating committees in each of the six elementary

schools to analyze data and discuss program components and strategies (Haysville School District, 2009). The second component of the OBPP is to administer a student survey to assess needs (Olweus & Limber, 2009). In the fall of 2008, student surveys were administered in the six elementary schools to identify high-risk areas and prioritize interventions (Haysville School District, 2009). The third component for the OBPP implementation is training for teachers (Olweus & Limber, 2009). Elementary teachers and administrators in the HSD received three days of professional training to learn the process for implementing the OBPP (Haysville School District, 2008). All elementary teachers were trained in strategies for preventing bullying, facilitation of weekly anti-bullying meetings, and the process of establishing classroom rules against bullying (Haysville School District, 2009). Teachers who were employed by the HSD after 2008 received OBPP training within their own building from the coordinating committee.

The fourth component of the OBPP is establishing school-wide rules against bullying (Olweus & Limber, 2009). In the HSD, each elementary school was required to establish clear rules for bullying by developing behavior charts that outlined clear and consistent consequences for negative behaviors (Haysville School District, 2013). The fifth component of the OBPP involves the implementation of classroom meetings (Olweus & Limber, 2009). Teachers in the HSD were responsible for facilitating weekly classroom meetings to discuss bullying, establish rules against bullying, and review strategies for prevention (Haysville School District, 2008). These meetings were intended to raise student awareness of bullying and build a sense of class cohesion and community. The sixth and last component of the OBPP is centered on parental involvement (Olweus & Limber, 2009). In the HSD, schools conducted parent meetings

to mobilize community resources and raise awareness of bullying (Haysville School District, 2009). These meetings allowed families to have active involvement in the OBPP. Parents were also notified of upcoming program events such as surveys, meetings, and assemblies (Haysville School District, 2009).

As an addition to the Olweus program, School A implemented a student leadership program for 4th and 5th grade students. In the spring of 2009, the coordinating committee at School A met to evaluate the effectiveness of the OBPP. The committee, which consisted of five teachers and the school administrator, examined the program to determine if any changes were needed. Overall, the committee concluded that the school was benefiting from the program, but there was an underlying need for more student involvement. With permission from district administration, the coordinating committee created a student leadership program called Bullying Ends Starting Today Buds (B.E.S.T. Buds). B.E.S.T. Buds was created to be used alongside the OBPP and was piloted at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year. The committee decided that by combining the OBPP with a student leadership program that gave students an active role in the preventive process, bullying incidents could be reduced. Each year, approximately 30 4th and 5th grade students are selected through an application process to represent the school in various activities and school functions related to bullying prevention. Students in the leadership program take an active role in the bullying prevention process by facilitating peer groups, classroom meetings, assemblies, and hot-spot training.

Statement of the Problem

According to the National Association of School Psychologists (2014), “over 3.2 million students are victims of bullying each year” (p. 14). In order to

counteract the problem, legislation in many states has mandated the implementation of anti-bullying programs. In the HSD, there is a need to identify whether elementary teachers and principals perceive the OBPP to be working after seven years of implementation.

According to Olweus, Limber, and Mihalic (2002), student involvement is an essential component to any anti-bullying program. Adding a unique component, such as a student leadership program, could improve the overall effectiveness of anti-bullying programs. Since a student leadership program had been implemented in one elementary school in the HSD, there was a need to collect data related to teachers and the principal's perceptions in that building to determine whether it had been a successful addition to the OBPP.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine elementary teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceived that students and staff were using more effective strategies to stop bullying, the number of bullying incidents had been reduced, and the severity of bullying incidents had been reduced after the OBPP implementation. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceived they had a greater understanding of the bullying problem in their school, there was more stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems, and there was a more peaceful atmosphere in their school after the OBPP implementation. Additionally, the purpose of the study was to determine whether there was a difference in teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP between teachers whose school had a

student leadership program and teachers whose schools did not have a student leadership program. The final purpose of the study was to determine elementary principals' perceptions related to training, strategies, number and severity of bullying incidents, and school atmosphere after implementation of the OBPP.

Significance of the Study

With the rise of anti-bullying programs being implemented in schools across the country, there is a growing need for researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of a variety of programs at different schools (Kueny, 2012). These research studies must be conducted in order to gain evidence about whether these programs are effective in reducing bullying behaviors. The current study could contribute to the growing base of knowledge on elementary school bullying and the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs. In August of 2014, Gallup Inc. conducted a web survey with 1,663 superintendents participating across the United States. The superintendents reported that in the last two years their school district had explored a variety of professional development topics for their teachers. Eight out of every 10 superintendents mentioned bullying and harassment prevention as a professional development topic for teachers (Gallup, 2014). With this much emphasis being placed on bullying for professional development of educators, there was a need for evaluating the effectiveness of the anti-bullying programs.

The current study is significant to the HSD, as the findings could be used to aid in future efforts to reduce bullying in the district and provide feedback on the OBPP and B.E.S.T Buds. Since the OBPP program has been implemented in the HSD for seven years, and no formal evaluation has been conducted, there is a need to determine whether

teachers and principals perceive that the program has been effective. Furthermore, the results of this study could provide new knowledge relating to student leadership programs that are designed to give students an active role in promoting the components of anti-bullying programs. If teachers in the school with the leadership program have perceptions that are more positive of the OBPP, there could be a need to add student leadership programs in other elementary schools. The results of the study are beneficial for future research on bullying prevention programs, specifically, programs that are student-centered and implemented at the elementary level.

Delimitations

As reported by Lunenburg and Irby (2008), delimitations are self-imposed boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose and scope of the research study.

This research study had the following delimitations:

1. The samples for this research were delimited to elementary teachers and principals who were employed by the HSD during the 2014-2015 school year.
2. This research study was delimited to the use of an online teacher survey instrument and principal interviews for data collection.

Assumptions

Bryant (2004) defined assumptions as “the beliefs that are brought to the study that are accepted as valid” (p. 56). The following assumptions were made concerning this research:

1. All elementary teachers and principals who participated in the study were trained on the key components for implementation of the OBPP.

2. All elementary teachers from School A were trained on the key components for implementation of B.E.S.T. Buds.
3. Elementary teachers who participated in the study understood the vocabulary on the survey.
4. Elementary teachers and principals who participated in the study responded truthfully and accurately.
5. The six elementary schools that were part of the study implemented the OBPP with fidelity during the past seven years.
6. The interpretation of the survey results accurately reflected the perceptions of the elementary teachers who participated.
7. The interpretation of the principal interviews accurately reflected the perceptions of the elementary principals who were interviewed.
8. The sample participating in the survey was typical of the total population of elementary teachers in the HSD.

Research Questions

As reported by Bryant (2004) “Research questions orient everything that is done in a study, they guide the research by stating what is necessary and what is important” (p. 78). The following 15 research questions guided this study:

- RQ1. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation?

- RQ2. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that elementary students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation?
- RQ3. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school as a result of the OBPP implementation?
- RQ4. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive there is more stakeholder (staff, administrators, community members) involvement in solving bullying problems as a result of the OBPP implementation?
- RQ5. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation?
- RQ6. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation?
- RQ7. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation?
- RQ8. To what extent are there differences in perceptions that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?
- RQ9. To what extent are there differences in perceptions that elementary students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student

leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

- RQ10. To what extent are there differences in perceptions that elementary teachers have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school as a result of the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?
- RQ11. To what extent are there differences in perceptions that there is more stakeholder (staff, administrators, community members) involvement in solving bullying problems as a result of the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?
- RQ12. To what extent are there differences in perceptions that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?
- RQ13. To what extent are there differences in perceptions that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?
- RQ14. To what extent are there differences in perceptions that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation between

teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers
whose school does not have a student leadership program?

RQ15. What are elementary principals' perceptions of the implementation of the
OBPP?

Definition of Terms

As stated by Thomas & Brubaker (2008), “Much misunderstanding in human communication results from people bringing different meanings to the words they use in speaking and writing” (p. 89). Researchers must clearly explain the meanings they assign to key terms. The following terms were operational during this study.

Bully. Horn (2002) defined a bully as “someone who knowingly abuses the rights of others to gain control of the situation and the individual(s) involved” (p. 3).

Bullying. The term bullying was defined as “repeated acts of aggression towards a victim who is weaker in regards to physical size, social status, or other factors” (Olweus, 1993, p. 9).

Overview of the Methodology

In this study, a mixed method research design was implemented that involved collecting data to represent both quantitative and qualitative information. The researcher collected data by surveying elementary teachers and interviewing elementary principals. The population included 104 elementary teachers and six elementary principals in the HSD. The participants included 74 elementary teachers who completed the survey and six principals who were interviewed. The survey used in this study was completed online using SurveyMonkey. Survey data was downloaded and imported into IBM SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 22 for Windows for analysis. Statistical tests used from this study

included one-sample t tests tested against null values, and two-sample t tests to analyze differences between schools. For the qualitative portion of the study, transcriptions were developed from recordings of the interviews. The content of the interview transcriptions was analyzed, and the responses were compared for similarities and differences.

Organization of the Study

This study contains five chapters. Chapter one included an introduction of the topic, background information, the problem to be studied, purpose of the study, significance of the research, delimitations, assumptions, research questions, definition of key terms, and an overview of the methods. Chapter two provides a review of literature relating to bullying legislation, types of bullying, bullying at the elementary level, school based bullying intervention programs, the effectiveness of the OBPP, teachers' and principals' perceptions of the OBPP, and student leadership programs. Chapter three provides a discussion of the methodological information including the research design, population, sample, sampling procedures, instrumentation, measurement, validity, reliability, data collection, data analysis and hypothesis testing, and study limitations. Chapter four includes the results of the data analysis. Chapter five contains a discussion of the findings, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and conclusion of the study.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Many students in the United States are deprived of the opportunity to learn because they are bullied and victimized daily (Garrett, 2003). Bullying can cause serious health problems for victims. As stated by Kuykendall (2012), “Victims of bullying can suffer from: physical wounds, anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation” (p. 4). This chapter presents a review of literature relevant to bullying in schools and is divided into seven sections. First, an overview of bullying legislation is provided for both the federal level and the state of Kansas. Second, different types of bullying are discussed. Third, a review of literature related to bullying at the elementary level is presented. Fourth, school-based bullying interventions and programs are examined. Fifth, a review of literature related to the effectiveness of the OBPP is presented. Sixth, teachers’ and principals’ perceptions of the OBPP are presented. Finally, there is a discussion of student leadership programs designed to prevent bullying.

Bullying Legislation

Leaders in education must be familiar with legal statutes and precedents before reacting to instances of bullying in the school setting (Conn, 2004). Teachers and principals have many legal factors to consider when addressing bullying and victimization. One of the benefits of having anti-bullying laws in schools is that they provide clear and consistent guidelines for implementation (Kuykendall, 2012). Bullying legislation from both the federal level and the state of Kansas is discussed.

Federal Bullying Legislation. Federal legislation against bullying and harassment in schools is necessary to ensure a safe learning environment and promote

citizenship in students (Kuykendall, 2012). Although no federal laws have been passed that specifically address bullying in schools, constitutional protections from harassment and discrimination have been present in the United States for many years. Section 1983, 42 U.S.C § 1983 of the Civil Rights Act of 1871 states:

Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage, of any State or Territory or the District of Columbia, subjects or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured an in action of law. (Chapter 21, Subchapter I, para. 4)

Section 1983 provides a basis for the protection of constitutional rights of students under federal law (Conn, 2004). Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 addresses discrimination in schools and provides that:

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (Section 2000d, para. 1)

School districts are government entities that receive federal assistance, and can be held liable if constitutional protections are violated (Conn, 2004). Federal law has also been established to address harassment of students. As reported by Conn (2004), “Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a powerful tool for addressing sexual harassment of students by either school personnel or peers” (p.53). Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, provides that “No person shall on the basis of sex, be excluded

from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance” (Section 1681, para. 1). Conn (2004) further stated, “Courts have interpreted ‘no person’ language to apply to students and school personnel, therefore, sexual or gender-based harassment in schools may be actionable under Title IX” (p. 53). The aforementioned laws provide constitutional protection for students against discrimination and deprivation of rights. Although no federal law addressing bullying exists, national legislators continue to make the topic a high priority (Kennedy & Temkin, 2013),

Kennedy and Temkin (2013) reported that federal bullying legislation has been proposed since 2003, when Congress first introduced the Bullying Prevention for School Safety Act. However, no federal laws have been enacted. Despite the absence of federal bullying legislation, 49 states have mandated the implementation of prevention programs to address bullying in schools (Clark, 2013). In 1999, Georgia was the first state to adopt an anti-bullying law that required the implementation of a character education program at all grade levels that included methods of discouraging bullying (Georgia Anti-bullying Law, Section 20, para. 2). Anti-bullying laws typically address bullying during school events, on school property, or when using school property (Kuykendall, 2012).

Bully Police USA is a “volunteer organization that works to promote bullying awareness and keep an updated record of the anti-bullying laws of each state” (Bully Police USA, 2014, para. 5). Bully Police USA (2014) defined 12 criteria necessary for effective anti-bullying laws:

1. The law must specifically use the term “bully.”

2. The law must speak to the safety of individual students, not to the entire school environment. Building safety is not the same as bullying prevention.
3. There must be clear and consistent definitions of harassment and bullying.
4. Theoretical application is not enough. The law should include statements on how to apply the components.
5. The law should demonstrate a collaborative approach to bullying using evidence-based practices in bullying intervention and prevention.
6. The law should mandate, not suggest, evidence-based programs in bullying prevention.
7. The law should include a start date for policies and programs.
8. There should be protection for people who report as well as protection for false reporting.
9. The law should address parent and teacher liability for failure to act or protection for those who do act according to the policies and procedures for bullying intervention and prevention.
10. Laws should put an emphasis on counseling services for victims.
11. The law should specify mandatory reporting of incidents to school officials.
12. The law should include cyberbullying. (para. 1-6)

States are graded annually based on the aforementioned criteria. Grades have ranged from A (scored by Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Hampshire, and Wyoming) to F (scored by Montana). Currently, Montana is the only state that has no laws against bullying (Bully Police USA, 2014).

Kansas Law on Bullying. Bullying continues to be a serious issue, and is now the subject of hundreds of state laws (Clark, 2013). For over 20 years, bullying legislation has existed in Kansas. In 1986, Kansas was one of the first states to pass a law to eliminate hazing. Kansas Statute Annotated (K.S.A.) 21-3434 (1986) forbids the use of or promoting the use of hazing as a means of “granting membership to a group or social organization” (“Permitting Hazing”, para. 2). This includes any intentional actions that coerce or demand that another person perform acts that can be considered as dangerous enough to lead to serious illness, injury, or death (K.S.A. 21-3434, 1986).

In 2007, House Bill (HB) 2310 was introduced, seeking to provide protection against bullying in Kansas schools and establish policies for prevention. HB 2310 (2007) provided a description of bullying, the effects that bullying has on its victims, and the consequences for bullying actions. Students, teachers, and proponents of HB 2310 attended a hearing for the bill where they shared their experiences with bullying and why they felt the bill was necessary. The bill was passed on April 27, 2007 and enacted as K.S.A. 72-8256.

Kansas Legislature amended the anti-bullying statute 72-8256 to require school districts to adopt policies prohibiting bullying on school property and adopt and implement a plan to address bullying including provisions for training and education of staff and students (K.S.A. 72-8256, 2013). Furthermore, the statute was amended to include assistance from the state board in the development of a grade-appropriate curriculum for character development programs (KSA 72-8256, 2013). KSA 72-8256 was amended again on July 1, 2013, this time requiring schools to include a clear definition of bullying, descriptions of bullying behaviors, and consequences for bullying

behaviors in their bullying policies (KSA 72-8256, 2013). Furthermore, Kansas school districts were required to include the definition and consequences of cyberbullying in their bullying policies (KSA 72-8256, 2013). In 2014, Kansas received an overall grade of B for anti-bullying legislation, scoring high marks for laws on school policies and cyberbullying, and receiving low marks for stipulations relating to teacher protections from lawsuits (Bully Police USA, 2014).

Types of Bullying

In order to address the issue of bullying, it is important to understand what bullying looks like and how it is defined. Kuykendall (2012) defined bullying as, “When one or more persons with power repeatedly abuse a person with lesser power for the purpose of causing harm, distress or fear” (p. 31). Furthermore, in order for an act to be considered bullying it must have the following four components:

1. The act must have been done on purpose;
2. The act must have a malicious intent;
3. The act must have been performed repeatedly over time;
4. The act must involve an imbalance of power between the victim and the bully.

(Kuykendall, 2012, p. 31)

As reported by the National Centre Against Bullying (2014), there are four types of bullying including verbal, physical, relational, and cyberbullying. The four different forms of bullying are not mutually exclusive. For example, “sending an abusive message about someone and then forwarding the message to other students is considered, verbal, relational, and cyberbullying” (Kuykendall, 2012, p. 46). Definitions and examples of each of the four types of bullying are discussed below.

Verbal bullying. According to Smokowski and Kopasz (2005), verbal bullying occurs when someone uses language to gain power over his or her peers. Victims of verbal bullying often feel defenseless against their attackers. Verbal bullies attack other students by focusing on things outside their target's control: such as physical appearance, race, family, or parents' income (Langan, 2011). Verbal bullying is the most frequently reported form of bullying. Kuykendall (2012) reported that verbal abuse is the most common form of bullying used by both boys and girls, and "accounts for more than 70 % of reported bullying incidents" (p. 45).

As reported by Coloroso (2002), younger children are most susceptible to verbal bullying because they have trouble defending themselves and have not developed a strong sense of self. Verbal bullying is often focused on things outside of the victim's control. Kuykendall (2012) stated that name-calling is the most common form of verbal bullying, which often includes nasty remarks about clothes, personal appearance, ethnic background, or sexual orientation. Of all the forms of bullying, verbal bullying is the one that can stand alone the easiest, and can be the first step toward more vicious and degrading violence (Langan, 2011).

A study was conducted by Wang, Iannotti, and Nansel (2009) to examine bullying among adolescents in the United States, and to determine which types of bullying were most prevalent among students. The researchers surveyed a nationally representative sample of over 7,000 sixth through tenth-grade students in the United States (Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009). Of the students who participated in the study, 53.6% reported they were involved in verbal bullying in the last two months, 30.3% were bullies only, 31.7% were bully-victims, and 38.1% had experienced being both a bully and a victim of

verbal harassment (Wang et al., 2009). The researchers also studied the effect of gender on verbal bullying and found that 40.3% of boys had verbally bullied someone in the last two months, compared to 34.7% of girls (Wang et al., 2009).

Physical bullying. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) stated, “Physical bullying occurs when a person uses overt bodily acts to gain power over peers” (p. 104).

Although some experts believe physical bullying is the most severe form of harassment, it is not the most commonly reported. Physical bullying accounts for less than one-third of the bullying incidents reported by children (Langan, 2011). As stated by Kuykendall (2012), “examples of physical bullying include: pushing, hitting, slapping, choking, poking, biting, punching, and kicking” (p. 43). Physical bullying also includes actions that deprive a person of their belongings, such as stealing, intentionally damaging another person’s property, or coercing someone to give away property (Kuykendall, 2012). Physical bullying becomes more serious with age progression. According to Coloroso (2002), “the older and stronger the bully, the more dangerous physical bullying becomes, even if serious harm is not intended” (p. 16).

Pushing, tripping, and hitting are all types of physical bullying behaviors that are more common among school-age boys (Langan, 2011). Physical bullying is also more prevalent among younger children. As reported by Kuykendall (2012), younger students are “commonly engaged in random, unorganized, active play where bullies can hide maliciousness” (p. 43). Students who demonstrate physical bullying behaviors are more likely to move on to other criminal offenses. Langan (2011) reported, “About 25% of school-age bullies end up with criminal records before the age of thirty” (p. 13).

A study conducted by Perlus, Brooks-Russell, Wang, and Iannotti (2014), offers the first nationally representative analysis of changes in physical bullying over time. The study was coordinated by the World Health Organization and included a survey that was administered to students in grades 6-10 over a twelve-year period from 1998 to 2010 (Perlus, Brooks-Russell, Wang, & Iannotti, 2014). The researchers tracked how often students were involved in physical bullying. In 1998, 23.4% of the students surveyed reported that they were involved in some type of physical bullying. In 2006, the number of students who reported physical bullying decreased to 18.4%. There was no significant change in physical bullying between 2006 and 2010 (Perlus et al., 2014).

Relational bullying. According to Smokowski and Kopasz (2005), “relational bullying describes an individual, or a group of individuals, who try to hurt a peer, or sacrifice another's standing within their peer group” (p. 102). Relational bullying involves actions that are intended to cause embarrassment, humiliation, or emotional grief to the victim” (Kuykendall, 2012). Common forms of relational bullying involve:

1. Excluding a person from the group
2. Giving someone an unpleasant glare or look
3. Spreading rumors
4. Depriving a person of needed resources for getting help
5. Getting someone in trouble by providing false information
6. Threatening to hurt someone
7. Forcing someone to do something against his or her free will. (Kuykendall, 2012, p. 45)

Coloroso (2002) stated that relational bullying causes a systematic diminishment of a bullied child's sense of self through isolation and exclusion. Relational bullying is a subtle form of abuse that often goes unreported. As reported by Langan (2011), relational bullying is the most difficult form of bullying to detect because victims are afraid of retaliation by the bully/bullies. Without intervention, relational bullying can continue for an extended period of time.

Wang et al. (2009) examined relational bullying among 7,168 middle school and high school students in the United States. Of the students who participated in the study, over half reported they were involved in relational bullying two months prior to survey administration. Relational bullying was reported more from middle school students 52.4%, compared to high school students 36.4% (Wang et al., 2009). The researchers also studied the effect of gender on relational bullying and found that 45.6% of girls reported being victims of relational bullying, compared to 36.0% of boys (Wang et al., 2009).

Cyberbullying. As stated by Rosenthal (2008), "Cyberbullying is the use of electronic devices and information, such as e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, mobile phones, and websites to send or post cruel or harmful messages or images about an individual or group" (p. 68). Cyberbullying is a growing problem in the United States because the majority of children have access to the Internet. As reported by Hinduja and Patchin (2014), "95% of teens in the U.S. are online and 74% access the Internet on their mobile device" (p. 5).

Cyberbullying enables bullies to cause emotional distress while being shielded from consequences. Kuykendall (2012) stated, "Cyberbullies can hide behind a screen of

anonymity, limiting retaliation by the victim” (p. 44). Furthermore, cyberbullying is often unreported by victims. According to the Pew Research Center (2011), 55% of all teens said that the most frequent response of their peers to cyberbullying is to ignore it.

In 2011, The Pew Research Center conducted a study to determine the prevalence of cyberbullying among U.S. teens. The study was based on telephone interviews with 799 U.S. teens aged 12 to 17 and their parents. Findings from the Pew Research Center study revealed that 8% of the students interviewed have been bullied online the last 12 months. The results of the study indicated that some teens said they were bullied with technology: “9% of teens said they were bullied by text, 8% were bullying by email, 8% social network site, and 7% said they have been bullied by phone” (Pew Research Center, 2011, pp. 803-804). Furthermore, 88% of teens said they had seen peers being mean or cruel to others online, and 12% of those students said this happens frequently (Pew Research Center, 2011).

Bullying at the Elementary Level

As reported by Olweus (1993), victimization appears to be most prevalent in elementary schools with younger and weaker students being most exposed. Students who bully others at the elementary level are often identified as more aggressive and domineering than other students. Shafer (2007) described the typical elementary school bully as “usually very dominant child, who has learned early on that they can become the leader of a group by being aggressive” (p. 51). Shafer (2007) also reported that bullies could be identified at an early age as they continually seek out new kids to victimize.

In the United States, the highest levels of victimization occur in elementary schools, with a steady decline in prevalence rates through secondary school (Kuykendall,

2012). In a study conducted by Stanford University Medical Center (SUMC) (2007), researchers surveyed 270 students in grades three through six in two schools in California and one school in Arizona. Researchers determined that bullying affects most elementary students. “Nine out of 10 elementary students reported they have been bullied by their peers, and six out 10 children reported participation in some type of bullying themselves in the past year” (SUMC, 2007, p. 133). In another study conducted with over 9,000 elementary and middle school students, Tsafos, Black, and Washington (2008) found “55% of third graders, 46% of fourth graders, 40% of fifth graders, 34% of sixth graders, and 29% of seventh graders reported victimization” (p. 86).

Although bullying victimization appears to be most prevalent in elementary schools, bullying perpetration rates increased from 8% in third and fourth grades to 18% in seventh grade (Tsafos, Black, & Washington, 2008). Some experts believe that victimization rates do not truly decrease with grade progression. According to a 2010 study conducted by the Regional Educational Laboratory of Northeast and Islands, 40% of bullying incidents in schools go unreported. Victims of bullying and harassment often have difficulty admitting they were bullied. Kuykendall (2012) stated, “By eighth grade, most youth do not want to be considered a victim because victims are considered weak and rejected by society” (p. 48).

A study was conducted by Jansen et al. (2012) in the Netherlands that included over 8,871 elementary students, and 6,379 parents. The purpose of the study was to examine the prevalence and socioeconomic disparities in bullying behavior among elementary school children. The results of the study revealed that 33% of the elementary students were involved in bullying, 17% were identified as bullies, and 13% were

identified as victims (Jansen et al., 2012). According to Jansen et al. (2012), low socioeconomic status (SES) and poor school neighborhood SES were associated with an increased risk of being a bully or bully-victim.

Without intervention, children who bully in elementary school are likely to continue bullying throughout middle school and high school. Shafer (2007) stated that elementary students have difficulty abandoning their roles, and early intervention is essential to educate children about bullying and identify bullies and victims. Staff training is critical for implementing an anti-bullying program. Elementary school personnel have the broadest power to reduce victimization in students, consistent with their responsibility to educate younger students about the consequences of bullying (Conn, 2004).

School-Based Bullying Intervention Programs

Since school bullying is a major issue facing children at the elementary level across the United States, elementary schools have responded by implementing research-based bullying intervention programs that instruct students in social-cognitive skills to prevent bullying and ensure school safety (Coloroso, 2002). In a study conducted by Ttofi and Farrington (2009), 59 anti-bullying programs were reviewed. The researchers established that schools with anti-bullying programs had 17 to 23% fewer incidents of bullying and victimization than schools without anti-bullying programs (Ttofi & Farrington, 2009). Researchers from The National Council for Prevention (2009) determined that the most important elements of an effective anti-bullying program were training, improved supervision, disciplinary methods, and classroom rules. In addition to the OBPP, four other elementary bullying intervention programs are reviewed in this

chapter including Peaceful Schools, Steps to Respect, Bully-Proofing Your School, and Bully Busters.

Peaceful Schools. The Peaceful Schools Program was established in 1990, and is currently being implemented in over 30 schools in Kansas, Illinois, North Carolina, and Texas (Peaceful Schools, 2013). The program provides a holistic, evidence-based approach to reducing violence and bullying in schools (Garrett, 2003, p. 104). Peaceful Schools was designed to reduce victimization, student aggression, and disruptive behaviors. A goal of the program is to improve the “capacity of students to interpret their own behaviors with greater self-reflection” (Twemlow & Sacco, 2011, p. 17). As reported by Garrett (2003), the Peaceful Schools Project calls for schools to address bullying by disciplining students for disruptive behaviors, establishing clear rules and guidelines for bullying behaviors, and challenging social norms that encourage violence. Fonagy, Twemlow, Vernberg, Sacco, and Little (2005) studied the impact of the Peaceful Schools program in five elementary schools over a 5-year period. Disciplinary and academic data were evaluated before and after the implementation of the Peaceful Schools program. Researchers concluded that participation in the Peaceful Schools program was associated with pronounced improvements in the students' achievement test scores, and there were notable reductions in bullying behaviors reported over the five-year period (Fonagy, Twemlow, Vernberg, Sacco, & Little 2005).

Steps to Respect. The Steps to Respect Program was developed by the Committee for Children and was first piloted at William King Elementary in Nova Scotia, Canada in 2001 (Garrett, 2003). Steps to Respect is a systematic approach for elementary schools to deal with bullying behaviors. The program includes an “extensive

program guide with research on bullying and step-by-step implementation guidelines” (Garrett, 2003, p. 107). A major component of the Steps to Respect program is encouraging empathy and reporting among bystanders. Garrett (2003) reported that Steps to Respect was developed based on the belief that bullying is a behavior that is strongly influenced by peer attitudes and reactions. The Steps to Respect program changes attitudes by “cultivating a school-wide sense that bullying is unfair and wrong, increasing empathy for kids who are bullied, and teaching kids what they should do if they see bullying” (Garrett, 2003, p. 108).

A study was conducted by Brown, Low, Smith, and Haggerty (2011) during the 2008-2009 school year that included 33 California elementary schools, 1,296 staff members, and 3,119 students. Students and staff were surveyed to gain perceptions of school climate and effectiveness of the Steps to Respect program. According to Brown et al. (2011), schools using Steps to Respect reported “33% less physical bullying, 35% fewer teachers reporting fighting as a major problem, and 20% more staff members reporting that their school is promoting a positive environment” (pp. 442-443).

Bully-Proofing Your School (BPYS). BPYS is a school safety program that was developed by the National Center for School Engagement in 1992, and has been implemented in elementary schools throughout the United States and Canada (Bully-Proofing Your School, 2014). According to Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, and Short-Camilli (2004), the main goal of BPYS is to create and maintain a safe, caring school community. The BPYS program “aims to target the silent bystander by teaching tools to avoid victimization and help promote a bully-free school” (Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, & Short-Camilli, 2004, p. 4). Students are taught protective skills that give them a sense of

empowerment in dealing with bullying situations, and staff members are taught different methods for addressing bullying and victimization (Garrett, 2003).

Research was conducted by Menard, Grotmeter, Gianola, and O'Neal (2008), to evaluate the effectiveness of the BPYS program. Researchers used treatment and comparison groups in eight elementary schools and four middle schools in Colorado. The schools that participated in the BPYS program had fewer incidents of physical bullying, verbal bullying, and victimization (Menard, Grotmeter, Gianola, & O'Neal, 2008). Furthermore, the BPYS program had a favorable impact on students' attitudes toward aggression and violence (Menard et al., 2008).

Bully Busters. The Bully Busters program was originally founded in 1997 by Suckling and Temple (Bully Busters, 2014, para 1). According to Horne, Newman-Carlson, and Bartolomucci (2003), Bully Busters is a research-based bullying intervention program that was “designed to help teachers increase their awareness, knowledge base, and intervention skills to attack the root causes of bullying behavior and to deal with the problem confidently” (p. 2). Professional development for teachers is a critical component of the Bully Busters program. The focus of the Bully Busters program is to develop bullying awareness, help teachers effectively deal with perpetrators and targets, support active bystanders, and teach effective defensive strategies to students (Horne, Newman-Carlson, & Bartolomucci, 2003).

According to Horne et al. (2003), the Bully Busters program includes in-service training for teachers, role-playing activities, teacher manuals, and materials for classroom activities. Teachers are trained on increasing awareness of bullying, recognizing bullies and victims, understanding bullying behaviors, and utilizing prevention strategies (Horne

et al., 2003). All curriculum information is provided in the Bully Busters Teacher's manual and accompanying CD. The Bully Busters teacher manual is organized into eight learning modules, with each module including a series of classroom activities. The activities are designed to increase student participation in reducing and preventing bullying, as well as to strengthen teacher/student relationships (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2003).

Browning, Cooker, and Sullivan (2005) evaluated teachers' perceptions of bullying awareness after implementing the Bully Busters program in a rural elementary school in Tennessee. Teachers were randomly assigned to a treatment group, which received three days of in-service training on the curriculum of Bully Busters, or a control group. At the conclusion of the training, participants in the treatment group demonstrated significantly better results than the control group on awareness of bullying, knowledge of prevention strategies, identification of bullying behaviors, ways to help victims, and interventions for reducing bullying (Browning, Cooker, & Sullivan, 2005).

The effectiveness of the Bully Busters program was also examined in a study conducted by Bell, Raczynski, and Horne (2010). The study took place in Georgia and consisted of a sample of 488 students ranging in ages from 10 to 16. Students were administered surveys before Bully Busters implementation and one year after implementation to measure school climate, school safety, and frequency of bullying behaviors. Prior to the implementation of the program, teachers participated in seven group sessions designed to provide exposure to the program components and training for implementing classroom activities (Bell, Raczynski, & Horne, 2010). Materials and experiences from these groups were then taken to the classroom and implemented with

the student participants (Bell et al., 2010). According to Bell et al., (2010), the findings from the study indicated that students' perceived a more positive school climate, increased awareness of bullying, and better strategies for prevention after implementation of the Bully Busters program.

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. The OBPP is the “most widely implemented bullying prevention program in the United States, and is implemented in 15 other countries around the world” (Violence Prevention Works, 2014, para. 2). The OBPP was developed by Olweus in 1983, and is based on his analysis of research on bully and victim characteristics (Garret, 2004). As reported by Olweus (1993), the three main goals of the OBPP are making schools safer, improving peer relations, and making schools more positive. The OBPP is intended for use in elementary and middle schools, but can be adapted for implementation in high schools. The OBPP is not a curriculum; therefore, its rules and core principles, can be adapted for use by any school or program that children attend on a regular basis (Olweus & Limber, 2010).

The OBPP is intended to be a universal system-wide effort for preventing bullying that includes a variety of stakeholders. According to Olweus and Limber (2009), the OBPP “involves restructuring the school environment to reduce bullying by developing a strong sense of community among students and staff” (p. 4). Furthermore, the OBPP was designed to stop preexisting practices that unintentionally promote bullying (Olweus & Limber, 2010). The OBPP is implemented at four levels:

1. Individual Level. Teachers and staff are trained to recognize and respond to bullying, supervise students' activities, and design intervention plans for those who bully. Students are instructed on the school-wide rules against bullying,

consequences of bullying, how to defend against bullying, and how to report bullying.

2. Classroom level. Teachers and students participate in weekly anti-bullying class meetings and lessons. Anti-bullying rules are listed in every classroom. Teachers are trained on strategies for implementing a positive, anti-bullying classroom environment for students.
3. School Level. Coordinating committees consisting of 5-10 staff members are established in each school. The coordinating committee oversees implementation of the program by providing training for staff, conducting student bullying survey, administering staff discussion groups, and disseminating anti-bullying rules.
4. Community level. School-community partnerships are established to spread anti-bullying messages and promote the components of the OBPP. Parent meetings are conducted to mobilize community resources and raise awareness of bullying. Parents and community members are notified of upcoming program events. (Olweus & Limber, 2001, pp. 54-55)

The OBPP has been associated with large reductions in antisocial behaviors, verbal bullying, relational bullying, and physical bullying (Olweus & Limber, 2010). Several studies have been conducted to evaluate the OBPP. The following section presents a review of the literature relating to the effectiveness of the OBPP.

Effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

The first evaluation of the OBPP took place between 1983 and 1985 in Bergen, Norway and involved over 2,500 student participants in grades 4-7 (Olweus, 1993).

Researchers used an extended selection cohort design, in which same-age students could be compared across time. Findings from the initial study revealed that there was a “33% reduction of bullying incidents after 8 months of implementation, and a 53% reduction of bullying incidents after 20 months of implementation” (Olweus & Limber, 2010, p. 125). From October 2001 to October 2006, a study was conducted in Oslo with approximately 3,000 students (Olweus & Limber, 2010). The results of the study revealed there was a “40% reduction in self-reports of victimization and a 51% reduction of self-reported bullying” (Olweus & Limber, 2010, p. 129).

There have also been several evaluations of the effectiveness of the OBPP in diverse settings in the United States. The first evaluation of the OBPP in the United States was conducted by Melton et al., (1998) and involved over 6,000 students from 18 middle schools in South Carolina. Results from the study revealed significant differences between intervention and control schools in vandalism, school misbehavior, self-reported delinquency, and sanctions for misbehavior (Melton et al., 1998). Researchers also documented a 16% decrease in rates of bullying among students in intervention schools and a 12% increase in bullying among students in comparison schools (Melton et al., 1998).

The OBPP was evaluated for a period of four years in six elementary and six middle schools in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Black & Jackson, 2007). Researchers utilized an independent evaluator to perform over 300 observations. Prior to implementation, there were 65 bullying incidents observed per 100 school hours. After four years of the OBPP implementation, there were 36 incidents of bullying per 100

school hours, an overall reduction of 45% over the course of the study (Black & Jackson, 2007).

The overall effectiveness of the OBPP was also researched by Bauer, Lozano, and Rivara (2007) using a nonrandomized control study with middle school students in three control schools and seven intervention schools in the state of Washington. Researchers analyzed students' self-reports of involvement in and perceptions of bullying. Results from the study indicated positive program effects regarding students' perceptions that other students actively intervened in bullying incidents, and substantial program effects for physical and relational bullying (Bauer, Lozano, & Rivara, 2007).

Ttofi, Farrington, and Baldry (2008) conducted a meta-analysis that included 44 bullying prevention programs used throughout the world. The researchers used coding to compare measures of effectiveness for 55 program evaluations. The authors concluded that school-based anti-bullying programs are often effective and the programs inspired by the work of Dan Olweus have been the most effective at reducing bullying and victimization (Ttofi, Farrington, & Baldry, 2008).

Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of the OBPP

According to Esquith (2012), educators play a critical role in identifying, addressing, and intervening in bullying behaviors in their schools. The adoption of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program requires a significant and sustained commitment by teachers to utilize program materials, conduct classroom meetings, monitoring bullying, and engage parents in prevention efforts (Smith, Pepler, & Rigby, 2004). A study conducted by Dake, Price, Telljohann, and Funk (2003) examined a national random sample of 359 teachers in the United States regarding their perceptions and practices

concerning school bullying prevention. Teachers who participated in the study perceived post-bullying activities as the most effective means of reducing bullying problems, followed by improved student supervision, and by environmental bullying prevention activities (Dake et al., 2003). As reported by Dake et al. (2003), “Less than one-third of the teachers surveyed set aside classroom time to discuss bullying (31.7%) or involved students in creating classroom rules against bullying (31.2%)” (p. 353). Furthermore, the findings from the study suggested professional training and continuing education are needed to improve teacher knowledge about effective classroom-based bullying prevention activities (Dake et al., 2003).

A three-year study was conducted by Edmondson and Hoover (2008) to determine teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP in four elementary schools in a large Midwestern school district in the United States. A survey was administered to 32 teachers three times over the course of the three-year study. “At the end of year two, 56% of teachers perceived a positive change in student behavior, and 20% perceived an increase in parental involvement after the OBPP implementation” (Edmondson & Hoover, 2008, p. 31). The findings of the study continued to show improvement after another year of OBPP implementation. By the end of the third year of OBPP implementation, “70% of the respondents perceived a positive change in student behavior, and 38% perceived an increase in parental involvement” (Edmondson & Hoover, 2008, p. 32).

Bowllan (2011) examined the prevalence of bullying in an urban/suburban middle school and determined teachers’ perceptions of the impact of the OBPP. In this study, data was collected through a teacher questionnaire prior to the OBPP implementation,

and one year after the OBPP implementation. The teacher questionnaire consisted of “29 items that addressed perceptions on prevalence of bullying, locations of bullying, types of bullying, students’ reports of bullying, and teachers’ and administrators’ response to bullying” (Bowllan, 2011, p. 169). Following one year of OBPP implementation, teachers reported improvements in their capacity to identify acts of bullying, talk to students who bully, and talk with victims of bullying (Bowllan, 2011).

A study was conducted by Daugherty (2011) to determine teachers’ and principals’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. The participants in the study included 117 teachers and five principals from three elementary schools in Georgia. Data was collected through a survey to evaluate teachers’ perceptions of the OBPP. Results from the survey revealed that “94.4% of teachers agreed that the OBPP has led to more effective strategies to stop bullying, and 95.9% of teachers agreed that there is a greater understanding of the bullying problem at their school” (Daugherty, 2011, p. 82). Furthermore, “70% of teachers agreed that the number of bullying incidents have decreased, and 77.9% agreed that the atmosphere at their school has been more peaceful after implementation of the OBPP” (Daugherty, 2011, p. 82). The qualitative findings of the study supported the quantitative results. Daugherty (2011) reported that the majority of principals interviewed in the study perceived that the number of bullying incidents had decreased since the OBPP implementation. Furthermore, all principals indicated that the OBPP had brought needed awareness of bullying to students and staff. One of the negative impacts reported by the principals was that some of the context of the program was not appropriate for all grade levels. Daugherty (2011) concluded that some

principals agreed that increased awareness of bullying led to over reporting by students and parents.

Student Leadership Programs

Although adults play a major role in anti-bullying efforts, students are in a better position to address mistreatment of their peers (Phillips, Linney, & Pack, 2008). Many schools across the nation are using student-centered leadership programs to promote positive behaviors. Davis (2007) stated, “Learning environments with positive social structures are those where students are included and supported by their peers and there are clear norms established about supporting each other” (p. 75). According to Phillips, Linney, and Pack (2008), students must have a pivotal role in efforts to reduce mistreatment and improve school climate for the following reasons:

1. Students have the power of numbers, as they outnumber adults ten to one in most schools.
 2. Students have a more personal understanding of the mistreatment that is going on in their schools.
 3. Students have that power of knowledge as they see, hear, and know things about their peers long before adults do.
 4. Students have the power of relationships as they can intervene in ways adults can’t because they have influence over their peers.
 5. Students largely determine the social norms that govern their peers’ behavior.
- (pp. 89-90)

Phillips et al. (2008) indicated, “70 to 85% of students have been passive bystanders to bullying and peer mistreatment” (p. 17). However, not all students are

afraid to take a stand against bullying. According to Davis (2007), students identified as leaders are most likely to be successful in intervening on the part of the victim, and these students should be targeted in school-based anti-bullying intervention efforts. Student leadership programs target socially influential student leaders to aid in bully prevention efforts. Two student leadership programs are reviewed in this chapter: Safe School Ambassadors and Where Everyone Belongs.

Safe School Ambassadors. The Safe School Ambassador (SSA) program was developed in 1999 to help prevent mistreatment and cruelty among students in grades 4-12 (Phillips et al., 2008). SSA is one of the most widely implemented student leadership programs in United States. The program has trained nearly “60,000 students in over 1,200 schools in 32 states with the communication and intervention skills to improve school climate and stop bullying” (Community Matters, 2014, p. 2). The concept of the SSA program is based on engaging socially influential student leaders and equipping them with skills they can use with their friends to prevent victimization and violence, shifting the social norms of the school in a positive direction (Phillips et al., 2008).

According to Phillips et al. (2008), student ambassadors are identified at the beginning of the school year through student and staff surveys based upon criteria such as communication skills, leadership skills, and ability to discern right from wrong. Approximately 30-40 students are selected by a coordinating committee to serve as student ambassadors throughout the school year (Community Matters, 2014). On-going training is provided for the students throughout the school year. Student ambassadors are trained to recognize the different types of bullying, learn strategies for peer intervention, defuse conflicts, and support isolated and excluded students (Phillips et al., 2008).

Furthermore, student ambassadors participate in collaboration activities with other students and mentors. According to Phillips et al. (2008), continued skill development is provided through weekly group meetings during which groups of 7-10 ambassadors work with their adult mentors to discuss situations in which they have intervened, practice skills, and receive feedback and support for their efforts.

Pack, White, Raczynski, and Wang (2011), in partnership with Texas State University, conducted a multi-year evaluation of the SSA program. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of SSA in twenty-four middle schools in Texas using a quasi-experimental design. Schools using the SSA program reported a “43% increase in peer intervention after two years of implementation” (Pack, White, Raczynski, & Wang, 2011, p. 132). The program also had a significant impact on reducing problem behaviors. Analysis of suspensions at SSA schools showed “reductions averaging 33%, while indicators at matched control schools rose 10% during the same years” (Pack et al., 2011, 133).

Where Everyone Belongs. Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) was created by Campbell, Hill, and Jacobson (2014), and has been implemented in over 1,300 middle schools in 42 states across the nation. WEB is a student leadership program designed to help students’ transition from elementary school to middle school. The WEB program was established “on the guiding principle that students are an invaluable and untapped resource for preventing violence and promoting positive peer relationships” (Phillips et al., 2008, p. 90). The co-founders believed that “students ultimately want to be positive change agents at school, but need the structure and permission to do so” (Campbell, Hill, & Jacobson, 2014, para. 2). The WEB program engages older students to welcome and

orient incoming students to the school through activities, lessons, and small-group meetings conducted throughout the school year (Phillips et al., 2008). The goal of the WEB program is to provide schools with a structure in which they can make real connections with each other; thus increasing school safety and reducing incidences of bullying (Campbell et al., 2014).

The WEB program acts as an anti-bullying intervention for the school by training student leaders how to identify, prevent, and intervene to bullying behaviors (Campbell et al., 2014). WEB also serves as a character development program for the student leaders. Student leaders “become a substantial presence at the school by acting as positive role models and setting the tone for climate change at the school” (Phillips et al., 2008, p. 92).

A study was conducted by the Boomerang Foundation (2009) to measure the effectiveness of the WEB program in a large middle school in Minnesota. After one year of WEB implementation, “bullying was reduced by 33% among 6th grade students. Furthermore, there was a 52% reduction in 6th grade disciplinary referrals” (Boomerang Foundation, 2009, para. 7). Additional research should be conducted relating to anti-bullying programs that have included a student leadership component. There is a gap in the research relating to evaluating the addition of student leadership programs to anti-bullying curriculums, such as the OBPP.

Summary

Chapter two identified and reviewed the relevant literature related to bullying in schools and is divided into seven sections. An overview of bullying legislation was provided for both the federal and state (Kansas) levels. Chapter two included a discussion on the four types of bullying, elementary bullying, and school-based bullying

interventions. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the OBPP, teachers' and principals' perceptions of the OBPP, and student leadership programs were discussed in this chapter. Chapter three presents the research methodology used in conducting this mixed method study. The population, sample, and sampling process are identified and explained in this chapter, as well as information pertaining to data collection, data analysis, instrumentation, and study limitations.

Chapter Three

Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of OBPP. Additionally, the purpose of the study was to determine whether there was a difference in teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose schools does not have a student leadership program. This chapter presents the research methodology used in conducting this mixed methods study.

Research Design

A mixed methods design was chosen for use in the current study. According to Creswell (2003), "A mixed methods approach is one in which the researcher employs strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to represent both quantitative and qualitative information" (pp. 19-20). The study was implemented with a concurrent strategy. The purpose of a concurrent mixed methods strategy is to use separate quantitative and qualitative methods to strengthen the knowledge claims of the study and offset the inherent weaknesses within one method (Creswell, 2009).

The design of this research study was implemented using two different methods. The first method was quantitative, and involved collecting data through a survey to determine teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. The second method utilized in the study involved collecting qualitative data through interviews with elementary principals to determine their perceptions of the OBPP. The dependent variables were teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP.

The independent variable was school (school with a student leadership program or school without a student leadership program).

Population and Sample

The population for the current study was composed of elementary teachers and elementary principals. The sample for the study consisted of 104 teachers and six principals in the Haysville School District. The elementary teachers who participated in this research study taught grades ranging from K-5 in the HSD, a suburban school district in south-central Kansas. The elementary principals who participated in this study each served as head administrator of one of the six elementary schools in the HSD during the 2014-2015 school year. All participants in the study received training on the OBPP and taught during at least one year of school-wide implementation.

Sampling Procedures

Nonrandom purposive sampling was used for the current study. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), "Purposive sampling occurs when the researcher specifies the characteristics of the population of interest and locates individuals with those characteristics" (p. 238). For the teacher population of the study, all participants were selected based on two established criteria. The first criterion was position, as only kindergarten through fifth-grade teachers were asked to complete the survey. The second criterion was time of employment. Faculty members who were employed by the HSD during the 2014-2015 school year were included in the study. To secure a sample of principals, all six participants were selected based on two established criteria. The first criterion was position, as only the head administrator of each of the six elementary

schools was selected. The second criterion was time of employment. Principals who were employed by the HSD during the 2014-2015 school year were included in the study.

Instrumentation

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) stated, “Instrumentation is critical to adequately operationalize the variables of a research study” (p. 230). The current study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to determine teachers’ and principals’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. The quantitative instrumentation for the study was a survey for elementary teachers (see Appendix A). The qualitative instrumentation for the study was an interview of elementary principals.

The survey instrument used in the current study was created, piloted, and administered to elementary teachers and principals in a large school district in Georgia (Daugherty, 2011). Daugherty was contacted and permission was granted to use the survey for the current study (see Appendix B). The survey instrument contained seven items relating to the effectiveness of the OBPP. Teachers were instructed to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each item on the survey.

Interviews with elementary principals were conducted for the qualitative instrumentation for the study. As described in chapter one, the six elementary principals in the HSD had been designated several responsibilities to ensure the fidelity of implementation of the OBPP. An interview script consisting of seven questions was used to guide the discussion. The researcher believed that by conducting face-to-face interviews, more insight could be gained concerning principals’ perceptions of the overall effectiveness of the program.

Measurement. The survey instrument in the current study used a Likert-type scale to determine the extent of elementary teachers' perceptions that the OBPP has been effective in the HSD. Participants were asked to respond to items on the survey by selecting one of the following choices: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, No Opinion, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Based on the measurement requirements by Creswell (2003), the choices from the survey were coded for analysis with the values of 1 (*Strongly Disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*No Opinion*), 4 (*Agree*), and 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

The first item on the survey was used to determine the extent of teachers' perceptions that the OBPP has led to school personnel using strategies that are more effective to stop bullying. The second item of the survey was used to determine the extent of teachers' perceptions that the OBPP has led to students using more effective strategies to stop bullying. The third item of the survey was used to determine the extent of teachers' perceptions that the OBPP has led to a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their schools. The fourth item of the survey was used to determine the extent of teachers' perceptions that the OBPP has decreased the number of bullying incidents in their schools. The fifth item of the survey was used to determine the extent of teachers' perceptions that the OBPP has reduced the severity of reported bullying incidents in their buildings. The sixth item of the survey was used to determine the extent of teachers' perceptions that the OBPP has increased stakeholder involvement in solving the bullying problem at their schools. The final, and seventh, item of the survey was used to determine the extent of teachers' perceptions that the OBPP has led to a more peaceful atmosphere in their buildings.

For the qualitative instrumentation used in this study, interview questions were developed to generate open-ended responses from the interviewees. The researcher asked additional follow-up questions to expand upon or clarify certain responses from the principals. However, the following questions were asked in every interview to guide the discussion and process:

1. What training was conducted with your staff to implement the OBPP?
2. What strategies are students and staff using in your school to stop bullying?
3. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the number of bullying incidents in your school?
4. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the severity of bullying incidents in your school?
5. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the atmosphere of your school?
6. How has implementation of the OBPP affected way you handle consequences of bullying behaviors in your building?
7. How has implementation of the OBPP affected community involvement in solving bullying problems in your school?

All interviews were recorded using a digital recording device, and the recordings were transcribed in Microsoft Word.

Validity and reliability. Validity refers to the extent to which something measures what it was constructed to measure (Creswell, 2003). Daugherty (2011) tested the survey items for content validity by administering a pilot survey twice to elementary teachers who have implemented the OBPP. According to Johnson and Christensen

(2008), "a pilot should be conducted using a minimum of five to 10 participants, and the participants should be similar to those being surveyed in the actual research" (p. 208). To pilot the chosen survey questions, ten printed surveys with the random iteration of responses attached were used. The survey questions were reviewed to verify that they were soliciting the responses they were intended to solicit.

As stated by Golafashani (2003), "Reliability is the degree to which an instrument is consistent, stable, and repeatable" (p. 17). In an effort to establish consistency and reliability, the survey used for this study was first piloted by Daugherty (2011) using a test-retest method. First, a pilot survey was administered to 10 elementary teachers who had experience implementing the OBPP. The same survey was administered to the same participants 10 days later (Daugherty, 2011). To establish reliability, the researcher identified that at least 70% of answers were identical, and the "percentage of overall consistency of the pilot survey was 72.9%" (Daugherty, 2011, p. 57).

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the present study through a three-step process. First, the researcher obtained permission to conduct the study in the HSD. The researcher presented the superintendent with a written proposal that was electronically mailed on March 7, 2013 (see Appendix C). After examination of the research proposal, permission was granted to conduct the study on March 10, 2013 through electronic mail (see Appendix C). Next, the process to obtain permission from Baker University to conduct the research study was initiated. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) request was submitted to Baker University on December 15, 2014 (see Appendix D). The Baker University IRB committee approved the research study on

January 7, 2015 (see Appendix E). Lastly, the researcher was given access to faculty emails through the HSD electronic mail database and uploaded the email addresses of elementary teachers into Microsoft Outlook as a distribution list.

Data was collected concurrently in this study. Quantitative data was collected through a survey to determine teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. The survey was administered through an online survey service called SurveyMonkey. A cover letter was generated, which included the survey link (see Appendix F). The cover letter described the purpose of the study and addressed ethical considerations for the survey. Teachers were informed that the survey was being administered anonymously, and no demographic information was being collected or analyzed. Two separate survey links were created to differentiate between two groups of teachers. The first survey link was sent to teachers from the five elementary schools that were using the OBPP without a student leadership program. The second survey link was sent to teachers from the one elementary school that was using a student leadership program. The cover letter and survey were first delivered electronically to all kindergarten through fifth-grade teachers at each of the six schools on January 7, 2015. A second email reminding participants about the survey was sent on January 16, 2015. A third and final email was sent on January 23, 2015. The quantitative portion of the data collection process was ended, and the survey was closed on January 30, 2015.

The qualitative portion of the data collection process involved the collection of data through interviews. The researcher interviewed the six elementary principals in the HSD. Principals were asked questions to determine their perceptions of the overall effectiveness of the OBPP. All interview participants signed a consent form (see

Appendix G). The interviews were recorded using a digital recording device, and transcriptions were developed. The content of the interview transcriptions was analyzed, and the responses were compared for similarities and differences.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The current study used hypothesis testing and interviews to examine teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. Hypothesis testing was also used to determine if there were differences in perceptions between teachers who implemented a student leadership program, and teachers that do not implement the program. Quantitative data from SurveyMonkey was downloaded and imported into IBM SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 22 for Windows to address research questions 1-14. The researcher used analysis of interview transcripts to address research question 15.

RQ1. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation?

H1. Teachers perceive that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H1. The average teacher perceptions that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ2. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation?

H2. Teachers perceive that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H2. The average teacher perceptions that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ3. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school as a result of the OBPP implementation?

H3. Teachers perceive they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H3. The average teacher perceptions that they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ4. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive there is more stakeholder (staff, administrators, community members) involvement in solving bullying problems as a result of the OBPP implementation?

H4. Teachers perceive there is more stakeholder involvement in solving problems after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H4. The average teacher perceptions that there is more stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems at their school after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ5. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation?

H5. Teachers perceive that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after OBPP implementation.

A one-sample t test was conducted to test H5. The average teacher perceptions that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ6. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation?

H6. Teachers perceive that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample t test was conducted to test H6. The average teacher perceptions that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ7. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation?

H7. Teachers perceive that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample t test was conducted to test H7. The average teacher perceptions that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05.

RQ8. To what extent is there a difference in perceptions that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H8. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H8. The average perceptions that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. The two sample means were compared. A level of significance was set at .05.

RQ9. To what extent is there a difference in perceptions that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H9. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H9. The average perceptions that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP

implementation were compared between teachers whose school does have a student leadership program with teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program. The two sample means were compared. A level of significance was set at .05.

RQ10. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school as a result of the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H10. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H10. The average perceptions that teachers' have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school does have a student leadership program with teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program. The two sample means were compared. A level of significance was set at .05.

RQ11. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that there is more stakeholder (staff, administrators, community members) involvement in solving bullying problems as a result of the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H11. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that there is more stakeholder involvement after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H11. The average perceptions that there is more stakeholder involvement after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school does have a student leadership program with teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program. The two sample means were compared. A level of significance was set at .05.

RQ12. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H12. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H12. The average perceptions that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school does have a student leadership program with teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program. The two sample means were compared. A level of significance was set at .05.

RQ13. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H13. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H13. The average perceptions that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school does have a student leadership program with teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program. The two sample means were compared. A level of significance was set at .05.

RQ14. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H14. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H14. The average perceptions that atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation were

compared between teachers whose school does have a student leadership program with teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program. The two sample means were compared. A level of significance was set at .05.

RQ15. What are elementary principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP?

Qualitative data was analyzed by the researcher to address research question 15. The interviews were recorded using a digital recording device, and transcriptions were developed. The content of the interview transcriptions was analyzed, and the responses were compared for similarities and differences.

Limitations

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) described research limitations as conditions that are not under the control of the researcher. Some teachers and principals who participated in the survey had limited exposure to the OBPP. Furthermore, some teachers and principals had limited training on implementation of the OBPP. Another limitation to this research was fidelity of implementation of the OBPP, as not all schools may have used the program exactly how it is intended. A final study limitation involved reporting of bullying. Some people are not willing to report bullying; therefore, there is an amount of error when studying the effectiveness of bullying interventions. Lack of reporting could have influenced teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP.

Summary

Chapter three included a restatement of the purposes of the study. Chapter three provided a discussion of methodological information including the research design, population, sample, sampling procedures, instrumentation, validity, reliability, data

collection, data analysis, hypothesis testing, and study limitations. Chapter four includes the results of the statistical analyses, hypothesis testing, and qualitative data.

Chapter Four

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. Additionally, the purpose of the study was to determine whether there was a difference in teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose schools does not have a student leadership program. The final purpose of the study was to determine elementary principals' perceptions of the OBPP.

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample. Hypothesis tests were conducted. One-sample *t* tests were utilized to compare average teacher perceptions against a null value. Two-sample *t* tests were utilized to identify differences in perceptions between teachers whose school had a student leadership program and teachers whose schools did not have a student leadership program. The results of the interviews with principals were analyzed by identifying similarities and differences in their perceptions of the OBPP.

Descriptive Statistics

The population for this research study was elementary teachers and elementary principals. The sample for the study consisted of 104 teachers and 6 principals in the Haysville School District. Seventy-four teachers chose to participate in the study of which 19 were implementing the OBPP with a student leadership program and 55 were implementing only the OBPP (see Table 2). The IBM SPSS Statistics 22.0 for Windows statistical program was used to analyze the data for this research study.

Table 2

Teacher Participant Demographics

	Frequency	Percent
Using only the OBPP	55	74.3
Using the OBPP with B.E.S.T. Buds	19	25.7
Total	74	100.0

The descriptive statistics were calculated by providing percentages of teachers using only the OBPP (74.3%), and teachers using the OBPP with a student leadership component (25.7%). The following section contains the results of the hypothesis testing that involved inferential analysis to draw conclusions related to teachers' and principals' perceptions of the OBPP.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing addressed 14 research questions. The results of the 14 hypothesis tests are presented below.

RQ1. To what extent do teachers perceive that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation?

H1. Teachers perceive that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample t test was conducted to test H1. The average teacher perception that school personnel were using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 8.101$, $df = 73$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M =$

3.92, $SD = .98$) was higher than the null value. On average, elementary teachers agreed that school personnel were using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation. The frequency distribution for survey question one is found in Table 3.

Table 3

Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 1

Response	<i>N</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	1	1.35
Disagree	10	13.51
No Opinion	2	2.70
Agree	42	56.76
Strongly Agree	19	25.68
Total	74	100.00

RQ2. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation?

H2. Teachers perceive that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample t test was conducted to test H2. The average teacher perception that students were using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the one-sample t test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 8.755$, $df = 73$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.92$, $SD = .90$) was higher than the null value. On average, elementary teachers agreed that students

were using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation.

The frequency distribution for survey question two is displayed in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 2

Response	<i>N</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
Disagree	10	13.51
No Opinion	3	4.06
Agree	44	59.46
Strongly Agree	17	22.97
Total	74	100.00

RQ3. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school as a result of the OBPP implementation?

H3. Teachers perceive they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H3. The average teacher perception that they have a greater understanding of the nature of the bullying problem at their school after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the one-sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 10.359$, $df = 73$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.99$, $SD = .82$) was higher than the null value. On average, elementary teachers agreed that they have a greater understanding of the nature of the bullying

problem at their school after the OBPP implementation. The frequency distribution for survey question three is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 3

Response	<i>N</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	1	1.35
Disagree	5	6.76
No Opinion	4	5.41
Agree	48	64.86
Strongly Agree	16	21.62
Total	74	100

RQ4. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive there is more stakeholder (staff, administrators, community members) involvement in solving bullying problems as a result of the OBPP implementation?

H4. Teachers perceive there is more stakeholder involvement in solving problems after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H4. The average teacher perception that there is more stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the one-sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 4.727$, $df = 73$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.13$) was higher than the null value. On average, elementary teachers agreed that there is more stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems after the OBPP

implementation. However, almost 34% of teachers had no opinion, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that there is more stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems after the OBPP implementation. The frequency distribution for survey question four is displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 4

Response	<i>N</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	1	1.35
Disagree	18	24.32
No Opinion	6	8.11
Agree	32	43.25
Strongly Agree	17	22.97
Total	74	100.0

RQ 5. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation?

H5. Teachers perceive that the number of bullying incidents have decreased after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H5. The average teacher perception that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the one-sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 5.014$, $df = 72$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.07$) was higher than the null value. On average, elementary teachers agreed that the number of bullying

incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation. However, about 34% of teachers had no opinion, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that the number of bullying incidents have decreased after implementation of the OBPP. The frequency distribution for survey question five is displayed in Table 7.

Table 7

Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 5

Response	<i>N</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	1	1.37
Disagree	15	20.55
No Opinion	9	12.32
Agree	33	45.21
Strongly Agree	15	20.55
Total	73	100.0

RQ6. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation?

H6. Teachers perceive that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H6. The average teacher perception that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the one-sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 7.243$, $df = 73$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.77$, $SD = .91$) was higher than the null value. On average, elementary teachers agreed that the

severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation. However, over 31% of teachers had no opinion or disagreed that the severity of bullying incidents had decreased after the OBPP implementation. The frequency distribution for survey question six is displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 6

Response	<i>N</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Disagree	9	12.16
No Opinion	14	18.92
Agree	36	48.65
Strongly Agree	15	20.27
Total	74	100.0

RQ7. To what extent do elementary teachers perceive that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation?

H7. Teachers perceive that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation.

A one-sample *t* test was conducted to test H7. The average teacher perception that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation was tested against a null value of 3.00. The level of significance was set at .05. The results of the one-sample *t* test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two values, $t = 6.156$, $df = 73$, $p = .000$. The sample mean ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.05$) was higher than the null value. On average, elementary teachers agreed that the atmosphere at

school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation. However, over 28% of teachers had no opinion, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation. The frequency distribution for survey question seven is displayed in Table 9.

Table 9

Frequency Distribution for Survey Question 7

Response	<i>N</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	1	1.35
Disagree	13	17.57
No Opinion	7	9.46
Agree	35	47.30
Strongly Agree	18	24.32
Total	74	100.0

RQ8. To what extent is there a difference in perceptions that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H8. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H8. The average perceptions that school personnel are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP

implementation were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. A level of significance was set at .05. The results of the two-sample t test indicated no significant difference between the two values, $t = -1.243$, $df = 72$, $p = .218$. The sample mean for the school using the student leadership program ($M = 4.16$, $SD = .90$) was not different from the sample mean for the schools using only the OBPP ($M = 3.84$, $SD = .96$). Although the difference was not significant between the two samples means, the sample mean was higher for the school using the student leadership program. The descriptive statistics comparing responses to survey question one between schools using only the OBPP and the school using the OBPP with a student leadership program are found in Table 10.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 1

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Schools using only the OBPP	3.84	.96	55
School using the OBPP with a student leadership program	4.16	.90	19

RQ9. To what extent is there a difference in perceptions that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H9. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation between

teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample t test was conducted to address H9. The average perceptions that students are using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. A level of significance was set at .05. The results of the two-sample t test indicated no significant difference between the two values, $t = -1.652$, $df = 72$, $p = .103$. The sample mean for the school using the student leadership program ($M = 4.21$, $SD = .90$) was not different from the sample mean for the schools using only the OBPP ($M = 3.82$, $SD = .88$). Although the difference was not significant between the two sample means, the sample mean was higher for the school using the student leadership program. The descriptive statistics comparing responses to survey question two between schools using only the OBPP and the school using the OBPP with a student leadership program are found in Table 11.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 2

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Schools using only the OBPP	3.82	.88	55
School using the OBPP with a student leadership program	4.21	.90	19

RQ10. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school as a result of the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a

student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H10. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that they have a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at their school after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H10. The average teacher perceptions that there is a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. A level of significance was set at .05. The results of the two-sample *t* test indicated no significant difference between the two values, $t = -1.392$, $df = 72$, $p = .168$. The sample mean for the school using the student leadership program ($M = 4.21$, $SD = .71$) was not different from the sample mean for the schools using only the OBPP ($M = 3.91$, $SD = .84$). Although the difference was not significant between the two sample means, the sample mean was higher for the school using the student leadership program. The descriptive statistics comparing responses to survey question three between schools using only the OBPP and the school using the OBPP with a student leadership program are found in Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 3

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Schools using only the OBPP	3.91	.84	55
School using the OBPP with a student leadership program	4.21	.71	19

RQ11. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that there is more stakeholder (staff, administrators, community members) involvement in solving bullying problems as a result of the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H11. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that there is more stakeholder involvement after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H11. The average teacher perceptions that there is more stakeholder involvement after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. A level of significance was set at .05. The results of the two-sample *t* test indicated no significant difference between the two values, $t = -1.225$, $df = 72$, $p = .225$. The sample mean for the school using the student leadership program ($M = 3.89$, $SD = .99$) was not different from the sample mean for the schools using only the OBPP ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.17$). Although the difference was not significant between the two sample means, the sample mean was

higher for the school using the student leadership program. The descriptive statistics comparing responses to survey question four between schools using only the OBPP and the school using the OBPP with a student leadership program are found in Table 13.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 4

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Schools using only the OBPP	3.53	1.17	55
School using the OBPP with a student leadership program	3.89	.99	19

RQ12. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H12. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H12. The average teacher perceptions that the number of bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. A level of significance was set at .05. The results of the two-sample *t* test indicated no significant difference between the two values, $t = -1.181$, $df = 71$, $p = .242$. The sample mean for the school using the student leadership program ($M = 3.88$, $SD =$

1.13) was not different from the sample mean for the schools using only the OBPP ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.05$). Although the difference was not significant between the two sample means, the sample mean was higher for the school using the student leadership program. The descriptive statistics comparing responses to survey question five between schools using only the OBPP and the school using the OBPP with a student leadership program are found in Table 14.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 5

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Schools using only the OBPP	3.55	1.05	55
School using the OBPP with a student leadership program	3.88	1.13	18

RQ13. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H13. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that the severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample *t* test was conducted to address H13. The average teacher perceptions that the severity of reported bullying incidents have decreased after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership

program. A level of significance was set at .05. The results of the two-sample t test indicated no significant difference between the two values, $t = -1.275$, $df = 72$, $p = .206$. The sample mean for the school using the student leadership program ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .88$) was not different from the sample mean for the schools using only the OBPP ($M = 3.68$, $SD = .92$). Although the difference was not significant between the two sample means, the sample mean was higher for the school using the student leadership program. The descriptive statistics comparing responses to survey question six between schools using only the OBPP and the school using the OBPP with a student leadership program are found in Table 15.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 6

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Schools using only the OBPP	3.68	.92	55
School using the OBPP with a student leadership program	4.00	.88	19

RQ14. To what extent is there a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program?

H14. There is a difference in elementary teachers' perceptions that atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose school does not have a student leadership program.

A two-sample t test was conducted to address H14. The average teacher perceptions that atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. A level of significance was set at .05. The results of the two-sample t test indicated no significant difference between the two values, $t = -1.166$, $df = 72$, $p = .247$. The sample mean for the school using the student leadership program ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.15$) was not different from the sample mean for the schools using only the OBPP ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.02$). Although the difference was not significant between the two sample means, the sample mean was higher for the school using the student leadership program. The descriptive statistics comparing responses to survey question seven between schools using only the OBPP and the school using the OBPP with a student leadership program are found in Table 16.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics for Participant Responses to Survey Question 7

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Schools using only the OBPP	3.67	1.02	55
School using the OBPP with a student leadership program	4.00	1.15	19

Interview Analyses and Results

RQ15. What are elementary principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP?

The following information is based on face-to-face interviews with six elementary principals in USD 261. For the 2014-2015 school year, the elementary schools enrolled

between 256 and 513 students, and employed between 16 and 24 certified elementary teachers. Each elementary school in USD 261 employed one head administrator to serve as principal. The six principals who participated in the study are identified as Principal A, Principal B, Principal C, Principal D, Principal E, and Principal F.

Qualitative data was analyzed by the researcher to address research question 15. Principals were asked questions to determine their perceptions of the overall effectiveness of the OBPP. The interview questions were related to staff training, anti-bullying strategies, frequency and severity of bullying incidents, school atmosphere, consequences for bullying, and community involvement. The interviews were recorded using a digital recording device, and transcriptions were developed. The content of the interview transcriptions was analyzed, and the responses were compared for similarities and differences.

Interview question 1. What training was conducted with your staff to implement the OBPP?

Principals indicated that teachers were trained on the implementation of the OBPP in the spring of 2007, and began implementing the program in 2008. Every year since inception, all new certified elementary teachers have been trained on the components of implementing the OBPP during orientation.

Interview question 2. What strategies are students and staff using in your school to stop bullying?

The majority of principals interviewed expressed positive perceptions of the anti-bullying strategies associated with the OBPP. All principals stated that teachers are implementing anti-bullying class meetings in their classrooms. The frequency of these

meetings varies throughout buildings. Three principals stated that they require teachers to conduct weekly anti-bullying class meetings. Two principals required biweekly meetings. One principal required monthly meetings. Three principals required teachers to submit documentation of class meetings. Examples of principal comments include:

Principal C: “We pride ourselves on building awareness of bullying throughout the district; this includes defining, role playing, and having conversations related to bullying during our meetings.”

Principal D: “I require feedback from all of our class meetings to stay informed with topics that were discussed and address any issues of concern.”

Principal F: “We use our class meetings as a platform to promote positive behavior and specifically address what bullying is and what it is not.”

The majority of the principals stated that they use anti-bullying posters in their buildings. Three principals reported that they have anti-bullying themed t-shirts for all students and staff. Every principal mentioned having a committee that addresses bullying. One principal stated that the anti-bullying committee in his building created a student leadership program to go along with the OBPP.

Principal A: “A few years ago we formed a student leadership program called B.E.S.T. Buds to give some of our older students an opportunity to be peer advocates and leaders.”

Principal A continued, “I have seen the results, and I believe that it is an excellent inclusion to the daily organization of the building.”

Interview question 3. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the number of bullying incidents in your school?

The majority of principals stated that the number of bullying incidents in their buildings has decreased since the OBPP was implemented. Some principals shared similar comments about the overall reduction of bullying in their buildings. Examples of principal comments include:

Principal B: “I see that we have grown a lot. I think the kids are more respectful than they used to be because we try to model positive behavior.”

Principal D: “Bullying incidents in our building have dramatically decreased since implementing the program. Very seldom do we have a situation come up that actually relates to bullying.”

Principal E: “Our students and staff have a very firm understanding of what bullying looks like and how it is defined. They know why they shouldn’t participate in that type of behavior.”

Principal F: “We have had to do very little redirection of problem behaviors because the students know what is expected of them.”

Interview question 4. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the severity of bullying incidents in your school?

The majority of principals stated that the severity of reported bullying incidents in their buildings has decreased since the OBPP was implemented. Examples of principal comments include:

Principal B: “Most of the bullying we see is verbal; occasionally we will have a report of someone being physically bullied, and we take those very seriously.”

Principal C: “Even though we still have more bullying incidents that we would like, I have definitely seen a decrease of severity.”

Principal E: “I see a lot less physical aggression in our building. This year we have not had any severe reports.”

Interview question 5. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the atmosphere of your school?

One of the principals interviewed stated that the atmosphere in their school has been more peaceful since implementation of the OBPP.

Principal C: “The atmosphere in our building is much more peaceful. We have built awareness in our students that shows what type of behaviors we accept, and what we don’t accept.”

Some of the principals interviewed shared similar experiences of positive school atmosphere. Examples of principal comments include:

Principal A: “I think our students and staff are very collegial because we have a joint focus and mission.”

Principal B: “I think the atmosphere in our building has very much changed because our students are aware of what behaviors are acceptable at school.”

Principal D: “The atmosphere at our school has been very positive because we focus on the positives.”

Principal E: “Our teachers have a responsibility to make sure that every student has someone to turn to in the building that cares for them.”

Principal F: “We make sure that kids that are feeling isolated have the opportunity to sit with kids that can be a positive role model so that friendships can be created or strengthened.”

Interview question 6. How has implementation of the OBPP affected way you handle consequences of bullying behaviors in your building?

The majority of principals stated that they have more clearly defined consequences for bullying behaviors since the implementation of the OBPP. Each elementary school in the district developed a rubric for the consequences of bullying. Examples of principal comments include:

Principal B: “At the start of implementation, we had to change some things on how we documented acts of bullying, so we developed a rubric to use for the consequences.”

Principal B continued: “Depending on the frequency and severity of the incidents, we handle disciplinary actions according to the rubric that was created.”

Principal F: “The rubric has really helped with having clear consequences. Our students know exactly how we handle acts of bullying, and they know we don’t take it lightly.”

Interview question 7. How has implementation of the OBPP affected community involvement in solving bullying problems in your school?

The majority of principals indicated there is more community involvement in solving bullying problems since implementation of the OBPP. Some principals interviewed shared similar experiences of community involvement in their building. Examples of principal comments include:

Principal A: “Our school works to develop a common understanding with our parents in regard to the problem of bullying.”

Principal C: “We work with our parents to help them understand the definition of bullying, how to identify it, and how to respond to it.”

Principal D: “We developed a partnership with members of our local police department to come and speak to students about bullying and promote best practices in the community.”

Principal F: “A major component of the program revolved around building relationships amongst your students, staff, and community.”

Summary

Chapter four contained the results of the data analysis and hypothesis testing related to elementary teachers’ and principals’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. The results of the one-sample *t* tests, two-sample *t* tests, and analyses of interviews were presented. Chapter five includes a summary of the research study, major findings, connections to the literature, implications for action, recommendations for further study, and conclusions.

Chapter Five

Interpretation and Recommendations

Chapter five presents a summary of the study including an overview of the problem, the purpose statement, research questions, and methodology. Additionally, this chapter addresses the major findings of the current study and findings related to literature. Finally, the chapter provides implications for action, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

Study Summary

The following section provides a summary of the current study. The summary includes an overview of the problem relating to evaluating the effectiveness of the OBPP. Second, an explanation of the purpose of the study is provided. The third section presents an overview of the methodology utilized in the study. Last, the major findings of the study are presented.

Overview of the problem. Kansas passed legislation requiring school districts to implement anti-bullying programs in 2007 (Kansas House Bill 2310, 2007). These programs must be studied in order to determine if they are effective at preventing and reducing bullying. In the HSD, there was a need to identify whether elementary teachers and principals perceive the OBPP to be working after seven years of implementation. Furthermore, limited research exists related to implementing an elementary student leadership program to improve the overall effectiveness of anti-bullying programs. Since a student leadership program has been implemented in one elementary school, there was a need to collect data relating to teachers and principals perceptions in that building and compare the

data to non-participating schools to determine whether it had been a successful addition to the OBPP.

Purpose statement and research questions. The purpose of this study was to determine elementary teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceived that students and staff were using more effective strategies to stop bullying, the number of bullying incidents had been reduced, and the severity of bullying incidents had been reduced after the OBPP implementation. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which teachers perceived they had a greater understanding of the bullying problem in their school, there was more stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems, and there was a more peaceful atmosphere in their school after the OBPP implementation. Additionally, the purpose of the study was to determine whether there was a difference in teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP between teachers whose school had a student leadership program and teachers whose schools did not have a student leadership program. The final purpose of the study was to determine, through interviews, elementary principals' perceptions of the OBPP.

Review of the methodology. A mixed method research design was used with a concurrent strategy. This research study was conducted in a suburban school district in Kansas. Data was collected to represent both quantitative and qualitative information. The researcher collected data by surveying elementary teachers and interviewing elementary principals. The participants included 74 elementary teachers who completed the survey and six principals who were interviewed. The survey used in this study was completed online using SurveyMonkey. Survey data was downloaded and imported into

IBM SPSS® Statistics Faculty Pack 22 for Windows for analysis. Statistical tests used from this study included one-sample *t* tests tested against null values, and two-sample *t* tests to analyze differences between schools. For the qualitative portion of the study, transcriptions were developed from the recording of the interviews. The content of the interview transcriptions was analyzed, and the responses were compared for similarities and differences.

Major findings. Several major findings were identified in the current research study. Quantitative findings revealed that the majority of elementary teachers perceived that students and staff were using more effective strategies to stop bullying after implementation of the OBPP. In addition, the majority of elementary teachers agreed that they had a greater understanding of the nature of the bullying problem at their school as a result of the OBPP implementation.

Qualitative findings revealed that the majority of elementary principals stated that their schools utilized many strategies to prevent and address bullying. Principals mentioned classroom meetings, anti-bullying t-shirts and posters, and committees to address bullying as strategies that are being used as a result of the OBPP implementation. Qualitative findings also revealed that teachers were trained on the implementation of the OBPP in the spring of 2007, and training for new teachers is conducted during orientation. Principals indicated they had developed rubrics for the consequences of bullying. The majority of principals stated that they have more clearly defined consequences for bullying behaviors as a result of the OBPP implementation.

Several major findings from the current study were supported by both quantitative and qualitative data. Elementary teachers and principals perceived there is more involvement in solving bullying problems as a result of the OBPP implementation. Elementary teachers agreed that there is more stakeholder involvement in solving bullying problems at their school after OBPP implementation. The majority of the principals stated there is more community involvement in solving bullying problems since implementation of the OBPP. It was also determined that elementary teachers and principals perceived that the number of bullying incidents had decreased after the OBPP implementation. In addition, teachers and principals also perceived that the severity of reported bullying incidents had decreased after the OBPP implementation. Furthermore, elementary teachers and principals perceived that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful or positive after the OBPP implementation. On average, elementary teachers agreed that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after implementation of the OBPP. The majority of the principals who were interviewed stated that the atmosphere in their school has been more positive since implementation of the OBPP. In addition to the OBPP, some principals mentioned other district-wide programs as contributing factors to positive school atmosphere.

The average perceptions were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. The sample means for all survey questions were slightly higher for the school using the student leadership program. However, the results indicated no significant difference between the two values. One principal represented a school

implementing a student leadership program. Therefore, a comparison of principals' perceptions was not conducted for confidentiality reasons.

Findings Related to the Literature

This section contains a discussion of the results of the current research study as they relate to the existing and relevant literature identified in chapter two related to elementary teachers' and principals' perceptions of the OBPP. There were similarities and differences between the results of the study and existing literature. The findings related to the literature are presented in order of the research questions.

The results of the current research study indicated that elementary teachers perceived that school personnel were using more effective strategies to stop bullying after implementation of the OBPP, which was similar to the findings of Bowllan (2011) where teachers reported improvements in their capacity to identify and address acts of bullying after implementation of the OBPP. The results of the current study were in contrast to the findings of Dake et al. (2003), where less than one-third of the teachers surveyed set aside classroom time to discuss bullying or involved students in creating classroom rules against bullying. The differences may possibly be due to fidelity of implementation of the OBPP by classroom teachers.

Elementary teachers in this study perceived that students were using more effective strategies to stop bullying after the OBPP implementation, which were in agreement with the findings of Edmondson and Hoover (2008), where teachers reported a significant increase in positive student behavior after implementation of the OBPP. The results of the current study were also similar to the findings of Bowllan (2011) where teachers reported an increase of student awareness and reporting.

The results of the current research study indicated that elementary teachers perceived that they had a greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem after the OBPP implementation. This finding was similar to Bowllan (2011), where teachers reported improvements in their capacity to identify acts of bullying, talk to students who bully, and talk with victims of bullying after implementation of the OBPP. These results were in contrast to the findings of Dake et al. (2003), where teachers reported that professional training and continuing education were needed to improve their knowledge about effective classroom-based bullying prevention activities. The differences may possibly be due to lack of training for new teachers on the OBPP before implementation.

In this study, the results indicated that elementary teachers and principals perceived that there was more involvement in solving bullying problems after OBPP implementation. This finding was similar to the finding of Edmondson and Hoover (2008), where a significant increase in parental involvement was reported after implementation of the OBPP. The results of the current study were also similar to the findings of Daugherty (2011), where over 87% of elementary teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that there was more stakeholder involvement after implementation of the OBPP.

On average, elementary teachers and principals who participated in this study perceived that the number of bullying incidents have decreased after implementation of the OBPP. This finding was similar to the findings of Ttofi and Farrington (2009), who determined that schools with anti-bullying programs had significantly less incidents of bullying and victimization than schools without anti-bullying programs. The results of

the current study were also similar to the finding of Black and Jackson (2007), who studied the number of bullying incidents before and after OBPP implementation, and found that the OBPP led to an overall reduction of bullying incidents by 45%.

The results of the current research study indicated that the majority of elementary teachers and principals perceived that the severity of reported bullying incidents have decreased after implementation of the OBPP. This finding was similar to the findings of Bauer, Lozano, and Rivara (2007) where schools using the OBPP reported a substantial decrease for severe forms of bullying. The results of the current study were also in agreement to the findings of Daugherty (2011) where over two-thirds of elementary teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that the severity of reported bullying incidents had decreased after implementation of the OBPP.

Research question seven was designed to determine the extent that elementary teachers perceived that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful after the OBPP implementation. The results of the current research study indicated that elementary teachers perceived that the atmosphere at school has been more peaceful since implementation of the OBPP. This finding was similar to the finding of Bauer, Lozano, and Rivara (2007) where the researchers reported substantial program effects for positive school atmosphere. The results of the current study were also similar to the findings of Daugherty (2011), where over three-fourths of elementary teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that the atmosphere in their school has been more peaceful since implementation of the OBPP.

For research questions 8-14, the sample means for survey questions 1-7 were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with

teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program. The sample means for all survey questions corresponding with research questions 1-7 was slightly higher for the school using the student leadership program. However, due to sample size, the differences in sample means were not significant. This finding was in contrast to Pack et al. (2009), who determined that a student leadership program had a significant impact on reducing problem behaviors.

Research question 15 was designed to determine elementary principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. The results of the current study indicated that elementary principals perceived that the number and severity of bullying incidents has decreased since implementation of the OBPP. Results of the current study parallel the findings of Daugherty (2011) who determined that elementary principals perceived that the number and severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased since OBPP implementation. Furthermore, the majority of principals interviewed in the current study were in agreement with the principals interviewed by Daugherty (2011) who indicated that the OBPP has increased awareness of bullying, increased community involvement, and led to a more positive atmosphere at school.

This section contained a discussion of the results of the current research study as they relate to the existing and relevant literature related to elementary teachers' and principals' perceptions of the OBPP. There were similarities and differences between the results of this study and existing literature. The following conclusions were drawn from the results of the current study.

Conclusions

Bullying can have many negative consequences for both bullies and victims. Legislation has mandated many states to implement anti-bullying programs in order to counteract these problems. The effectiveness of these programs must be studied in order to determine if they have been successful. In the HSD, there was a need to identify whether elementary teachers and principals perceive the OBPP to be working after seven years of implementation. Much emphasis has been placed on bullying prevention for professional development of educators. Data from the current study is significant to school leaders, as the findings could be used to aid in future plans for professional development to reduce bullying and provide feedback on the OBPP and B.E.S.T Buds. The following section provides recommendations for implications for action.

Implications for action. The results of the current research study provide implications for action and future research. This mixed method study was designed to inform school officials in their decision-making process relating to bullying prevention, specifically at the elementary level. Kansas Statute 72-8256 (2013) requires the board of education of each school district to adopt and implement a plan to address bullying and clearly define district policy relating to bullying incidents. It is incumbent upon school districts to select an anti-bullying program and implement it with fidelity. Programs must include training for staff members to raise awareness of bullying and develop strategies for prevention. The results of the current study provide data that may aid district leaders in the selection of an anti-bullying curriculum, and how to implement the program effectively.

Findings from the current study indicated that the majority of elementary teachers and principals in the HSD had positive perceptions of the OBPP; therefore, continued implementation of the program is recommended. Based on findings of the current research study, the HSD may benefit from expanding the OBPP to middle schools and high schools. Although the OBPP is primarily implemented in elementary and middle schools, the program can be adapted for high school students. The results of the current research study may benefit district leaders by informing them of professional development relating to bullying prevention. School district leaders must be mindful of providing extensive training on the OBPP to all new teachers. Furthermore, on-going professional development on the OBPP is recommended for all staff members in the HSD.

The sample means for all survey questions were compared between teachers whose school did have a student leadership program with teachers whose school did not have a student leadership program, and no significant difference was found. However, the teachers from the school using the leadership program had perceptions of the anti-bullying program that were more positive. Therefore, adding a student leadership program could enhance perceptions of program effectiveness. Based on this result, district leaders and principals may consider implementing a similar leadership program for students.

Recommendations for future research. The first recommendation is to replicate the current study in school districts with similar and dissimilar characteristics to the HSD. Similarities and differences in teachers' and principals' perceptions of the OBPP could be compared to rural, urban, and other suburban school districts. The second

recommendation is to extend the current study by using a collection of disciplinary data from a school implementing the OBPP and a school not implementing any type of anti-bullying program. This type of study could provide meaningful data regarding the impact of the OBPP on frequency and severity of bullying behaviors. The third recommendation is to extend the current study by using academic data from a school implementing the OBPP and a school not implementing any type of anti-bullying program. This type of study could provide meaningful data regarding a possible correlation between academic achievement and anti-bullying interventions. Since bullying has been linked to absenteeism and depression, more research is needed to determine the effects of bullying on academic achievement. The fourth recommendation is to expand the current study to include schools from multiple demographic environments. This type of study could aid in determining the effectiveness of the OBPP in high socioeconomic areas, low socioeconomic areas, and school environments with predominately minority populations. The fifth recommendation is to conduct more research relating to anti-bullying programs that have included a student leadership component. There is a gap in the research relating to evaluating the addition of student leadership programs to anti-bullying curriculums. This type of study could provide meaningful data regarding the effectiveness of empowering student leaders to aid in bullying prevention.

Concluding remarks. The purpose of this study was to determine elementary teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP. Findings from the current study indicated that the majority of elementary teachers' and principals' in the HSD perceived the OBPP to be effective at preventing and addressing bullying. Specifically, the majority of elementary teachers' and principals who participated in this

study perceived that the OBPP has led to: effective prevention strategies for students and staff, decreased incidents of bullying, decreased incidents of severe bullying, increased awareness of bullying, more stakeholder involvement, and improved school atmospheres. Findings from the current study, though not significant, also indicated that using a student leadership program in addition to the OBPP could enhance perceptions of program effectiveness. The results of the current research study provide data that may aid district leaders in making important decisions relating to bullying prevention.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Instrument Used in Current Study

Please indicate the extent to which you perceive the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program to be working.

Opinion	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
School personnel use more effective strategies to stop bullying.					
Students use more effective strategies to stop bullying.					
There is greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at our school.					
More stakeholders (staff, administrators, community members) are involved in solving the bullying problem at our school.					
The number of bullying incidents has been decreased.					
The severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased.					
The atmosphere at the school has been more peaceful.					

Appendix B: Permission to Use Daugherty Survey Instrument

Carolyn Daugherty <csdaugherty@gmail.com>

Sat 8/23/2014 2:49 PM

Dear Micah,

Of course you can!

I would love to read your paper also!

Best of luck!!

Carolyn

Sent from my iPhone

REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

Mark as unread

Micah I Friesen

Sat 8/23/2014 6:10 AM

Sent Items

To:

...

Sent Items

Dr. Daugherty,

My name is Micah Friesen and I am a doctoral student from Baker University in Kansas. I am studying the effectiveness of the OBPP of six schools in Haysville, KS .

I enjoyed reading your study and thought you did an excellent job with your research. I am writing you today for permission to use the survey you created for teachers. I feel that the survey will be very beneficial for my study and aligns well with my own research questions.

Thank you so much for your time.

Micah I. Friesen

Appendix C: Permission to Conduct Study in HSD

Original message-----

From: "Burke,John" jburke@usd261.com

Date: Sun, 10 Mar 2013 17:11:47 -0500

To: mfriesen@usd261.com

Subject: Re: Dissertation

Micah,

Sounds like a great idea. You have my permission.

Thanks,

John

-----Original message-----

From: "Friesen,Micah" mfriesen@usd261.com

Date: Thu, 07 Mar 2013 09:32:28 -0600

To: "Burke John" jburke@usd261.com

Subject: Dissertation

Dr. Burke,

I am planning a study for my doctoral dissertation on the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program to determine if the program had an impact on the reduction of bullying.

In addition, I will be evaluating the B.E.S.T student leadership program that was used in addition to the OPBB at one elementary school.

I want to find out if the addition of B.E.S.T. Buds made a positive impact at that school.

I am planning on surveying and interviewing elementary teachers and principals.

I am writing you for permission to conduct the study in the district.

Sincerely,

Micah Friesen

Appendix D: Baker University IRB Form



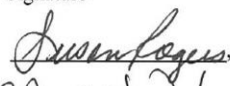
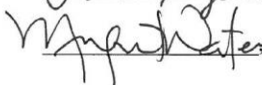
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
GRADUATE DEPARTMENT

Date: _____
IRB PROTOCOL NUMBER _____
(IRB USE ONLY)

IRB REQUEST
Proposal for Research
Submitted to the Baker University Institutional Review Board

I. Research Investigator(s) (Students must list faculty sponsor first)

Department(s) **School of Education Graduate Department**

Name	Signature	
1. Susan Rogers		Major Advisor
2. Margaret Waterman		Research Analyst
3. Verneda Edwards		University Committee Member
4.		External Committee Member

Principal Investigator: Micah I. Friesen *Micah I. Friesen*
Phone: 316-207-3773
Email: mfriesen@usd261.com
Mailing address: 1507 Sandalwood, Haysville KS 67060

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Susan Rogers
Phone: 913-344-1226
Email: srogers@bakeru.edu

Expected Category of Review: ___Exempt **X** Expedited ___Full

II: Protocol:

Elementary Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

Summary

In a sentence or two, please describe the background and purpose of the research.

Since 2007, the OBPP has been implemented in all six elementary schools in the Haysville School District (USD 261). The effectiveness of the OBPP has not been examined in USD 261. The purpose of this research is to determine teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP). Additionally, the purpose of the study is to determine whether there is a difference in teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the OBPP between teachers whose school has a student leadership program and teachers whose schools do not have a student leadership program. An email letter of approval to conduct the study in USD 261 is attached.

Briefly describe each condition or manipulation to be included within the study.

The independent variable in this research study was the presence or absence of a student leadership program (SLP).

What measures or observations will be taken in the study? If any questionnaire or other instruments are used, provide a brief description and attach a copy.

The survey instrument to be used to determine teacher perceptions in the current research was created by Daugherty in 2009. Daugherty was contacted and permission was granted to use the survey (approval email is attached). The survey is comprised of seven items (see attached survey). Observations will be made and thematic coding will be used to interpret qualitative data from interviews with elementary principals (see attached example questions).

Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical, or legal risk? If so, please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.

Subjects will not encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical, or legal risk during this research study.

Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.

Subjects will not experience any stress during this research study.

Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.

Subjects will not be deceived or misled in any way during this research study.

Will there be a request for information which subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? If so, please include a description.

Subjects will not be asked to provide personal or sensitive information during this research study.

Will the subjects be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.

Subjects will not be presented with materials that might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading during this research project.

Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?

Participation in the teacher survey will take approximately 5 minutes. Participation in the principal interview will take approximately 30 minutes.

Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of any written solicitation as well as an outline of any oral solicitation.

The subjects of this study are general elementary teachers (grades K through 5) and elementary principals in the Haysville School District (USD 261). Elementary teachers' and principals' will receive an email invitation to participate in the research (see attached emails).

What steps will be taken to insure that each subject's participation is voluntary?

Teacher participants will receive an email invitation that will state that participation in the study is voluntary and anonymous. Additionally, there will be a statement included in the survey stating that participation in the study is voluntary and anonymous. Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher will inform principal participants that their participation in the study is voluntary (see interview script).

Participants will be provided with the contact information of the researcher for any questions relating to participation in the study (see attached email).

What if any inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?

No threats or forms of coercion will be used to encourage subject participation. Furthermore, no inducements will be offered to the subjects for participation.

How will you insure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? If so, include the form. If not, explain why not.

Potential participants will be invited to complete the survey through an email invitation. Two separate emails will be sent to study participants. One email will be sent to elementary teachers inviting them to participate in the survey portion of the study. The other email will be sent to elementary principals requesting their permission to participate in the interview portion of the study. A copy of each email that will be sent to potential participants is attached to this form. Participants will be informed that completing the survey indicates they give their consent to participate in the study. Principals will be asked to sign an interview consent form, which will state that participation in the study is voluntary and anonymous. A copy of the interview consent form is attached to this form.

Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? If so, please explain the necessity.

No data will be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject. The survey data will be collected using Survey Monkey and no data will be collected that contains identification information. The identity of the participants is anonymous.

Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer? If so, explain.

No information is gathered on whether an employee of the Haysville School District did or did not participate in the study. Participation in the study is anonymous. Participants will not be asked to provide any data that would reveal their identity.

What steps will be taken to insure the confidentiality of the data? Where will it be stored? How long will it be stored? What will be done with it after the study is completed?

The data will be collected anonymously using Survey Monkey and access to the data will only be available to the researcher. Qualitative data will be available only to the researcher; audio recordings from interviews will be deleted within one year of the completion of the study. Signed consent forms for interviews will be retained for three years past completion of the research study.

If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subjects or society?

Participants in this study will not be subjected to any risks during their participation.

Will any data from files or archival data be used? If so, please describe.

This research study will not involve the use of data from files or archives.

Original message-----
From: "Burke,John" jburke@usd261.com
Date: Sun, 10 Mar 2013 17:11:47 -0500
To: mfriesen@usd261.com
Subject: Re: Dissertation

Micah,

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Thanks,

John

-----Original message-----
From: "Friesen,Micah" mfriesen@usd261.com
Date: Thu, 07 Mar 2013 09:32:28 -0600
To: "Burke John" jburke@usd261.com
Subject: Dissertation

Dr. Burke,

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In addition, I will be evaluating the B.E.S.T student leadership program that was used in addition to the OPBB at one elementary school.

I want to find out if the addition of B.E.S.T. made a positive impact at that school.

I am planning on surveying elementary teachers and interviewing elementary principals.

I am writing you for permission to conduct the study in the district. There will be more details and paperwork to come.

Sincerely,
Micah Friesen

Carolyn Daugherty <csdaugherty@gmail.com>
Sat 8/23/2014 2:49 PM

Dear Micah,
Of course you can!
I would love to read your paper also!
Best of luck!!
Carolyn

Sent from my iPhone
REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD
Mark as unread

Micah I Friesen
Sat 8/23/2014 6:10 AM
Sent Items
To:

...
Sent Items

Dr. Daugherty,

My name is Micah Friesen and I am a doctoral student from Baker University in Kansas. I am studying the effectiveness of the OBPP of six schools in Haysville, KS . I enjoyed reading your study and thought you did an excellent job with your research. I am writing you today for permission to use the survey you created for teachers. I feel that the survey will be very beneficial for my study and aligns well with my own research questions.

Thank you so much for your time.

Micah I. Friesen

Please indicate the extent to which you perceive the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program to be working.

Opinion	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
School personnel use more effective strategies to stop bullying.					
Students use more effective strategies to stop bullying.					
There is greater understanding about the nature of the bullying problem at our school.					
More stakeholders (staff, administrators, community members) are involved in solving the bullying problem at our school.					
The number of bullying incidents has been decreased.					
The severity of reported bullying incidents has decreased.					
The atmosphere at the school has been more peaceful.					

Teachers,

My name is Micah Friesen. I would appreciate your assistance with research I am conducting on teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. The research is being conducted through the Ed.D program at Baker University. I am administering a short survey during the month of January 2015. The survey should take approximately five minutes to complete.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and responses will be anonymous. Your name will not appear anywhere on the survey. Teacher participation in this survey is extremely important for the completion of my dissertation. The results will provide useful information about the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.

By completing and returning the questionnaire you are acknowledging that you are 18 years of age or older and are consenting to participate in this study. If you have any questions regarding this research, please contact me at mfriesen@usd261.com.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Micah Friesen
Ed. D. Candidate
Baker University, Graduate School of Education
E-mail: mfriesen@usd261.com

Dear Principal,

My name is Micah Friesen. I would appreciate your assistance with research I am conducting on teachers' and principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. The research is being conducted through the Ed.D program at Baker University. I am administering a short survey during the month of January 2015 to elementary teachers in USD 261. In addition to the survey, I would like to conduct interviews with each of the six principals in USD 261 to gather principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.

I am asking for your permission to conduct and record an interview with you as part of the research. The recording(s) will be used to assist in writing field notes, reflections, and add to the quantitative portion of my dissertation. The recording(s) will include your title as principal only. Your name and the school name will not be used in the study. The recording(s) will be stored in a locked file cabinet and destroyed within a year from the interview. The investigator will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

Please respond to this email stating whether you give your consent to be interviewed. Once I receive your consent, I will be sending you another email to schedule the interview. If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact me at mfriesen@usd261.com. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Micah Friesen
Ed. D. Candidate
Baker University, Graduate School of Education
E-mail: mfriesen@usd261.com

Principal Consent Form to Participate in the Study

You are invited to participate in research conducted by Micah Friesen related to elementary teachers' and principals' perceptions of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. One of the research questions is to determine principals' perceptions of the implementation of the OBPP. Your participation will take approximately 30 minutes.

I am asking your permission to conduct and tape record an interview with you as part of the research. The recording(s) will be used to assist in writing field notes, reflections, and add to the qualitative portion of my dissertation. The recording(s) will include your title as Principal only. Your name and the school name will not be recorded or used in the research. The recording(s) will be stored in a locked file cabinet and destroyed within a year from the interview. I will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

Your signature on this form grants me, as the investigator, permission to record you as described above during participation in the above-referenced research. The investigator will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your **participation is voluntary** and you have the **right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate.** You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

If you need to change your appointment, please contact me at 316-207-3773.

If you agree to participate in this research, please sign your name on the line below and indicate the date of your permission.

Participant

Date

Dear Principal,

You have already agreed to participate in research conducted by Micah I. Friesen entitled: Principal and Teacher Perceptions of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. I am writing you today to schedule an appointment to conduct an interview with you regarding this research.

I will be available to conduct interviews on Monday through Friday for the next four weeks (January 20th through February 14th). I have designated three separate times for you to consider for the interview.

1. 10:45-11:30 am (Monday through Friday)
2. 12:45- 1:30 pm (Monday through Friday)
3. 4:00-5:00 pm (Monday through Friday)

Please select a time that works best for you. Once I have received an email stating your desired time, I will send you a confirmation email. If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact me at mfriesen@usd261.com. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Micah Friesen
Ed. D. Candidate
Baker University, Graduate School of Education
E-mail: mfriesen@usd261.com

Principal Interview Script

Principals,

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

1. What training was done with your staff to implement the OBPP?
 2. What strategies are students and staff using in your school to stop bullying?
 3. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the number of bullying incidents in your school?
 4. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the severity of bullying incidents in your school?
 5. How has implementation of the OBPP affected the atmosphere of your school?
 6. Are there components of the OBPP that you disagree with? If so, which ones?
 7. Are there components of the OBPP that you feel strongly about in a positive way?
-

Appendix E: Baker University IRB Approval



Baker University Institutional Review Board

Monday, January 05, 2015

Dear Micah Friesen and Dr. Rogers

The Baker University Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the research proposal under Expedited Status Review.

After review, the IRB **approves** the protocol with the following **contingency**:

1. The participating teachers should be notified of the option to not answer any question that may make them feel uncomfortable. The author does offer this to the principals, but it should be offered to the teachers as well.

Work on the project may begin with the above concern(s) addressed and reviewed by the IRB. When revisions have been completed, please send an updated copy of the research protocol for our review.

If you have any questions about the IRB's decision, please contact me at 785-594-8440. Thank you for submitting this research proposal to the Baker University IRB.

Sincerely,

Chris Todden EdD
Chair, Baker University IRB

Baker University IRB Committee
Verneda Edwards EdD
Sara Crump PhD
Molly Anderson
Scott Crenshaw

Appendix F: Cover Letter for Survey Instrument

Teachers,

My name is Micah Friesen. I would appreciate your assistance with a research project I am conducting on elementary bullying and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. The project is being conducted through the Ed.D program at Baker University. I am administering a short survey during the month of January 2015, which should take approximately three-five minutes to complete.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and responses will be anonymous. Your name will not appear anywhere on the survey. You have the right to refuse to respond to particular items that make you feel uncomfortable. Teacher participation in this survey is extremely important for the completion of my research study. The results will provide useful information about the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.

By completing and returning the questionnaire you are acknowledging that you are 18 years of age or older and are consenting to participate in this study. If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact me at mfriesen@usd261.com. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Micah Friesen
Ed. D. Candidate
Baker University, Graduate School of Education
E-mail: mfriesen@usd261.com

Appendix G: Interview Consent Form

Principal Consent Form to Participate in the Study

You are invited to participate in research conducted by Micah Friesen related to elementary teachers' and principals' perceptions of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. One of the research questions is to determine principals' perceptions of the implementation of the OBPP. Your participation will take approximately 30 minutes.

I am asking your permission to conduct and tape record an interview with you as part of the research. The recording(s) will be used to assist in writing field notes, reflections, and add to the qualitative portion of my dissertation. The recording(s) will include your title as Principal only. Your name and the school name will not be recorded or used in the research. The recording(s) will be stored in a locked file cabinet and destroyed within a year from the interview. I will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

Your signature on this form grants me, as the investigator, permission to record you as described above during participation in the above-referenced research. The investigator will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your **participation is voluntary** and you have the **right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate.** You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

If you need to change your appointment, please contact me at 316-207-3773.

If you agree to participate in this research, please sign your name on the line below and indicate the date of your permission.
