



## **SAFE SCHOOLS FOR ALL YOUTH COALITION**

Coalition for Equal Access for Girls  
Community of Welcoming Congregations  
Center for Intercultural Organizing  
YWCA of Portland  
Oregon Safe Schools & Communities Coalition  
Cascade AIDS Project  
Stand for Children  
Oregon Students Association  
Oregon Students of Color Coalition  
Oregon Students Equal Rights Alliance  
Healthy Kids Learn Better Coalition  
Pan-Asian Community Alliance  
CAUSA Oregon  
CAUSA Eugene  
Religious Response Network  
Human Dignity Coalition  
Self Advocates As Leaders  
Oregon School Psychologists Association  
Human Rights Campaign  
American Federation of Teachers - Oregon  
Latino Network  
Family Action Coalition Team  
Latinos United Siempre  
Mano a Mano Family Center  
Girls, Inc.  
GLSEN Oregon  
Safe Schools Working Group (Springfield)  
Partnership for Safety and Justice  
National Association for Mental Illness  
National Association of Social Workers - Oregon Chapter  
Disability Rights Oregon  
Amigos Multicultural Center  
Portland Latino Gay Pride  
GSA Network  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Organizing People Activating Leaders  
Urban League  
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon  
Portland Association of Teachers

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Dear Friends:

Basic Rights Oregon is proud to have led a broad coalition of over 40 community groups who worked to pass the Oregon Safe Schools Act of 2009. This legislation is a critical first step to ensuring that Oregon youth have a safe environment in which to learn and grow.

Current data from Oregon reveals that more than 40% of Oregon youth report being harassed at school. It's especially difficult for youth of color, differently-abled youth and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth. Right now, gay and lesbian youth are three times more likely than their straight counterparts to find themselves homeless, drop out of school, or attempt suicide. Those numbers increase dramatically for transgender youth and LGBT youth of color.

We know that effective anti-bullying programs can cut bullying in half. The Oregon Safe Schools Act strengthens anti-bullying policies in public schools to ensure that every school in every district provides a safe environment for all students. The Oregon Safe Schools Act gives teachers and staff the tools to set clear expectations and hold students accountable. Critical early intervention is ensured by clearly communicated standards, combined with set procedures for dealing with problems as they arise and a designated point person for each school.

Understanding that legislation is just the first step, we have created this tool kit to support you in ensuring that the promise of the Oregon Safe School Act can be fully realized in your own community. Here you will find tools to help you make sure that the best policy is adopted in your school district, along with resources for training and prevention programs.

Thank you for your leadership in ensuring dignity and respect for all youth!

Sincerely,



Jeana Frazzini  
Executive Director  
Basic Rights Oregon

### **What does Oregon law say about anti-bullying policies in Oregon schools?**

In 2009, House Bill 2599, the Oregon Safe Schools Act, was signed into law. This law strengthens and enhances anti-bullying policies for K-12 public schools in Oregon.

### **How does the law define bullying, intimidation, harassment and cyber bullying?**

House Bill 2599 amends existing law. It defines bullying, harassment and intimidation as any act that:

- Substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities or performance;
- Takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop;
- Has the effect of:
  - Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property; or
  - Knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student’s property; or
  - Creating a hostile educational environment, including interfering with the psychological well-being of a student; and
- May be based on, but not be limited to, the protected class status of a person. “Protected class” means a group of persons distinguished, or perceived to be distinguished, by race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, familial status, disability or source of income.
  - *Cyber bullying is the use of any electronic communication device to harass, intimidate or bully.*

## **What must be included in school district anti-bullying policy for the 2009-2010 school year?**

### **The policy that the school district adopts must include:**

- o A statement prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying and prohibiting cyber bullying.
- o A description of the type of behavior expected from each student.
- o A statement of the consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying or an act of cyber bullying.
- o Definitions of “protected classes” that are consistent with state law.
- o Notice that the policy applies to behavior at school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation and at any official school bus stop

### **School districts are encouraged to consult with parents, guardians, school employees, volunteers, students, administrators and community representatives while developing their policy.**

The policy must include certain clear courses of action for reporting and investigating bullying:

- o A procedure that is uniform throughout the district to report an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying or an act of cyber bullying, including anonymous reports.
- o A uniform procedure for prompt investigation of a report of an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying or an act of cyber bullying.

### **The policy must designate who is in charge of dealing with bullying complaints and investigations. It must include:**

- o A list of the school officials responsible for receiving reports at a school and those responsible for investigating these reports.
- o The job titles of the school officials and school district officials responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.
- o A procedure that allows someone to request that the school district review the actions a school takes in responding to acts of bullying and reports of bullying.

**The district is required to spell out in the policy how they will handle incidences of bullying**

**The law states that the district's anti-bullying policy must include:**

- A description of how a school and school district will respond after an act of bullying is reported, investigated and confirmed.
- A statement of the consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have committed an act of bullying.
- The law makes it clear that it is prohibited to retaliate against any person who reports an act of bullying and requires clear consequences and remedial action for a person who engages in such reprisal or retaliation.
- It also requires districts to outline consequences and remedial action for someone who makes false accusations about bullying.

**The law requires that a district publicize the policy within the district.**

At a minimum, a school district shall make the policy annually available to parents, guardians, school employees and students in a student or employee handbook. It must also be readily available to parents, guardians, school employees, volunteers, students, administrators and community representatives at each school or district office and, if available, on the school or district website.

**The Oregon Safe Schools Act is effective July 1, 2009, and applies to the 2009-2010 school year.**

A school district that does not have an updated anti-bullying policy in place by the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year risks being designated as “nonstandard” if it is reported to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Superintendent may withhold funding from “nonstandard” districts.

- The law does not require any formal training for school officials, teachers, students or parents on the issue of bullying, although the law encourages such training for students and school employees.
- The law does not require schools or districts to collect data on the number of reports of bullying or the outcome of these reports, though school districts may (and some do) collect such data.
- The law does not permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- This law does not have any effect on policies at private schools.
- This law does not have any effect on college or university policies.

The Oregon Safe Schools Act became effective July 1, 2009 and applies to the 2009-2010 school year. All of the steps below must be completed before the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year or the district will be "nonstandard" and will risk losing state funding.

- School Board approves updated model policy
- School Board instructs School District Superintendent to give notice to all schools that a new anti-bullying policy is in place
- Superintendent assigns school district official to be in charge of implementation of updated policy requirements
- District creates uniform bullying incident report form and investigation procedure and ensures that uniform system is in place in all schools
- District updates anti-bullying policy on website and in student, parent, and employee handbooks
- District employee in charge of implementation ensures that the principal of each school in the district has assigned a school employee to receive reports of bullying and ensures that that person's role is known to students, employees and parents

## How to Get the Model Policy Implemented In Your Local School District

Not all school boards keep track of new laws passed by the State Legislature. So even though the Oregon Safe Schools Act (HB 2599) has become law, it does not mean your school board will know that it needs to implement an anti-bullying policy or update its existing policy for schools in your community.

There are currently 198 school boards in Oregon – far too many for any non-profit organization to communicate with effectively about the new law. The conversation has to happen at the local level.

1. **Start NOW** to let the school board know the law has passed and that the Board needs to take action – board members will need time to plan for implementation. You can communicate with the Board in several ways:
  - **Contact a school board member you think is friendly and ask that person to take the lead on implementing the anti-bullying policy** by presenting the issue to other school board members at an upcoming meeting.
  - OR contact the school board before their next meeting (you can also contact the superintendant) and **ask to have time in an upcoming school board agenda to speak about the new law.**
  - OR **go to a school board meeting and sign up for an opportunity to speak during the public comment period**, which usually occurs at the beginning of the meeting. You may only have two or three minutes.
  - OR **write a letter to your local school board** and send it via email to all the members.
    - School board members' contact info is available on the school district website and at school district headquarters.
    - School board meeting dates, locations and agendas are available on the school district website and at school district headquarters.
2. **Give a copy of the text of the new law and the Oregon Schools Boards Association's model anti-bullying policy (located in of this toolkit) to each school board member.**
3. **Keep An Eye on the Process**
  - Your school board may not want to implement certain aspects of the new law or may feel that it has more pressing concerns. If that is the case, gently remind the board that the Oregon Safe Schools Act became effective July 1, 2009, and that each school district in the state must implement its model policy during the 2009 – 2010 school year or it

will risk being deemed “nonstandard.” A “nonstandard” school district is in danger of losing state school funding.

- By law, your school board has one year to implement or update its anti-bullying policy. If your school board does not do so by the start of the 2010 - 2011 school year, you should report it to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The process is set out in Oregon law at . Scroll down to Oregon Revised Statute 327.103 for details. If you do not alert the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, it is likely that no one else will do so.

**Some policies set out in the Oregon Safe Schools Act are required and others are suggested. Please ask your school board to:**

- **Offer trainings!** Under the new law, school districts are *encouraged* (but not required) to incorporate into existing training programs for students and school employees information related to the prevention of, and the appropriate response to, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying and acts of cyberbullying. Studies have shown educating students and staff about positive, respectful behavior is more effective in combating bullying than punishing bullies after an incident occurs.
- **Create a task force that involves school employees, students, administrators, volunteers, parents, guardians, law enforcement and community representatives!** Under the new law, school districts are *encouraged* (but not required) to form task forces and to implement programs and other initiatives that are aimed at the prevention of, and the appropriate response to, acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying and acts of cyberbullying.
- **Be creative and proactive in encouraging positive behavior!**
- School board members are volunteers. Please be considerate rather than demanding and thank them for their service.
- Approach the school board in the spirit of cooperation. We all want the same thing for our youth – to be able to learn effectively in a safe and supportive school environment. The Safe Schools Act helps to foster that environment.
- All school boards in Oregon had elections in May 2009, so your board may include some new members just learning their role. Don’t expect them to be experts.

**SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR  
LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**RE: Legislature Requires School Districts to Update Anti-bullying Policies this School Year**

Dear School Board Members:

First, as a I thank you for your service on the school board. I know it takes a lot of energy and I appreciate you volunteering your time to make our local schools better for all students.

An issue that I am particularly concerned with in local schools is the continued problem of harassment, intimidation, and bullying that I hear about from students. [ADD A LOCAL STORY OF BULLYING OR COMMENT YOU HAVE HEARD FROM A LOCAL STUDENT OR TEACHER.]

Fortunately, the state legislature has taken action to address this problem. **I am writing to let you know about a school safety bill that became law this summer, which requires action by the school board as we head into the 2009-2010 school year in order to avoid designation as a “nonstandard” district.**

HB 2599, the Oregon Safe Schools Act, was passed by the state Legislature to amend and make more effective Oregon’s existing anti-bullying law, codified at ORS 339.351 – 339.364. The law requires school districts to include specific elements in their policies addressing harassment, intimidation, bullying, and cyber-bullying. I have attached a copy of HB 2599 and the model anti-bullying policy offered by the Oregon School Boards Association for the Board to use as a template to update our district’s policy.

While it is true that children have been bullying one another since the dawn of time, a study by the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center indicates that **schools with effective anti-bullying programs can cut bullying in half.** That means more students focusing on learning rather than fearing for their safety in school.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help the Board put our district’s new policy in place and to tell parents, teachers, students, staff and volunteers what the new policy means for the district, their school and themselves. You can reach me at [phone number] or [email].

Again, thank you for your service.

Sincerely

Your name(s)

## **Turning the Oregon Safe Schools Act into Your School's Anti-bullying Policy**

One of the services that the Oregon School Board Association (OSBA) provides for Oregon's School Boards is the development of model policies to comply with education law. Basic Rights Oregon is working with the OSBA to develop a comprehensive policy based on the Oregon Safe Schools Act that will be available later this summer. Please visit [www.basicrights.org](http://www.basicrights.org) for updates.

**Seven things to know if you're being bullied or harassed in school:**

1. In 2009, the Oregon Legislature passed and the Governor signed House Bill 2599, the Oregon Safe Schools Act. This law makes anti-bullying policies in Oregon stronger. The new law defines bullying, harassment and intimidation as any act that:
  - Makes learning, educational opportunities or performance more difficult for a student
  - Takes place on school grounds, school-sponsored activities, school-provided transportation or official school bus stops
  - Physically harms a student or their property, makes a student afraid of physical harm, or causes non-physical harm (emotional or mental harm.)

The Oregon Safe Schools Act also includes cyberbullying (bullying, harassment, or intimidation online or electronically) and school districts are required to adopt or update their anti-bullying policy for the 2009/10 school year.

2. You have the right to be yourself. Under the Oregon Safe Schools Act, you are protected from bullying and harassment on the basis of your actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation (including gender identity), national origin, marital status, familial status, source of income or disability.
3. If you are having problems with bullying or harassment there is someone at your school you can talk to – this might be a teacher, a counselor, or an administrator such as your principal. Your school district's policy must state who is in charge of dealing with bullying.
4. There is a process for reporting bullying and harassment at your school. Your school district's policy must also include details about this process.
5. When you report bullying and harassment it's a good idea to keep notes with dates and descriptions of all the incidents and when you reported them.
6. No one deserves to be bullied or harassed. School is supposed to be a safe place for everybody. When it isn't, it is your fault.
7. You can check out the resources page to find more information and connect with resources that can help you if you're being bullied or harassed or if you're seeing it happen.

Below are a few community organizations and online resources to connect to trainings, prevention programs, advocacy groups, and more.

## EDUCATION ADVOCACY

### Oregon School Boards Association

[www.osba.org](http://www.osba.org)  
1201 Court Street NE, Suite 400  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
Phone: 503-588-2800 | 1-800-578-OSBA | Fax: 503-588-2813

### Oregon PTA (Parent/Teacher Associations)

[www.oregonpta.org](http://www.oregonpta.org)  
4506 SE Belmont  
Suite 108B  
Portland, OR 97215  
503.234.3928

### Healthy Kids Learn Better Coalition

[www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/ah/cshp/cshp.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/ah/cshp/cshp.shtml)  
Adolescent Health Section  
Office of Family Health  
Oregon Department of Human Services - Health Services  
800 NE Oregon Street, Ste. 825  
Portland, Oregon 97232  
Phone: 971-673-0252 | Fax: 971-673-0240

### Oregon Student Association

#### Oregon Students of Color Coalition

#### Oregon Student Equal Rights Alliance

[www.orstudents.org](http://www.orstudents.org)  
635 NE Dekum St.  
Portland, OR 97211  
Phone: 503-286-0477 | Fax: 503-286-0924

### Stand for Children

[www.stand.org](http://www.stand.org)  
516 SE Morrison St  
Portland, OR 97214-2327  
Phone: 503-235-2305

### Oregon Small Schools Association

Oregon Small Schools Association  
2001 SW Nye Avenue  
Pendleton, Oregon 97801  
Phone: 888-437-6892 | Fax: 541-276-4252

### Safe Schools Working Group (Springfield, Oregon)

Community Alliance of Lane County  
[www.calclane.org](http://www.calclane.org)  
458 Blair Blvd,  
Eugene, OR 97402  
Phone: 541-485-1755

## SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

### Oregon School Psychologists Association

[www.ospaonline.com](http://www.ospaonline.com)  
PMB 419  
25 NW 23rd PL STE 6  
Portland, OR 97210-5599

[www.bullypolice.org](http://www.bullypolice.org)

## LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER STUDENT ADVOCACY

### Oregon Safe Schools & Communities Coalition

#### Oregon GSA Network

[www.oregonsafeschools.org](http://www.oregonsafeschools.org)  
[www.oregongsa.org](http://www.oregongsa.org)  
PO Box 80604  
Portland, OR 97280  
Phone: 503-232-4556

### GLSEN Oregon (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network)

[www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)  
11745 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy  
Beaverton, Oregon 97005  
Phone: 503-936-5614 | Fax: 503-646-4139

### Basic Rights Oregon

[www.basicrights.org](http://www.basicrights.org)  
PO Box 40625  
Portland, OR 97240  
Phone: 503-222-6151 | Fax: 503-236-6686

## DISABILITY ADVOCACY

### Family And Community Together

[www.factoreregion.org](http://www.factoreregion.org)  
619 SW 11th Avenue, Suite 102, Portland, OR 97205  
Phone: 888-988-FACT (3228) | Fax: 503-227-0346

### Disability Rights Oregon (formerly The ARC)

[www.oradvocacy.org](http://www.oradvocacy.org)  
620 SW Fifth Ave, Suite 500  
Portland, OR 97204-1420  
Voice: 503-243-2081 or 1-800-452-1694 / TTY: 503-323-9161 or 1-800-556-5351  
Fax: 1-503-243-1738

### Self Advocates as Leaders

[www.asksaal.org](http://www.asksaal.org)  
3886 Beverly Ave NE # I21  
Salem, OR 97305-1373  
Phone: 503-589-1664

## **GIRLS ADVOCACY:**

### **Girls, Inc. of NW Oregon**

[www.girlsinitiativenetwork.org](http://www.girlsinitiativenetwork.org)

1233 SE Stark St

Portland, OR 97214-1437

Phone: 503-230-0054

### **Coalition for Equal Access for Girls**

1500 NE Irving St. Suite 250

Portland, OR 97232

Phone: 503-258-4167 | Fax: 503-630-5883

## **RACIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY**

### **Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon**

[www.apano.org](http://www.apano.org)

311 N Ivy

Portland, OR 97212

Phone: 503-896-7560

### **Pan-Asian Community Alliance**

Email: [panasiancommunityalliance@gmail.com](mailto:panasiancommunityalliance@gmail.com)

[P.O. Box 21512](#)

Eugene, OR

### **Latino Network**

[www.latnet.org](http://www.latnet.org)

5123 N Michigan Ave

Portland, OR 97217-2516

Phone: 503-283-6881

### **Urban League of Portland**

[www.ulpdx.org](http://www.ulpdx.org)

10 N Russell St

Portland, OR 97227-1673

Phone: 503-280-2600

## **CAUSA**

[www.causaoregon.org](http://www.causaoregon.org)

700 Marion St NE

Salem, OR 97301

Phone: 503-269-5694 | Fax: 503-982-1031

### **Center for Intercultural Organizing**

[www.interculturalorganizing.org](http://www.interculturalorganizing.org)

700 N. Killingsworth Street

Portland, Oregon 97217

Phone: 503-287-4117

### **Latinos Unidos Siempre**

[www.latinosunidosiempre.org](http://www.latinosunidosiempre.org)

#### **Colonia Libertad**

2921 Saddle Club St. S.E. #1009

Salem, OR 97317

Phone: 503-315-2292 | Fax: 503-315-2424

## **RURAL OREGON & SMALL TOWN ADVOCACY**

### **Human Dignity Coalition**

[www.humandignitycoalition.org](http://www.humandignitycoalition.org)

354 NE Greenwood Ave

Bend, OR 97701-4624

Phone: 541-385-3320

### **Rural Organizing Project**

[www.rop.org](http://www.rop.org)

PO Box 1350

Scappoose, OR 97056

Phone: 503-543-8417

## **ONLINE BULLYING RESOURCES:**

[www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov)

[www.safeyouth.org](http://www.safeyouth.org)

[www.schoolsafety.us](http://www.schoolsafety.us)