

Dear Berkeley Family:

Berkeley Middle School takes bullying seriously. Our school counselor team of Mrs. Lively and Mrs. Strange just finished working with our 6th grade students on the first portion of their Bully Proofing Program. During these classes, their intent was to introduce our students to what constitutes bullying, versus the normal conflict and teasing that can and does take place between students at this age. After identifying these areas, the team worked with our classes to help them understand what they can do to if they find themselves in such a situation. Obviously, letting an adult know about it is an important first step. Our students are also taught to advocate for themselves and to be resilient in cases of teasing.

As we continue through the fall, our 8th grade and 7th grade students will receive similar time with our guidance counselors to work through a refresher of the difference between teasing, bullying, and harassment and how they can prevent and build self-reliance skills at Berkeley.

If your child is being teased or harassed or finding themselves involved in some of the normal conflict that often takes place between students at this age, please be sure to share this information with the classroom teacher, counselor, or administration. We will partner with you to offer the best possible solution to the situation. Obviously, our goal is get the actions to stop. If further intervention is required, we are here to assist in any way.

Remember that for any situation to qualify as bullying, the actions have to be repetitive and ongoing, willful and purposeful, and done with the intent to harm over this time. This is how we work to define what bullying is with our students at Berkeley.

Finally, we have shared with our students and share with you our Matrix of Consequences for Bullying to ensure that everyone in our learning community is of the same understanding that this behavior is not positive, not supported, and has consequences that are attached to it that can be extremely severe depending upon the situation. We share this information with you in order to help support your conversations and discussions about teasing, conflict, and bullying at home and hope that the information is useful!

Thank you for your partnership and continued support of student safety and well-being at Berkeley. We appreciate all of your efforts at home to work with us here to educate the entire child!