

## **BULLYING**

- WHEREAS, Bullying in school is a pervasive problem that can have negative consequences for the school climate and for the right of students to learn in a safe environment without fear, and one that can have negative lifelong consequences, both for students who bully and for their targets; and
- WHEREAS, Bullying is comprised of direct behaviors such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against a target, as well as indirect behaviors such as spreading rumors and acting in other ways to cause a student to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion, with all such behaviors, direct or indirect, amounting to physical or psychological intimidation occurring repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse; and
- WHEREAS, The American Medical Association in 2002 adopted a new anti-bullying policy that concludes bullying is not just a matter of kids being kids, but a public health problem; and
- WHEREAS, The National Association of Attorneys General in meetings with students across the nation in 2000 found bullying, “dissing,” harassing and outcasting as major contributors to youth violence in the opinions of the young people, with other surveys of students, including one survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Nickelodeon showing bullying as a “big problem” ranking higher than racism, AIDS, the pressure to have sex or to try alcohol or drugs; and
- WHEREAS, Bullying other children or being the target of bullies are considered risk factors for youth violence by the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and
- WHEREAS, A study complete in 2002 by the National Threat Assessment Center, run by the U.S. Secret Service, found that in more than two-thirds of 37 school shootings, the attackers felt “persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked or injured; and
- WHEREAS, Bullies whose behavior goes unchallenged risk ending up as violent adults, with boy bullies being at greater risk of becoming spouse abusers as adults and girl bullies being at greater risk of becoming abusers of their own children; and
- WHEREAS, Bullying for too long has gone unchallenged, with parents, who are often unaware of the bullying problem, neglecting to talk about it with their children; with students feeling that adult intervention is infrequent and ineffective and will only bring more harassment from bullies; and with school personnel viewing bullying as a harmless right of passage that is best ignored; and
- RESOLVED, That Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers support legislation requiring school districts to have policies dealing with bullying and

programs to prevent bullying and in some way secure or require skilled intervention and/or treatment for both bullies and their targets; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers, through its member councils and units, encourage their boards of education to adopt policies dealing with bullying and have programs in their school districts to prevent bullying and in some way secure or require skilled intervention and/or treatment for both bullies and their targets; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers, through its member councils and units, encourage and sponsor programs such as conflict resolution, anger management, assertiveness, self-esteem and social interaction to help both bullies and their targets; and be it further

Resolved, That Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers, through its member councils and units, endeavor via educational literature, programs and projects for parents, students and school personnel, to bring about an atmosphere of zero tolerance for bullying behavior, and an attitude that bullying behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in homes, schools, playgrounds, buses, school activities or anyplace children congregate.

Adopted 2003