



**BEST PRACTICES
CLEARINGHOUSE**

- Lessons from the Field -

Preventing and Intervening in Identity-Based Bullying

Wednesday, October 19, 2022 | 3:00 – 4:30 PM ET
Transcript

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Hello, everyone, and welcome to our webinar, Preventing and Intervening in Identity-Based Bullying. We're excited to have you here today for our latest installment in our Lessons from the Field Webinar Series. This series highlights critical information from subject matter experts, and shares effective tools, techniques, and strategies employed by everyday practitioners to increase the safety, and the wellness, and learning opportunities for young people in our schools. We are excited to have you here and hope that you'll enjoy this webinar.

My name is Cindy Carraway-Wilson, and I am the training specialist for the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments or NCSSLE. NCSSLE is funded by the Office of Safe Supportive Schools within the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. To learn a bit more about NCSSLE, we encourage you to log onto our website to access a wide range of resources that address school climate and conditions for learning. Our main areas of focus really are pretty diverse on the site, and we encourage you to visit this site to access our tools.

To give you a sense of what the website looks like, here you'll see on the right-hand side a snapshot of our homepage. On the left side, you see a variety of tools and resources that are easily accessible and downloadable for your use. Please note that all materials you see today, including the slides, the referenced resources, and the archive of the recording will be available on the event webpage within this website. In fact, some items are already there, including the slides and the speaker bios. Please also note that you can access previous lessons from the field sessions by visiting the webinar series webpage, which is also listed here and will be posted periodically in chat. We welcome you to share your strategies with us, and work that you have done on this topic, and more at bestpracticesclearinghouse@ed.gov.

We'd like to begin by letting you know a little bit about who's in the room. You can see from the slide that people identify with various different roles. The most common role selected for this webinar was the student support specialist, including social workers, and psychologists, and others in the school. The other categories are second highest, and this category includes folks from the community-based organizations, community mobilizers and advocates, prevention specialists and coordinators, therapists and counselors, and professionals who work with resettlement agencies or who work with newcomers. We also have a few people who are identifying as students or family members. You can see the distribution of the rest of the roles on this chart.

I'd like to briefly show you the agenda. We're currently in that logistics area. We're going to be moving to the official welcome from our U.S. Department of Education speaker, and then move into a series of presentations to provide context. Then we'll go into our panel discussion, and then closing remarks for those of you who need to leave on the quarter hour. But please do remember the last 10 to 15 minutes of this webinar we will be spending responding to live questions from our audience. We hope you can stay for that, as well.

We have a great lineup of speakers and panelists in our webinar today. I'd like to briefly show you the speakers next so that we can move into their presentations. We have an entire page devoted to the bios of our speakers, and we encourage you to click that link to see more and to learn more about what our subject matter experts have been doing in this field of identity-based bullying.

Right now, I'd like to take this moment to introduce Mr. Bryan Williams, the Director of the Office of Safe Supportive Schools out of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education in the U.S. Department of Education, who's going to provide our official welcome. Mr. Williams?

Bryan Williams:

Hey, thanks, Cindy, and welcome, everybody. I'm pleased to have you join us today for the Lessons from the Field Webinar on Preventing and Intervening in Identity-Based Bullying. As we focus on bullying today, this webinar is one of the many ways the U.S. Department of Education is recognizing National Bullying and Prevention Month, and we really appreciate you taking the time today to join us.

As I'm sure many of you already know, bullying in the context of schools is a form of unwanted aggressive behavior among school age children of similar age that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Over time, the behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, and unfortunately, both kids who are bullied and those who bully others can experience serious, long-lasting issues. In short, no matter what, bullying is not something that we can accept in our schools and communities.

Today we will talk about a type of bullying that is particularly harmful, and that is identity-based bullying. This is because aspects of identity are so core to who

we are as people, who we are as individuals. If we are to create safe and supportive learning environments where every student feels that they can thrive and feels enriched, we must continue to find ways to address identity-based bullying and promote inclusive environments for all students.

Today's webinar is designed to focus on exactly that. We hope it will help increase your understanding of the problem of identity-based bullying and the impact it has on our students, our schools, and our communities, and that you will learn more about strategies that you can use to help prevent and address identity-based bullying in your community. So again, thanks for joining us today, and now I'd like to turn it back over to Cindy.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you so much for that warm welcome, Mr. Williams. We appreciate the ongoing support of the Department of Education on this important webinar series, and we're excited to kick it off. Now, I'd like to introduce Dr. Christopher Allen, who's a behavioral scientist at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control in the Division of Violence Prevention at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or the CDC. Dr. Allen's going to provide us with some information about bullying to begin to set the context for our discussions. Dr. Allen?

Christopher Allen: Good afternoon, everyone. How are you doing today? Before I get started, I just really want to thank NCSSE for inviting me to participate in this webinar, and I'm excited to share some research findings about bullying, as well as where to find some resources to engage in some prevention of bullying.

Let's see. Before diving into any statistics, or numbers, or research findings, I'd really like to start off by clarifying what I mean when I use the word bullying. When I say bullying, I am talking about the formal uniform definition of bullying, which is an unwanted aggressive behavior by another youth, or group of youths, or youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance, and is repeated multiple times, or is highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth, including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm.

I really want to stress that bullying includes the three main components that are highlighted on the screen in red, so unwanted aggressive behaviors, involvement of a perceived or observed power imbalance and repetition, or having the potential to be repeated. This uniform definition for children's bullying is the one that's used across federal agencies. It was developed across several years via collaboration among CDC, Health Resources and Services Administration, and the Department of Education, along with other federal agencies, researchers, experts, practitioners, and school officials.

When we're thinking about bullying, there are various types of bullying that we want to keep in mind. Bullying can be physical, such as hitting, kicking, or tripping. It can be verbal, so name calling or teasing. It can also be relational or social, for example, spreading rumors or leaving somebody out of a group. Bullying can also involve damage to property. Finally, I also wanted to mention

that bullying can also occur via electronic media or electronic means, also referred to as cyberbullying. While beneficial for communities of learning and connectedness, we want to keep in mind that the increased online activity that we have seen in recent generations can also result in increased risk for online harms like cyberbullying. Bullying is not something that's limited to school grounds, and cyberbullying can happen any time someone is in an online community environment, whether that is online being in social media, or playing video games, or even in a virtual learning environment.

Now, when we turn to the numbers on bullying, what we see is that, unfortunately, bullying is a very common and widespread public health problem in the United States. Analyses of the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey estimate that one in five, or nearly 20%, of U.S. high school students were bullied on school property, and that more than one in six, or about 16%, were cyberbullied during the past 12 months. Similarly, a 2020 probability based nationally representative study found that about 15% of preteens between the ages of nine and 12 reported ever being cyberbullied in the United States.

Now, with these numbers, what we want to keep in mind is that one of the reasons that we stress the importance of paying attention to bullying and intervening and preventing bullying is that bullying is a developmental precursor for multiple forms of violence. What we see on the graphic on the screen here is that bullying perpetration during childhood is at the foundation of an overt developmental pathway for other violent and delinquent behaviors. When we look at the research, we see is that studies have shown that bullying can lead to physical fighting and other serious forms of violence, including adult intimate partner violence, self-directed violence such as suicidal ideation, deliberate self-harm, and suicide, as well as delinquency.

We also want to keep in mind that the research has shown that bullying can also be a precursor for sexual violence. That can be sexual harassment, sexual coercion, and sexual assault, as well as teen dating violence. Formally in research, we refer to this as the bullying sexual violence pathway, and given their shared risk factors, so perceptions and actions related to social, sexual learning, alcohol use, and social violence, what we want to keep in mind is that addressing bullying not only helps with bullying, but can also prevent other multiple forms of community violence. In fact, what we see in the research is that preventing bullying during the school age years can actually prevent other multiple forms of violence across the lifespan, as well as reduce disciplinary actions and other use risk behaviors.

When we look at the evidence base for bullying overall, some of the key findings on what works is definitely growing. A good place to find a summary of it is a report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine supported by the CDC and other federal agencies. This comprehensive report titled ... excuse me, titled Preventing Bullying, explains the state of the science on the biological and psychosocial consequences of bullying, peer victimization, as well as the risk and protective factors that either increase or decrease bullying behavior and its consequences. Their findings, some of which are listed

on the screen, summarize the best science we have on bullying, and confirms a lot of what I mentioned today, as well as providing some recommendations for future research and practice.

For instance, some of the things I want to highlight from this report are there are short and long-term consequences of bullying for everyone involved, not just the person being bullied, but also the person doing bullying. Zero tolerance policies for bullying are not effective. The use of common uniform definitions for bullying is important and even essential for getting a comprehensive understanding of bullying and being able to prevent it effectively. The report also encourages the development, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based prevention and intervention programs. Finally, it also highlights the role of laws and policies to strengthen local efforts to prevent bullying in communities.

When we look at some of the bullying statistics more granularly, one of the things we see is that bullying rates vary by sex, race, ethnicity, gender preference, and other youth characteristics. In other words, what I'm saying is that some youth experience bullying more than others. Again, looking at analyses from the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, data found that among U.S. high school students, more female than males reported being bullied in school or during electronic interaction during the past year. Similarly, we found that more non-Hispanic white than Hispanic and non-Hispanic black high school students reported to being bullied, and more LGB and unsure students than heterosexual students reported being victimized by bullying.

I also wanted to mention that at CDC we are also continuously engaged in different types of studies related to bullying prevention. For example, one recent publication based on 2020 Fall Consumer Styles and Estilos online panel survey data analysis explored U.S. parents' and caregivers' self-reported changes in concern about children's bullying, as the one bullying others, being bullied, or witnessing the bullying. This survey took place during the fall of 2020, so during the COVID 19 pandemic, and compared survey data to the prior year. What we looked at specifically were the differences in children's type of school attendance, either physically at school or not physically at school, as well as parents' self-reported race and ethnicity.

In terms of the type of school attendance as it related to the findings on bullying, what we found is that U.S. parents' concern generally did not change in 2020 compared to 2019. However, there were significant differences found by children's type of school attendance, either in person or virtual, as well as parents' race and ethnicity. Not physically attending school was associated with parents being less or not concerned about their children being bullied. This finding in particular warrants further insight into parents' knowledge and beliefs about bullying, as it may generally suggest that U.S. parents consider bullying to be mostly a physical school grounds problem and not necessarily a public health problem that can happen anywhere. While the type of school attendance plays a role in parents' level concern about their children being bullied, it is not the only factor in determining how their parents are concerned about it.

What we see is, if we go onto the next slide, is that when we ask ... or excuse me, when we ask parents about their specific concerns, the nature of their concerns, about bullying, we see that not only are they more concerned about being bullied in general, we see that racial and ethnic minority parents in the United States specifically are the ones who report the greatest concern about their children being involved in bullying. Hispanic parents accounted for the highest proportion of parents who said that they were more concerned about their child being bullied now, or in 2020, as compared to the previous year 2019, followed by non-Hispanic black parents.

Diving a little deeper in unpacking those findings, what we found is that this study's analyses identified racism as the most frequently reported reason why U.S. parents are more concerned about their children being bullied. Looking at both the Consumer Styles and the Estilos parents, 42% of the Fall 2020 Consumer Styles parents, and 60% of the Estilos parents cited racism as the primary reason for their increased concern about bullying. To the author's knowledge, the authors of the study, this is the first study based on nationally representative online survey panel data to identify racism as the reason for U.S. parents' increase concern about their children being bullied.

I'd also like to mention some resources for bullying prevention before I end my time. First of all, I wanted to start off with CDC's Youth Violence Technical Package. The CDC actually has technical packages for youth violence, including bullying, sexual violence, suicide and self-harm, child abuse and neglect, and you can actually find them on the link shown on the slide. What this technical package does is it lays out strategies, which are directions of actions, so how to go about preventing whatever specific type of violence you're interested in, approach, so specific ways to advance a strategy, so programs, policies, and practices, as well as evidence for each approach in preventing violence and its associated risk factors.

The next resource that I wanted to mention is the Community Preventive Services Task Force. What this does is it makes evidence-based recommendations and findings about the effectiveness and economics of public health intervention approaches, and to disseminate the findings through the community guide to inform how communities protect and improve the population's health. What the Community Preventive Services Task Force does is it recommends school based anti-bullying interventions to reduce bullying experiences and improve mental health among students. The recommendations are based on evidence from 69 studies included in a systematic review and meta-analysis published in 2021. The evidence shows that school-based anti-bullying interventions lead to the following small but very meaningful outcomes: reductions in bullying, perpetration and victimization, improvements in anxiety, depression and wellbeing, and reductions in cyber bullying, perpetration, and victimization.

Then finally, I also wanted to mention that most of the federal government's bullying information and dissemination efforts are conducted in partnership with other federal agencies through the Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention

Work Group and stopbullying.gov, which is the homepage that you see on the screen here. Additionally, beyond stopbullying.gov, at CDC, we also actively disseminate information and resources through our CDC's Injury Center Veto Violence webpage, which is shown on the screen. The address for this is, without any triple W's, vetoviolence.CDC.gov. As a quick sneak peek, we are actually going to have a bullying prevention toolkit coming up soon. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present today.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you, Dr. Allen, for providing the basic context that we need for bullying in general. Now we're going to be diving deeper into the identity based bullying side of this. It's my pleasure to introduce Ms. Stephanie Rapp, who is the program manager at the Delinquency Prevention and Child Protection Division of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Ms. Rapp?

Stephanie Rapp: Good afternoon, everybody, and thank you, Cindy, for that introduction. Let's see. As Cindy mentioned, I'm a program manager at the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. OJJDP's vision, we envision a nation where our children are free from crime and violence. If they come into contact with the justice system, the contact should be rare, fair, and beneficial to them. OJJDP provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to youth delinquency and victimization. The office helps states, localities, and tribes develop effective and equitable juvenile justice systems that create safer communities and empower youth to lead productive lives.

Identity-based bullying is any form of bullying that occurs because of the use, actual or perceived, social identity or identities. Example includes a racist or antisemitic remark, or shoving someone due to actual or perceived LGBTQ identity. Various identities are frequently associated with higher levels of victimization, including but not limited to age, ethnicity, race, disability, gender, weight, and sexual identity. I'm going to give you a brief overview of our programs that can be used to prevent and combat bullying, including identity based bullying.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention launched a comprehensive national initiative to prevent youth hate crimes and identity-based bullying. Operating from a youth-based lens that focuses on prevention and early intervention, OJJDP is taking a multi-pronged approach through this initiative. We want to increase awareness of youth hate crimes and identity-based bullying, identify best practices and evidence-based strategies to build protective factors, ensure youth have a voice on this topic, and provide grantees, interested communities and the field at large tools to change the attitude and behavior of young offenders and at risk youth. This initiative kicked off October 27th in 2021 with a two day virtual symposium, it was followed by a series of 13 webinars, the initiative included 19 national youth round tables across seven cities this summer, the development of a youth hate crime and identity based bullying prevention curriculum, and a synthesis of findings in a special report and an associated fact sheet, everything can be viewed on our website except the curriculum and special report, which will be posted this December.

Why do we need to focus on mitigating identity based bullying? I pulled up two examples from our expert speakers, one, I think you're going to hear from later today. Since the start of the Covid 19 pandemic, there's been an alarming rise in harassment and bullying against Asian American communities. The organization, Act To Change shared that inside and out of the classroom Asian American students became targets of verbal assaults by peers and at times physical violence, they were spit on, punched and accused of causing the pandemic. When schools transitioned to a virtual learning classroom, the harassment moved online into social media platforms where Asian American youth faced cyber bullying. Our speaker from GLSEN shared a study of LGBTQ youth, four out of five youth did not feel safe at school, there are a number of marginalized vulnerable populations who need our support. As noted, research has illustrated negative consequences for youth who experience bias based bullying and harassment from peers, including greater risk of substance use, lower levels of academic achievement, higher levels of truancy, and higher rates of mental health issues, such as depression, psychological distress, and suicidal ideation.

Also, the 2019 FBI UCR report showed that 15.4% of youth were responsible for hate crimes across the United States, it was close to the same in 2020. A recently completed study of hate crime investigations in the US found that for most of the hate crime investigations in their samples, the victims were targeted because of race, ethnicity, or ancestry, followed by sexual orientation, religion, gender identity, disability, and gender. The Simon Wiesenthal Center surveyed 2667, 8 to 12 graders in 2019 and 2020, and the survey was, I see hateful or harmful content online. 33.2% of the youth responded that they see hateful or harmful content online daily, and an additional 38.2% see that type of information online, weekly.

All of these are alarming statistics. The virtual symposium that we had addressed important topics such as current trends and research on identity-based bullying, cyber bullying, youth related hate crimes, and how hate groups use social media and technology to reach, recruit and radicalize youth, panel discussions provided programs, best practices and evidence-based strategies on how schools, families, law enforcement, and communities can work together to build protective factors in youth and help youth resist and disengage from extremist hate groups. OJJDP conducted a listening session with experts in the field to find out where there was the most need for information, this 13 part webinar series provides juvenile justice professionals, law enforcement, and school communities and understanding of youth hate crimes, identity-based bullying and hate groups, along with strategies to prevent identity-based bullying, hate crimes, and mitigating microaggressions and implicit bias.

The development of the curriculum was informed by our 19 Youth Roundtable discussions that OJJDP facilitated across the country with middle and high school age youth, this curriculum provides an interactive learning process that educates young people about bias, prejudice, and hate, and provides them with the information, awareness, skill development, and motivation to be active participants in combating prejudice and hate in their schools and communities both online and offline. Youth are among the most powerful influencers on the

other young people and on the culture of their schools and communities, when they come face to face with bias, prejudice, and hate, many are highly motivated to take action, but they often need support and opportunities to develop safe and effective skills to respond. The curricular lessons in the guide provide activities and resources useful in the development of these skills in youth.

Here, I've included resources for you. These resources come from a variety of places, they are proven practices, evidence-based practices, promising practices altogether, so you would have to research each one to look to see what would work best for your school. All youth can benefit from attempts to enhance school climate, change attitudes or awareness about bullying, reduce aggressive behavior. For this slide, this is universal prevention. In our special report, we listed programs that focus on identity based bullying and hate crime prevention, which we have here, these programs are listed under universal prevention, secondary prevention, and intervention for youth who have... Secondary Prevention is for at risk youth and intervention programs are for youth, have been involved in bullying, either as a bully or a victim. These are our secondary prevention programs for you to look at, if you download this PowerPoint, you can actually just click on each one of these and the links will come up.

The OJJDP FY 2022 Enhancing School Capacity to Address Youth Violence Program supports targeted efforts to address youth violence by implementing evidence-based prevention and intervention efforts in a school-based setting. The goals are to reduce the incidents of school violence through improved school safety and climate, prevent youth violence, delinquency and victimization in the targeted communities, many programs incorporate a bullying prevention component. From 2017 to the first six months of 2021, OJJDP funded mentoring programs that served an estimated one million youth around the country, mentoring can be provided one to one in a group by peers or with combined models, some of our mentoring programs such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of America incorporate their own bullying prevention curriculum into their programming. Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America conducted a study of their program and found significant improvements in the areas such as school engagement, self-control, social skills, self-advocacy, and family functioning, these outcomes build protective factors, which I believe can help prevent bullying behaviors.

Mentoring with LGBT youth have positive outcomes as well. If mentors are trained to help and support LGBTQ youth, mentors can change the trajectory of a child's life. Studies show that one caring adult in a child's life can make a huge difference and become a protective factor. What can we do in our schools? What can we all do? So I know you're going to hear from the Anti-Defamation League and GLSEN later, which I'm happy about, so from one of our speakers from the Anti-Defamation League, and we heard this over and over again from many speakers, staff should establish clear school policies, be public and purposeful about being inclusive of all kids, encourage reporting of bullying or hate incidents, be an approachable adult, teach about bias, provide support to targeted students, teach civics and inspire ally behavior. The Federal

Government's bullying prevention website, which you just heard about, stopbullying.gov, reports that if a youth, an upstander, an ally steps in to interrupt bullying, the bullying stops almost 60% of the time.

This slide is from Pastor Palmer, who is one of our speakers who spoke about identity based bullying and racism. How do we intervene when we see bias based bullying or racist incidents? We create an equitable playing field, we listen to all, especially those who are often ignored, identify harmful behavior when it occurs and address it in the moment, give equal opportunity for everyone to succeed and confront norms set in place by and for certain groups.

It's important to think about adolescent development and what kids needs are as they're growing up, adolescents crave a sense of identity and belonging, their peers become very important to them as they separate and individuate from their primary caretakers, help them create a positive pro-social peer group that fulfills that need for a sense of belonging and identity so that they feel part of a group where they can learn and practice positive healthy behaviors and give them a space to create norms in their peer group that value, kindness and respect, and that doesn't allow or accept bullying, I ran my own program in Baltimore City, a violence prevention program, we created this positive Pro-social peer group, did a lot of different activities, and it really worked, the kids policed themselves, it was positive peer pressure.

Just reiterating, stopbullying.gov. OJJDP is a member of the federal partners in bullying prevention and is on the editorial board of stopbullying.gov, there's a wealth of information on this website, so I'll also repeat that it would be great for you to visit this website, and these are our resources for you to check out. And finally, this is how you can connect with OJJDP, I would love to hear from you. Thank you very much.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Stephanie, thank you so much for those comments, and going a bit deeper on that identity bullying side of the bullying continuum. Just a reminder for all of our audience, these links are all going to be available to you, many of them are going into chat as our speakers are presenting, and they will also be on our event webpage. Now it's my great pleasure to introduce Ms. Maggie Siddiqi. Ms. Siddiqi is the director of the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the US Department of Education, she was also an integral member of our planning team for this webinar, Ms. Siddiqi

Maggie Siddiqi: Thank you so much, Ms. Carraway-Wilson and team for putting together this important webinar. I'm really happy to be a part of it, and my role today is really to share with you about some recent actions taken by the Biden Harris administration that are directly relevant to today's conversation. On September 15th, just over a month ago, the White House hosted a day long summit entitled United We Stand in order to counter the destructive effects of hate field violence in our democracy and public safety, to mobilize the diverse sectors of society and communities across the country to address those dangers and to put forward a shared inclusive bipartisan vision for a more united America, and as you may recall, President Biden has spoken fairly personally about how the

horrific hate motivated violence we witnessed in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017, it's what motivated him to even run for president.

And within the first 100 days of the Biden Harris administration, the White House released its national strategy to counter domestic terrorism. This summit was another step toward that end of addressing the real and pervasive problem of hate motivated violence and the United We Stand Summit, which you can, by the way, read more about at UnitedWeStand.gov. We launched a new White House initiative on hate motivated violence, the initiative has three specific aims, to strengthen interagency coordination in this work, to leverage related federal research and resources, and to enhance our ongoing engagement as the full administration and our consultation with a broad range of impacted communities.

In President Biden's remarks during the United We Stand Summit, he spoke about the ways the initiative will pursue a whole of government approach to addressing hate motivated violence, and he specifically named as an example of that work partnerships with schools that help them address bullying and harassment. Let me go to the next, thank you. The UnitedWeStand.gov website, if you click, there's a tab on the top that says fact sheet, you'll see a very long list of actions that are being taken under this new initiative, I'm just going to go through a very high level summary, but everything that you'll see on the slides and more can be found on that website on that fact sheet.

So first, there are a number of actions aimed at helping prevent hate field violence, and first, among them, you'll see support for educational authorities and institutions to improve their ability to prevent hate based threats and bullying and to recover from hate based violence, there are several actions there, and then moving on, you'll see that there are also several actions to improve the federal response when violence occurs and to help communities recover from that. Again, I'm going to skip through this quickly since it's all on the UnitedWeStand.gov site, and then lastly, actions aimed at promoting and fostering civic community, including a list of commitments made by many non-governmental organizations towards that end, including from the tech sector, and again, you can visit UnitedWeStand.gov to see those lists of commitments.

So I wanted to drill down a little further into what new actions we'll be taking on through this initiative related to bullying prevention. There is, of course, an ongoing body of work on addressing bullying that will continue, such as stopbullying.gov, the work of the speakers you've heard from today and more, and so these are really additional activities that you should expect to hear more about soon. First, the US Department of Education and the US Department of Health and Human Services will be issuing a call to action to school districts, public health agencies, other health and education leaders and their community partners to develop and strengthen evidence-informed strategies that prevent and respond to hate based threats, bullying and harassment. You should also expect to see a parallel call to action for institutions of higher education. Second, new funds were made available through the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act that the president recently signed into a law that includes one

billion dollars for supporting safer and healthier learning environments under the Stronger Connections Grant Program that was not limited to that 1 billion, there will be more through HHS as well.

Third, relatedly, our departments will be issuing new guidance about how those funds can be applied to those purposes. Fourth, our departments will be providing technical assistance to help all who serve our youth access and utilize the many federal resources that exist for this work, we recognize that our resources, our guidance, our materials, all of it is only as good as they are useful to you, and so we're constantly working in consultation with all of you to make sure that that's better, and we want to hear from you about how to do that.

And fifth, we know that so many of you are already doing incredible work to prevent and address bullying, and we want to uplift those amazing stories. I'm excited that our upcoming panel will highlight a few of those examples because ultimately, we know that schools are cultivating climates, many schools are cultivating climates in which students feel included, welcomed, safe, or they can feel whole while receiving a good education, so although this work is about addressing some really difficult challenges, we want to keep our focus not just on those difficult spots, but also where the bright spots exist and keeping our eye on what is truly achievable for all of our students.

So the new White House Initiative on hate motivated violence is a whole of government endeavor, numerous offices serving its different capacity that many different agencies are involved in implementation, so what you see on this slide is not going to encapsulate all of those offices by any means, but I wanted to just share a little bit more about where my office is and how we are situated, so first I want to point out the URL that you see at the bottom there, which is sites.ed.gov/cfbnp/, which is for Centers for Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, that's the website for us at the Department of Education, you can find our email address on there and social media, so you're welcome to follow up with us there if you have any questions following the webinar.

I also just wanted to point out that we are one of 11 Centers for Faith-based, sorry, Centers for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships across the administration in addition to the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. So we can also play a role in connecting you with other agencies wherever that might be helpful, and with that, thanks so much for the opportunity to share a little bit about this today, and I'll turn it back to Ms. Carraway-Wilson.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you, Ms. Siddiqi, that was wonderful to hear all the different efforts that are going on at the Department of Education, you, like many of our other speakers, are getting lots of icons showing up, I appreciate that. Now, I'd like to welcome our panelists to come on who are going to speak more about identity-based bullying in general and things that they're doing and suggestions to share with you that you can use right now.

So I'd like to welcome Ms. Saman Ali who is a student. She's currently a student at UC Berkeley, and joined the Islamic Network Group in the beginning of her high school career and was certified as a youth speaker, Ms Caterina Rodriguez, who is the K-12 anti-bias programs director at the Anti-Defamation League, Ms. Victoria Rodriguez Roland, who is the Director of Public Policy at GLSEN and Miss Jodie Middleton, who is the principal of Auburn Schools in the Avondale School District in Michigan, where they're implementing the Anti-Defamation Leagues, No Place For Hate. So each of our panelists are going to go ahead and turn on their webcams, and we're going to pull these slides down so that we can have a conversation, and given all that context that we just have, I know that there is more that each of you has to say about why is it important to recognize and to address identity based bullying, and I'd like to start with you, Saman.

Saman Ali:

Yeah. So I feel like a lot of bullying is identity based and stereotypes and misunderstandings that lead to bullying often stem from how a kid is raised and the lack of diversity in their area. So when we educate students at a more impressionable age about these religions and cultures, it helps build an open mind for when they do encounter people of different races and religions.

Another big thing is addressing these stereotypes and misconceptions before a problem arises because students shouldn't feel like they have to defend who they are or have to deal with bullying that stems from the lack of education given to their peers. I also want to emphasize how it's also a lot more impactful when students are hearing from a fellow peer. In my case, when I taught about Islam at my high school, which I'll get into shortly, I was also representing a Muslim who does not look like a stereotypical Muslim, this helps students redefine their understanding of who Muslims are, for example, because they're getting the perspective of a local moderate Muslim and not what they imagine a Muslim to be or what they usually see in Muslims in the media. So it's really important to break down the concept and variations of identity so students don't associate every member of a group as following a common stereotype.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: That's an excellent response. Thank you so much for that. It's so important to put these side by side, the identity based bullying and bias are happening together, so thank you so much for that. Ms. Caterina, would you like to speak next?

Caterina Rodriguez: Absolutely. Thanks so much. Identity based bullying is still an area of research that is quite new, but the little bit of research that is out there shows that over half of bullying incidents are actually identity based, and the same goes for cyber bullying, and additionally, what it also shows is that students with multiple intersecting marginalized identities are at the highest risk and experience the highest impacts.

And so, one, if you are trying to create an inclusive school climate at your school, you cannot do that without addressing the identity based piece of identity based bullying, because without that piece, we are only really addressing a symptom, not the root issue. When you're targeted because of who you are at your core, an aspect of your identity, especially social identities

that are tied to systems of power, that can be particularly destructive and not just to the individual, the target, but actually also to everyone, the entire group of students that belong to those targeted identities, because those biases, those stereotypes, those misinformed single narratives are continued to be perpetuated, and so it's for that reason that we really need to address the root issue behind identity based bullying, because if not, what we're just doing is kind of flapping a Band-Aid over the problem and trying to avoid one kind of behavior, but the bias is still there, it's unchallenged and it's going to continue to manifest if we don't address it.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. And I appreciate that you're expanding it beyond a one-on-one or group on one issue, and you're making it a broader issue for other folks who had shared a similar identity, and Mr. Williams started us off by also speaking about how bullying affects the entire school community and people who witness it or hear about it and how it impacts them as well. Miss Victoria, would you like to join the conversation?

Victoria Rodriguez-Roldan: Of course. I mean, the truth is, the policies that address identity based bullying are essential to preventing it when it comes to LGBTQ students. We recently released our bi-annual national school climate survey for 2021, was released just yesterday, and it has consistently found that students that can say, "Yes, my school has an anti-bullying policy that prohibits bullying on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression." They report less and less severe LGBTQ+ related victimization than their peers without such policy, or for that matter, policies that are blanket policies and do not address identity-based bullying, like generic identity blind policies. In the process, they're more likely for schools to say that school staff proactively intervene when overhearing anti-LGBTQ remarks. They're more likely to tell staff if they experience bullying themselves related to their LGBTQ+ identity. Those that do tell staff are more likely to also say that the school staff responded effectively. If we take it from another angle, the survey of K-12 teachers specifically does suggest that recognizing identity-based piece of bullying does prepare them to do more of the "see something, say something" aspect, and thus otherwise intervene when it comes to LGBTQIA schools.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. That's a great reminder how important policies can be to help guide behaviors and responses, and that behaviors and responses can also feed into effective policies. Thank you for that. Miss Jodie, what would you like to add to the conversation?

Jodie Middleton: Well, I think a couple things that were stated earlier regarding attendance and parent fear. This is a community issue. This isn't just a student issue. Our kids are here to learn and we know that they're not going to learn if they don't feel safe. The core of who they are needs to be seen, acknowledged, and celebrated. We need to be public and purposeful, I think, was the language that was used earlier, so that parents also trust us because it does take a community to educate our students. We all want the best for them and we all have to work together, identify specifically what the problem is, alleviate any fear so that we

can have them in school, a place they want to be, and a place that they can learn.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: That's well demonstrated in the photo even that you sent for your speaker bio. You didn't represent just yourself but your whole student population. It's important to include in that student population, the parents, the caregivers out in the community. Excellent. All right. I'd like to move into our next question. If we can briefly hear from each of you a description of what you're currently doing to prevent and intervene in identity-based bullying. I'd like to begin here with you, Jodie.

Jodie Middleton: Yeah. We had a few years at Auburn of professional development around implicit bias, culturally relevant teaching, trauma-informed practices, and we thought that we had a pretty solid foundation for the work that we were doing in addressing these types of situations. 2020 hit, and it was a whole different ballgame. We were disconnected physically from our community. We had fear due to the pandemic. We had fear due to the ongoing racial injustice that was happening. At that time, I knew that we had to be loud and proud about what we were doing. We knew what we were doing in the building, but it was really important that the adults knew what we were doing in the building because they were entrusting their children back to us at some point. That is when I found the ADL website and the No Place for Hate Program.

I knew that it just captured who we already were beautifully. It also was extremely public, and it really stands our identity in saying, "This is a safe place to come back to. It's a safe place to send your kids back to. We know that the world is disconnected and there's a lot of conflict right now. This is going to be the safe haven. This is where everyone's going to walk in and be celebrated, and lifted up so that they can learn." The No Place For Hate Program has really driven everything that we have done since then. It's gotten deeper and deeper and more and more part of our identity. The student voice is incredible. The students are driving it now. We're a K5 building. We have representatives, we call them the Auburn Ambassadors, as you saw. K5 all have representatives. They have a voice, they drive it, and there's not a day that goes by that I don't hear somebody standing up and being that ally, and saying, "That's not okay. We're in no place for hate school." That common language has been integral in our identity and in our success.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: That's a great story. We so appreciate you sharing that tidbit, and we're going to hear more from Jodie later. But I remember when I first met Jodie, how she spoke to that, how important it was to begin that process online during that virtual time when things were so unsettled to be able to create a sense of safety and inclusiveness when the people went live again. Now, I'd like to move back to you, Saman. If you could tell us a bit about the work that you were doing, particularly how you started in high school and the Islamic Networks Group, and if you want to share what you're doing now as well.

Saman Ali: Yeah. For a little bit of background, the area I lived in growing up was not very diverse. I grew up in Danville, California. From Elementary to high school, I was

very much the minority among my peers who are primarily Caucasian. One thing I noticed was the lack of understanding of some of the most basic knowledge about my religion or culture. For example, I had a student once asked me, "Are you Islam?" I was shocked at how even the terminology concerning my religion was heavily misunderstood by a lot of my peers. Considering how Islam is the second largest religion in the world, I would always be concerned at how nobody knew what Eid was, which is our biggest holiday, or that Muslims don't eat pork, or that we fast for one month during Ramadan, just like Catholics do during Lent. I found myself constantly having to explain myself and my religion to people, and I felt that religious knowledge about Islam could really benefit them by keeping them open and aware of how other people live their lives.

One thing I can also say that I experienced several times throughout my time in school is that every year on 9/11, I had several teachers take time out of their agenda to talk about 9/11 and how terrifying of a time it was for our country. But after they talked about all the terror and pain and suffering that America went through as a whole, it always ended there. What this did, I felt, was simply reinforce the hatred that uneducated students had towards Muslims while not recognizing the fact that 9/11 led to an unimaginable amount of racism and hatred towards Muslims. That needs to be addressed because after 9/11, not only did Muslims face prejudice, but Sikhs also experienced racism, which is living proof that not enough Americans are educated on the simplest facts about religions, like the significance of different headdresses worn by different religious people, such as the difference between a turban worn by a Sikh man versus a skull cap that might be worn by a Muslim man.

These are two entirely different religions, yet people associate them together because nobody taught them otherwise. This is why I joined the Islamic Networks Group or ING. What their youth program did was first, empower Muslim students by informing them of their basic right to feel safe at school, and then teach these students how they can create an impact at their local schools by preventing bullying and countering Islamophobia through education and engagement with other students. Basically, we were trained on how to give presentations about Muslims in an unbiased, respectful manner where we're teaching, not preaching. These presentations were designed by the organization to supplement what is already being taught in school and cover topics ranging from getting to know Muslims in America, the history of Muslims in America, women in Islam, contributions of Muslims, and so forth. We underwent these drill sessions in which our program manager would cold call on us and have us answer one of over 100 frequently asked questions about Islam, ranging from basic questions to why women wear the hijab to controversial questions regarding the development of ISIS.

They really wanted to prepare us on how to tackle these uncomfortable conversations, but also do it in an approachable manner. Upon successfully completing the training, I became a in youth certified speaker, and I offered the service to my AP world history teacher. I was a bit nervous at the intensity of my request to essentially halt preexisting lesson plans and talk about something that I felt was important. But to my surprise, she happily agreed. The principal

also welcomed me with open arms, and I ended up giving presentations about Islam to all the AP world history classes of that year.

Afterwards, students anonymously sent me questions that they had and I answered them. A lot of students approached me after and expressed their respect and appreciation for me because I also took the time in my presentation to describe why I was doing this, which was to prevent bullying and Islamophobia because I recognized that as being a problem in my school. I think that encouraged my peers to be a little more open-minded because they saw a fellow student doing something out of the ordinary for a good purpose. The Islamic Networks Group, in general, provides countless opportunities for their youth students in order to assist them in being their own change makers at their own schools.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: I'm sure you're seeing all those icons flying on my side [Laughter]. So, that's powerful. It's always so powerful to hear when a young person can feel empowered enough to seek an opportunity to take their action, and to be supported by adults to be able to have the skills to do that. I look forward to hearing some more from you, particularly about some of the shifts that you saw at your school. Thank you very much for that. Now, I'd like to go ahead and move to Caterina.

Caterina Rodriguez: Absolutely. Yeah. At ADL, obviously, we're a large organization, many different departments, our education departments specifically. Our goal is to help students and adults understand how to examine and challenge bias in themselves and others in society. We do a lot of work in school-based settings, especially around bias and bullying prevention. We do it in kind of three main approaches. The first is online learning. Whether it's all of our open access resources that we develop in-house or alongside partners that educators and students can access and implement in their schools, or online four-week long course for educators about how to create an anti-bias learning classroom. We also do through facilitated programming, and we actually facilitate anti-bias, antisemitism, and holocaust education for educators, for students, and for parents. We obviously always have conversations with whatever group we're working with to understand where they're at in their anti-bias learning journey.

You need something at the very basic foundations. You want to dig deep into specific topic like implicit bias and microaggressions where you want to pan out and really talk about systems of oppression and systems of power and privilege. Lastly, we pan out from working with smaller groups and skill building to actually helping schools understand how to go about their school climate journey. This was the program that Jodie was speaking to, No Place for Hate, which is always wonderful to actually hear from schools how it's going and how impactful it's being. It's actually a self-led program and we consult and collaborate with schools.

What I mean by self-led is an entire framework for inclusive climate work where schools actually get to assess their own climate and figure out what are the issues that are important to them. They do this year in and year out, every year,

to newly become a no place for hate school because we want to emphasize that climate work is ongoing work and there's never an end point. It is an ongoing journey. Those are the big main ways that we partner with schools, with different facets of a school community, to do identity-based bullying and bias prevention work.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. Thank you so much for that. I appreciate that you spoke to the flexibility. Jodie had also mentioned that it's very flexible and it fit to who they were. Being able to be flexible in how you implement a process is wonderful, and it really respects the cultures and the needs of that particular school. Now, finally, I'd like to come back over to you, Victoria, for this question. Some ideas about what you're currently doing.

Victoria Rodriguez-Roldan: Of course. In our case, we launched over 20 years ago the bi-annual school climate survey of LGBTQ+ students precisely to increase awareness about their experience with bullying and discrimination at school. Like I said earlier, this year's... The last one at 2021 was polished just yesterday with 83% of LGBTQ students who attended school in-person at some point between 2021 and 2022 academic year, they experienced some form of in-person harassment or assault based on personal characteristics including sexual orientation, gender identity expression, religion, race, ethnicity and disability. Particularly likely to experience multiple forms of identity-based victimization where LGBTQ students of color compared to white LGBTQ students. Overall, transgender or non-binary students will experience a more hostile school climate than their cisgender peers. Aside from shining that spotlight on the issue, a research has always found around four core supports that we refer to as something that improves school conditions for LGBTQ students.

These four supports are comprehensive policies that prohibit LGBTQ-related discrimination or victimization, like the enumerated anti-bullying policies that we've touched on before, supportive gender clubs like the GSA, Gay-Straight Alliances or Gender-Sexuality Alliances, inclusive curricular resources such as access to books written by LGBTQ authors. Finally, and I would say possibly almost most importantly, supportive school staff. Sometimes even just the teacher who posts up a safe space sign in their classroom. Our four supports, you inform our policy advocacy and our resources for educators, students, and families. For example, we've developed a model local education agency policy on preventing bullying and harassment. We've also created a model state anti-bullying law, currently only 21 states, so less than half the country have implemented policies prohibiting identity-based bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity. We still have that long way to go. Also, GLSEN finally works with locally embedded chapters across the whole country. We have chapters all over the country, as well as educators, students, families, precisely to provide them the assistance and help them advocate for and implement these inclusive and supportive policies and practices. Yeah.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. It's a lot of work for sure. We appreciate all those efforts, and it's particularly important as some of our areas are struggling with how can they address, especially the transgender needs, the needs of transgender students

and other folks in our schools so that they can feel safe and included. Greatly appreciate that work. Now, I'd like to shift gears a little bit and come to... Just recognizing time, I'm going to shift this around a hair. I'd like to give us good question, our fourth question here, and talk a little bit about some concrete actions that folks can take as individuals. If I wanted to make an impact today and I'm working in a school in some capacity, what can I do to begin to create environments where identity-based bullying is prevented and/or addressed? I'd like to begin with you, Caterina, on this question.

Caterina Rodriguez:

Yeah, absolutely. Depending on where you're sitting at in a school community, there's so many different things outside of just bringing these programs that individuals can do. One is as simple as actually emphasizing that identity-based bullying is a product of the aggressor's biases, not a product of the target's identity. That's something that may seem super logical, but it's a quick mental shortcut we make and we don't verbalize it often. It actually helps us verbalize the root issue that this is a bias-based issue. It's nothing to do with the identity of the person being targeted. When you are actually challenging or being an ally in the moment or after the fact, and educating around it, that's really important. It's a very simple action that's often overlooked.

Another piece is, no matter where you work at in a school, whether it is right your name on your desk at the front of your classroom, putting your pronouns next to your name actually is a really easy and implicit way to show people who step into your space, whether it's your classroom, your guidance office, whatever it may be, that this is a place where you acknowledge and understand that diversity is present and something not to be tolerated, but to be embraced and fully included. Something as simple as you don't have to ask everyone in the room what their pronouns are, or if they want to offer that up, that's great. Sometimes for different reasons, youth might be a little nervous to do that. But if you, yourself, offer that up, it helps both students and adults understand this is a place where I can actually talk about this, and it's a safe place for me to potentially report something.

Not necessarily just related to gender-identity. It could be, but it's a whole spectrum of issues. We all know that systems of oppression are very interconnected. Another piece is if you're someone who actually has a classroom, you're a teacher leading your students, really working at the very beginning of the year to kind of establish that this classroom is a brave and safe space, and actually creating group agreements or guidelines to abide by in conversations with your students and have them actually add to those agreements at the beginning, because this is going to help structure conversations around identity and bias or if there's an incident that happens in your classroom, and it's going to help proactively create that accountability that's necessary for effective anti-bias learning, and helps people not shut down in these conversations.

I guess one other really simple piece as an administrator is to actually communicate on your website. At the start of school year, communications throughout the years or throughout the year during heritage months, make it

known to your school community that inclusion and belonging are top priorities at your school. Make it known to your parent community, to your staff community, to your student community that this is incredibly important. Because while that's not a magic switch that's going to make every parent, student, or staffer be like, "I totally get this and this is something I should fully embrace." What it does do is it helps create the expectation that this is something your school actually takes seriously and is going to act upon. That will actually encourage implicitly better reporting and encourage further allyship. I hope those are some quick concrete actions that individuals feel like they can take.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you so much. Yes. Yes, they were. You gave us a nice sampling from various levels. Pardon me. I'd like to move to Victoria. Victoria, what are some concrete actions that an individual could take today or tomorrow to begin to make some changes?

Victoria Rodriguez-Roldan: Of course. Before we're really in talking a while about anti-bullying policies that are LGBTQ inclusive, so in that sense, I want to lift up the other three supports which are essential to this question. Inclusive curricular resources, supportive student clubs, and supportive school staff. Individual teachers, school counselors, librarians, school staff, they can very much directly support LGBTQ students in their schools through inclusive and affirming practices of their own, sharing pronouns when introducing themselves and asking students to do the same at the start of the school year also helps, as was mentioned before. Teachers can include stories for sentiment contributions like LGBTQ people, including those who are people of color, people with disabilities in their lesson plans. School librarians also, for example, can also ensure that they have library books written by LGBTQ authors that have affirming representations of LGBTQ people.

I'm also going to add... We have cases and we can take advantage of GLSEN Rainbow Library program. But I would also add, try to make sure if you include your own books around LGBTQ issues and that are affirming, try to make sure that they have good endings, that they have joyful depictions of LGBTQ identity and life. Queer and GSA requires a school staff sponsor. That is the role you can take on to make that club possible. Another example you can have, for example, GLSEN found that LGBTQ students who say that they have more supportive school staff, they report fewer absences, higher GPAs, a greater likelihood of pursuing post-secondary education, higher self-esteem, lower levels of depression, and I can keep going. All of these are things that have lifelong positive impacts in the students' lives. So it's just a matter of stepping up in your own capacity as a staff person or teacher.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Again, another nice diverse selection of suggestions from something as simple as the pronouns to something more complex of taking on a role of sponsoring a club. So thank you very much for that. Now I'd like to go ahead over to Miss Jodie.

Jodie Middleton:

I'm going to just sort of piggyback what Victoria was talking about, because just being that person, oftentimes if you are in a building and you're in this system that the principal's not moving it or you're not feeling the support, I know we have a lot of counselors and social workers on here. You are the person. You are the person that makes our kids feel safe, that makes them feel seen. Do not stop advocating. Do not stop being an ally. Even if you're a little uneasy about it, you stick with advocacy for your student. Make everybody else uncomfortable. That's all right. That's in your building. Find your allies. Find your partners in the school that believe the same way you do and continue to voice and question. You have more power than you know, and it only takes one person and it doesn't matter who it is.

We have Mr. Craig, he's our custodian, he is part of our family. He's the go to for a lot of our kids. And everybody needs a person in school. So be that person but also be loud. I need everybody to be voicing, using the language in restorative practices, naming what identity based bullying is and making sure the kids understand. So I think as individuals we have a lot more power than we give ourselves credit for, especially sometimes when we're in a system that doesn't feel as supportive. It's even more important in those systems that you continue to do the work that needs to be done for our kids.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson:

Thank you very much for those suggestions. And that emphasis on it only takes one to get that one little pebble coming down the mountain starts that rock slide, right? And each individual in a school can be that person to start that shift. And Saman, would you like to add to the conversation about what individuals can do?

Saman Ali:

Absolutely. One thing that I felt was that some initial steps that schools can take would be to simply address the existence of racial and religious stereotypes. And I also feel that even letting students just converse with each other in a classroom about their feelings on how they've been treated will open up the eyes of other classmates and help them realize the impact of these stereotypes.

Because you need to ask students, do you feel that you are experiencing identity based bullying or see others experiencing it? And if so, for which identities? And for their peers, hearing from kids your own age makes it more personable, and identifying the problem will help kids come closer to the solution. I also believe that teachers at any level who do touch topics of religion and race in their curriculum need to be taught on how to teach about religion in a respectful and unbiased manner.

ING has a lot of resources for educators on how to do this. And this is important because teachers need to be prepared with the right information, so that when their students look up to them and ask them a difficult question, they're able to answer it effectively or have people of those races or religions tackle that part of the curriculum for them to ensure that students are getting the right information. ING provides not just Muslim speakers, but also interreligious panels who teach about different religions as well as interethnic panels who teach about countering bigotry. So these resources can be really beneficial to

take that extra step as an educator to create a better environment for your students.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you so very much for those suggestions. I love the idea, again, of having that student involvement and pulling them in, and the idea of first setting up those group norms that Caterina had mentioned to be able to create those courageous conversations in the classroom among the students and letting them drive the process. That's wonderful.

I'd like all of our panelists to hold on for a moment. We're going to do an official close because we do recognize that some folks need to leave around the quarter of the hour. So I'm going to ask, we're bring our slides back up to close out, but I do want to remind everybody who's on with us that we will be doing a live Q&A. We'll finish up our conversation here and then go into our live Q&A right after this closing. So first of all, I'd like to thank everybody who logged in with us today. We had almost 600 people I think on live with us at one point or almost 500 people. And so we appreciate you for being here. And we want to remind you that you can go to the NCSSE websites to be able to download the resources that were mentioned, the slides, the recording, the archive recording, and to be able to see other webinars and recordings of those that were done previously on different topics.

I'd also like to encourage you to go to the Best Practices Clearinghouse for more information and to submit your thoughts and ideas there. We are really interested in what your experience was of this webinar as well. And so we want to encourage you to go to our feedback forum. The link for that is going to be coming into the chat in just a moment. And on that forum, if you can let us know what this webinar was like for you. And you also have another opportunity here to ask some questions, to make some comments, to really let us know what you're looking for in the lessons from the field webinar series and even on this topic here that we discussed today.

So I'd like to go ahead and come back to our panel, and we'll leave that link up for folks to do the feedback, and we hope that you can stay for the panel and then we'll move right into some questions from our audience. So I'd like to come back to where Saman just left off with us around the first steps. So we talked about some things that individuals can do. I'd like to hear from starting with Victoria about if you have any other ideas about a first step a school might do if they want to do a school-wide implementation to address identity based bullying.

Victoria Rodriguez-Roldan: I would say starting as myself, look up our model school policies and don't be afraid to reach out in that sense. We do have working model curriculums and model policies for school districts precisely because that's where it starts, at the top.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent, thank you. And then if we can hear from Jodie, that would be wonderful.

Jodie Middleton: I would say start where you are. So define who you are, vision, where you want to be. Start with your mission and vision and determine what are you going to do to enhance who you already are. Our education staff cannot handle one more add on, and we know that. So this has to be integral to who you are. You're going to have to provide training to staff. This implicit bias work, it's deep, it's personal, and you can't wait for teachers to be ready. We're never going to be ready. We have to start our policies and programs while we are educating our staff so that they feel comfortable.

There's going to be uneasiness, there's going to be things that you don't answer, it's not going to be perfect. We are forever going to be learning in this area and growing and you just need to start, don't wait. And I know a lot of colleagues who wait because they don't feel comfortable, they don't feel like they're educated enough to address all of these situations. You have to start, the kids can't wait for us. We need to start now.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. Thank you for being such a champion and such a go-getter on starting your initiative. And also just by way of reminder, there are a lot of resources that have come out just in this webinar alone that can help that startup process and give folks pointers and there are people you can reach out to that will all be referenced in this webinar to give that support. Caterina, did you have anything that you wanted to add?

Caterina Rodriguez: Yeah, sure. Kind of sticking to this theme that Jodie started around start where you're at. The answer truly changes depending on where a school is at on their anti-bias learning journey. So if this is something that's going to be entirely brand new, do not jump off the deep end and implement an entire school approach. Jodie, I loved that you touched on educator professional development because that's exactly where you need to start. I think a lot of times schools think we need to focus on students, working with students, workshop the students, make these groups for students, but students cycle in and out. They graduate, they leave. Adults are the actual drivers of a school's culture in the long term. And so creating that initial buy in with adults is incredibly important. Whether it is buy in around why this is important to us or also enabling them with schools. So many adults in a school community don't do this work precisely because of what Jodie said. They feel uneasy. And there are plenty of us out there who it's not just PD around the substance of bias and bullying, but also if you don't know how to facilitate these conversations, if you need to develop and practice that skill, a ton of us do that work in a variety of different organizations.

So equip your adults and prepare them for then the programs that you'll bring into the school first through a variety of different PDs, whatever that may look like. And then of course, doing both the more micro level of diverse and culturally responsive curricula in classrooms, to setting up those guidelines, to the more macro we're going to bring in a program to work with a subgroup that's going to then work with the rest of the school, or bring in a program that impacts the whole school. But what I would say is it's all part of the same collective impact puzzle, and you don't have to build the whole puzzle at once.

In fact, that's how you burn yourselves out. So make sure that you actually take a look at where you're at, understand where your highest, most short-term priority needs are, and build yourself a roadmap with small achievable wins that are going to incrementally build up that collective impact.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. And it is all about those incremental steps, and the small steps that lead to success. And I'd also like to point out what Jodie and Saman have already said, is that you also have a whole group of students that I'm sure there are champions and people and students who are passionate who want to feed in. I mean, Jodie herself is in elementary school with little ones leading the charge on her program right now. That's pretty amazing. And Saman, would you like to add to this conversation or speak to other things that individuals can do?

Saman Ali: Yes. So kind of adding more to what you just said, I also felt like in high school for me, for example, I joined the Black Student Union, and I remember there was a meeting where everyone expressed their experiences with racism, and I had no idea how bad it was until I sat down and heard it from my classmates. I feel like that's why I really want to emphasize just asking the students, "What do you want us to do to help you? And what are you experiencing?" Because that's the only way you'll know what to target first, what to talk about first. You know what I mean? There's so many things you can teach kids about different races and religions, but it's really about what's the biggest problem here. But like I said, ING has a lot of resources.

There's a lot of different lesson plans that they provide. How narratives about certain groups are formed, what are dominant narratives, their impact on communities and policies in the United States, what you should know about different communities from perspectives of those people, and how to work together to counter stereotypical narratives about different peoples beginning with ourselves. I think these resources can really be helpful for a lot of educators and schools in general, but really just targeting those serious problems that are catered to that school specifically. Because I feel like every school is different. Every school has different levels of diversity and different problems. So it is more unique to the school, but definitely asking students first would be the best thing.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Absolutely. And I think that approach of student inclusiveness builds the buy-in, and then you can do that peer to peer work, You can do adult to student work and do student to adult work, and really share it out into the entire community, which is pretty amazing. I'm going to pause on the panel for one moment to come to a question that I'm seeing surface in the Q&A. What are some things or what's being done or what could you imagine having happen, pardon me, to help districts keep moving forward? Because as many of you have mentioned, this is a hard process, and there are sure to be stumbles and pauses and pushback. So how do you keep it moving? Does anybody want to take a first shot at that?

Victoria Rodriguez-Roldan: I think this question feels more geared towards the leadership, which is to use your privilege. If you are a school district leader, do not be afraid to go up

to the school board when it comes to them. Do not be afraid to protect the teachers that take the initiative and take measures of acceptance and so on and whatnot. Use your privilege when it comes to the position.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Okay. So one of the ways of keeping it moving forward is for people in higher positions or maybe positions of power to use that power to keep pushing that snowball to make the big snowball. Right? Anybody else want to add to that? Caterina?

Caterina Rodriguez: Yeah, I think a big piece of this is either people not knowing or not knowing how, especially in positions of power, especially at district and school board levels, because they're not on the ground, they're not in the schools as often. And so partnering, especially in your feeder pattern with fellow schools or in your charter network, if you're in a private school it looks a little bit different, but sometimes some of that buy-in needs to happen upwards in order for them to understand what the issues are. They're going to look different from district to district.

But then also leaning into that, I know we've talked a little bit about discomfort here, and acknowledging the fact that challenging the status quo, trying to dismantle systems of inequity by definition is going to make people uncomfortable because you are destroying what is normative. And so we will never be able to avoid the discomfort in helping people understand how to lean into that, especially those who are decision makers. Because a lot of times that is a big barrier, more than the not knowing or not wanting to, it's the, "I don't know, and this is going to cause some messiness and I don't think that I want to get into that," but that's the only way to go forward. This is messy work and we need to acknowledge and own that it's messy and that that's totally fine. It's supposed to be.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. Thank you. And I'd like to invite Ms. Maggie and Stephanie in also to see if either of you would like to respond to that question about what's being done to encourage districts to keep moving forward. Maggie, did you want to say anything?

Maggie Siddiqi: Sure, yeah. I'll just very quickly add that the US Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona, sent a dear colleague letter to chief state school officers last month regarding the Bipartisan Safer Community Act dollars under the Stronger Connections Grant Program. There were allocations to every state under that program. And so there was some information in that letter, which I think just got posted in the chat with some resources in terms of where school districts can go. There will be additional guidance that's coming out soon that will help school districts as well. So just keep an eye out for that.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you so much, Maggie. I knew there are things going on to help support those districts moving forward. And also I want to say it's okay to stumble, it's okay to stutter, it's okay to pause, as long as you start back up again. And I see Stephanie leaning in, did you want to add something to that question?

Stephanie Rapp: Sure. I mean, we do have funding that goes out to the states through the juvenile justice offices. So juvenile justice specialists were trained in... as part of our webinar series, we did something specifically for them on how to put together state plans to combat hate and identity based bullying. And we're encouraging them to use their funding. They don't have to use it to combat bullying and hate crimes, but we've been encouraging them to do so.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. Thank you so much. And I can't believe we're almost at time. We have two minutes left. This is going to be a lightning round for our panelists. If you can think of one shift that you noticed as a result of the work that you've done to increase understanding and to address identity based bullying that happened in your community, what shift did you notice? And I'd like to begin with Saman here because I was very curious about the work that you did at the high school especially.

Saman Ali: Yeah, so upon giving the presentations at my high school, I really did feel like I gained a lot of respect from my peers. And when we did the anonymous Q&A, a lot of my classmates actually asked me very personal questions, "Why don't you wear the hijab? Do you pray five times a day?" And I was honestly just happy that they were given the opportunity to be curious, and the anonymity of the questionnaire allowed them to ask whatever genuine question they had. So I feel like it kind of sparked this curiosity amongst a lot of the students. And I also could just tell that they saw that this was a problem that meant a lot to me and obviously meant a lot to other Muslim students. So I feel like I could see the overall change in behavior and the change in the way they interacted with kids of color and kids of different religions, because I think they noticed the problem that there was.

A lot of students approached me after and said that they learned a lot of useful information that they had no idea about, and how they felt like this education was really needed. So I think they noticed the time and the dedication that I put into it, but it really begins with the trust that ING gave me to represent the organization and the support that my teachers and my principal gave me, because I might just be one student voice trying to solve this problem, but they gave me the confidence to be able to solve it. So it really does start with that one voice or one kid can express how they feel, and it does matter because anyone who feels anything, their voice matters.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Absolutely. Absolutely. And I'm just noticing that we're at time. So I'm sorry for the other panelists. I am so grateful that each of you came in to speak with us today. I could keep going on this conversation, I don't know how the audience feels about it, but I feel like it's very powerful.

And I'd like to thank each and every one of you and also Stephanie and Maggie and Dr. Allen and all of you for coming in to speak with us today on this topic. And also, I'm so grateful to our audience. You guys have been really active in the Q&A, and those icons are flowing all over the place. It's wonderful to know that there are people who have a passion and interest in this topic. I'm sure that

we're going to keep moving it forward. There's lots of supports, you can see some faces connected to some of these supports right here in the webinar.

So thank you so much everybody, and we hope you can join us in our next Lessons From The Field Webinar. We have one scheduled for November 16th, and that one will be on the topic of intervening and preventing in gender based violence in the K through 12 area. Thank you so much and have a wonderful rest of the day.