

EDUCATION

Grant will help D60 battle bullies

Three-year, \$2.1 million initiative to begin

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THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

It's called the Pueblo No Bully Initiative, a three-year undertaking funded by a \$2.1 million grant designed to combat bullying and cyberbullying through training, engagement of parents and stakeholders, as well as student-involved summits.

In high-energy fashion, news of the partnership between Pueblo City Schools (D60) and No Bully was announced by acclaimed X Games BMX athlete Kevin Robinson during presentations at three schools.

The district's association with No Bully — a national evidence-based program that leverages student empathy to stop bullying and cyberbullying — dates back to October. As part of the ESPN X Games Shred Hate campaign, ESPN paid for No Bully to work with three D60 schools.

"Then we further partnered with No Bully to pursue a bully-prevention grant through the Colorado Department of Education for the remaining 26 schools," said Jason Cellan, multitiered system of supports specialist with the district.

The D60 board of education was apprised of the grant and timeline of implementation during a Jan. 24 meeting.

Rosemary Rein, vice president of education

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for No Bully, told the board, "The challenge of bullying is perhaps one of the deepest plagues we face in the classroom and our children face in life."

No Bully addresses the challenge not by "drive-by training but rather a systemic approach to changing culture and tapping into the latest research that says empathy can be the fuel for kindness."

In the district, Cellan is confident the initiative will be a proactive measure to stop bullying by preventing it from taking place in the first place. Foundational training for adults at every school will begin this month, to be complemented by training of bully prevention coaches and engagement of parents and community members as to their role in bullying prevention.

Benchmark data will also be collected as the initiative gets underway.

Students will become more actively involved through a series of "peace summits" to take place throughout the year.

Sometime this month, a community kickoff will officially usher in the initiative.

While an eight-member No Bully team will spearhead the training, administrator over the grant is Cheryl Madrill, the district's executive director of student intervention and support programs.

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