



2018 Legislative Report

School Bullying  
Prevention and Education  
Grant Program



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

# Introduction and Background on the School Bullying Prevention and Education Grant Program

Administered by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), the School Bullying Prevention and Education Grant (BPEG) is a state-funded program designed to reduce the frequency of student bullying in Colorado. The program provides support to help schools implement evidence-based bullying prevention practices, strategies for involving family and community in school bullying prevention, and adoption of effective policies concerning bullying education and prevention.

The BPEG was first created in 2011 after the Colorado General Assembly passed House Bill 11-1254, Concerning Measures to Reduce the Frequency of Bullying. The goal of the BPEG was to reduce the frequency of student bullying in Colorado public schools, district charter schools, institute charter schools, board of cooperative services schools, and facility schools. Though created in 2011, funds were not allocated for this grant until the passage of Proposition BB, the Colorado Marijuana TABOR Refund Measure, in 2015. Proposition BB allowed the state of Colorado to retain and spend marijuana tax dollars for school construction and other state programs, including the BPEG. The BPEG receives \$2 million each year to help prevent bullying in schools and to date has received a total of \$4.9 million dollars. The 2017-18 school year is the second year of a three-year grant cycle for the BPEG.



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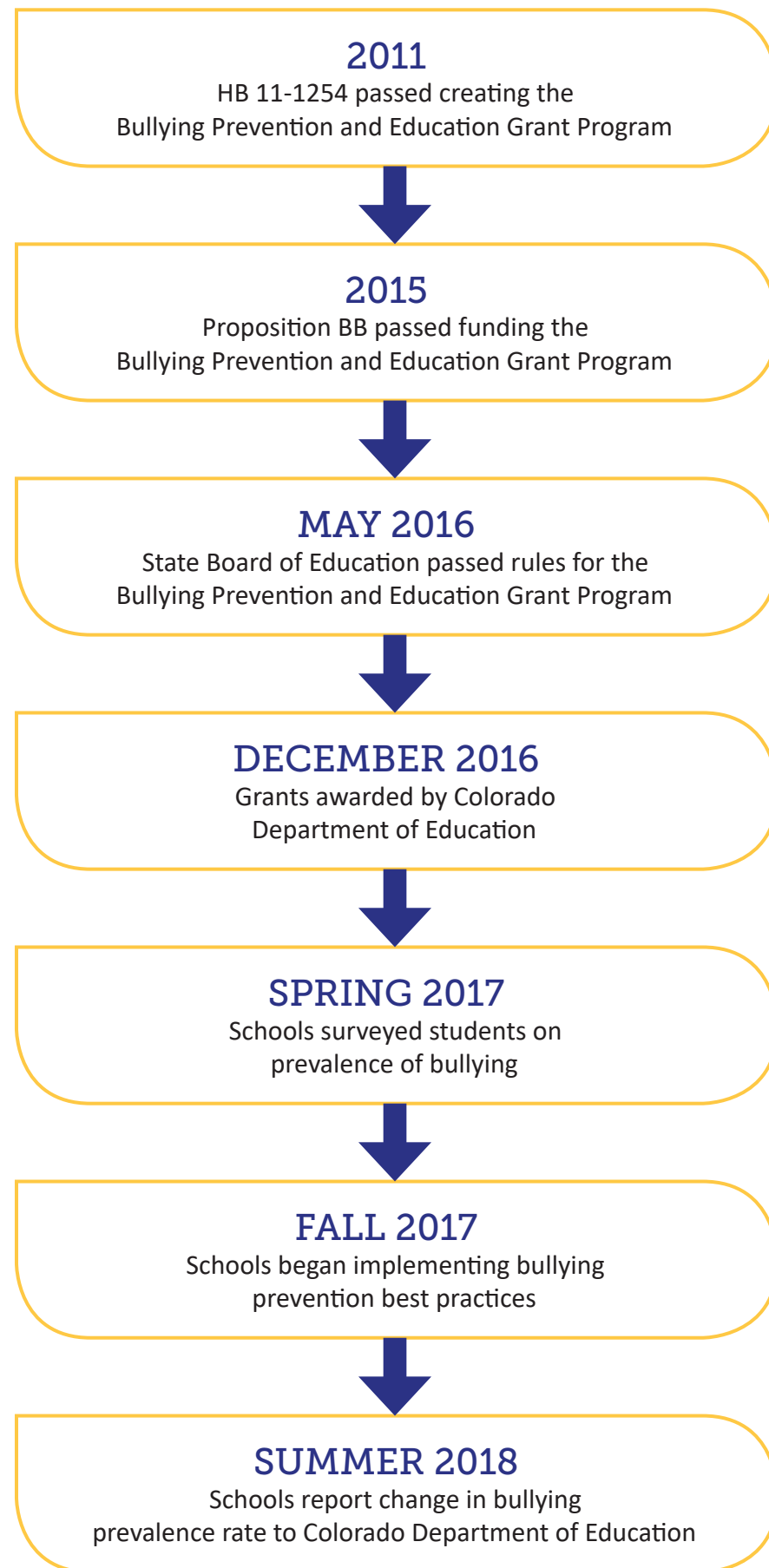
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*“The CDE Bullying Prevention and Education Grant has given us a framework, structures and a toolbox to enact real, sustainable change in our school and larger community,” said Amanda Novak, dean of culture for Westgate Community School. “Our students feel empowered to speak out and stand up for themselves and others in the face of disrespect and bullying. Our community knows how to access support and resources, and there is an honest dedication to creating a positive and safe school.”*

– Arvada Press





Schools that participate in the grant are eligible to receive up to \$40,000 per year for the purpose of educating students, families, and school staff on evidence-based practices to reduce the frequency of bullying. These funds may be used for any of the following activities:

- Purchasing an evidence-based bullying prevention program
- Educating parents and legal guardians about bullying prevention efforts
- Developing student leadership and voice in bullying prevention efforts
- All aspects of measuring the impact of bullying prevention efforts
- Hiring an Implementation Coach

To support these efforts, CDE provides participating schools with training to assist them in meeting their goals.

“We are going to start including tips for parents in our monthly newsletter and at our Fifth Grade Parent Night. We have also had parent call the school and share success stories with our administration regarding Stand for Courage and how kids have used our stop phrase.”

– Anne Genson, Poudre School District



# Schools Participating in the BPEG Program

The BPEG serves 34,423 students across 14 local education agencies. **Table 1** lists each local education agency and school in the BPEG program with their corresponding student population. The size of the student population at each school ranges from a low of 58 to a high of 1,398.

**Table 1: Number of Students at Each BPEG School**

<b>Adams 12 Five Star Schools</b>		<b>Harrison School District</b>	
Westgate Community School . . . . .	508	Harrison High School . . . . .	995
<b>Boulder Valley School District RE-2</b>		Mountain Vista Community School . . . . .	621
Columbine Elementary School . . . . .	537	<b>Lamar School District RE-2</b>	
<b>Charter School Institute</b>		Alta Vista Charter School . . . . .	133
New America School - Lakewood . . . . .	249	Lamar High School . . . . .	443
New America School - Lowry . . . . .	475	Lamar Middle School . . . . .	320
<b>Cherry Creek School District 5</b>		Parkview Elementary School . . . . .	293
Fox Ridge Middle School . . . . .	1,398	Washington Elementary School . . . . .	270
Horizon Middle School . . . . .	958	<b>Montrose County School District RE-1J</b>	
<b>Crowley County School District RE-1J</b>		Cottonwood Elementary School . . . . .	416
Crowley County Primary . . . . .	241	Johnson Elementary School . . . . .	551
<b>Denver Public Schools</b>		Northside Elementary School . . . . .	366
Bear Valley International . . . . .	324	Oak Grove Elementary School . . . . .	418
Denver Discovery School . . . . .	449	Olathe Elementary School . . . . .	447
Eggleton Elementary School . . . . .	399	Pomona Elementary School . . . . .	398
Hamilton Middle School . . . . .	889	<b>Poudre Schools District</b>	
Hill Campus of Arts and Sciences . . . . .	712	Blevins Middle School . . . . .	652
Lake International School . . . . .	342	Leshner Middle School . . . . .	761
McAuliffe Manual Middle School . . . . .	218	Preston Middle School . . . . .	1,146
Merrill Middle School . . . . .	567	Wellington Middle School . . . . .	552
Morey Middle School . . . . .	280		
Skinner Middle School . . . . .	608		
Stedman Elementary School . . . . .	261		

<b>Pueblo City Schools District 60</b>	
Belmont Elementary School . . . . .	526
Bessemer Academy . . . . .	291
Beulah Heights Elementary School . . . . .	376
Bradford Elementary School . . . . .	406
Carlile Elementary School . . . . .	256
Centennial High School . . . . .	1,197
Central High School . . . . .	785
Columbian Elementary School . . . . .	371
Corwin International Magnet School . . . . .	606
Eva R. Baca Elementary School . . . . .	345
Fountain International Magnet School . . . . .	391
Franklin Elementary School . . . . .	406
Goodnight Elementary School . . . . .	715
Haaff Elementary School . . . . .	362
Heritage Elementary School . . . . .	382
Heroes Academy . . . . .	261
Highland Park Elementary School . . . . .	524
Irving Elementary School . . . . .	375
Minnequa Elementary School . . . . .	413
Morton Elementary School . . . . .	488
Park View Elementary School . . . . .	432
Pueblo Academy of Arts . . . . .	712
Roncalli STEM Academy . . . . .	427
South High School . . . . .	1,063
South Park Elementary School . . . . .	360
Sunset Park Elementary School . . . . .	491

<b>Sheridan School District 2</b>	
Fort Logan Northgate . . . . .	559
<b>South Central BOCES</b>	
Fisher's Peak Elementary School . . . . .	341
Fowler Elementary School . . . . .	205
Fowler Junior High School . . . . .	58
Fowler High School . . . . .	120
Manzanola Elementary School . . . . .	63
Manzanola Junior-Senior High School . . . . .	77
Trinidad Middle School . . . . .	235
<b>Thompson School District</b>	
Berthoud High School . . . . .	715
Cottonwood Plains Elementary School . . . . .	419
High Plains School . . . . .	473

**Total 34,423**



Current grantees in the BPEG program were awarded through a competitive grants process in 2016. The BPEG is currently in the second year of a three-year grant cycle. **Table 2** illustrates the participating local education agencies and their funding levels for each year of the grant program.

**Table 2: Average Funding for Local Education Agencies Participating in the Bullying Prevention and Education Grant Program**

Local Education Agency	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Total
Adams 12 Five Star Schools	\$24,275	\$25,744	\$25,380	\$75,399
Boulder Valley School District RE-2	\$40,735	\$33,669	\$35,200	\$109,604
Charter School Institute	\$39,752	\$67,355	\$68,244	\$175,351
Cherry Creek School District 5	\$51,236	\$78,802	\$75,802	\$205,840
Crowley County School District RE-1J	\$40,276	\$35,930	\$37,430	\$113,636
Denver Public Schools	\$273,739	\$427,654	\$410,202	\$1,111,595
Harrison School District 2	\$82,638	\$67,663	\$64,238	\$214,539
Lamar School District RE-2	\$149,650	\$119,050	\$140,995	\$409,695
Montrose County School District RE-1J	\$172,413	\$97,511	\$97,511	\$367,435
Poudre School District	\$123,631	\$152,088	\$152,180	\$427,899
Pueblo City Schools District 60	\$862,674	\$631,874	\$770,020	\$2,264,568
Sheridan School District 2	\$31,628	\$40,570	\$40,570	\$112,768
South Central BOCES	\$166,875	\$202,850	\$202,850	\$572,575
Thompson School District	\$101,316	\$115,266	\$111,999	\$328,581
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,160,838</b>	<b>\$2,096,026</b>	<b>\$2,232,621</b>	<b>\$6,489,485</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$154,346</b>	<b>\$149,716</b>	<b>\$159,473</b>	<b>\$463,535</b>

**Table 3** provides the demographics of students within the BPEG schools. On average, there are more male than female students receiving services from the grant. The most common race/ethnicity served by the grant are students who identify as Latino (50 percent), followed by students who identify as White (39 percent) and Black (5 percent). Overall, 62 percent of students served by the BPEG receive Free-and-Reduced Lunch.

**Table 3: Demographics of Students Across Recipient Schools**

Descriptor	Number	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	16,461	48%
Male	17,962	52%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	232	1%
Asian	619	2%
Black	1,761	5%
Latino	17,333	50%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	52	0%
White	13,410	39%
Two or More Races	1,016	3%
<b>Free-and-Reduced Lunch</b>		
Average Percent per School		62%

“We have done a MUCH better job of communicating with parents when their student is involved in a bullying incident. Parents have given us positive feedback.”

– Amanda Novak, Dean of Culture in Adams 12 Five Star Schools



## Program Implementation Activities

Schools receive multifaceted support from CDE when they participate in the BPEG. Financial resources can be used, in part, to purchase an evidence-based bullying prevention curriculum. Schools are able to select the program that best fits their needs. Lessons are taught by teachers and staff to all students which provides everyone in the school with a common language and universal approach to preventing bullying.

Through the BPEG, grantee schools are encouraged to create a team to lead the bullying prevention work. These teams, called Bullying Prevention Committees, consist of a variety of stakeholders including teachers, administration, families, and community members who have a primary focus of monitoring student perceptions of bullying in their schools. Bullying Prevention Committees are led by an Implementation Coach who is hired by the local education agency using grant funds. CDE supports these Implementation Coaches by providing professional development and leadership to ensure that best practices are implemented with fidelity.

The Bullying Prevention Committees track student perception of bullying through the administration of an annual survey focused on student impressions of bullying. This survey,

which is a requirement to participate in the grant, consists of at least the following two questions:

- (1) how many students have been targeted for bullying, and
- (2) how many students have witnessed bullying?

These committees are permitted to incorporate additional questions. Some grantees have taken advantage of this opportunity and sought to determine the location and time of day that students were targeted for bullying. Consequently, these grantees were able to use data to make informed decisions about where and when to increase adult supervision in the school allowing them to meet the local needs of their school community.

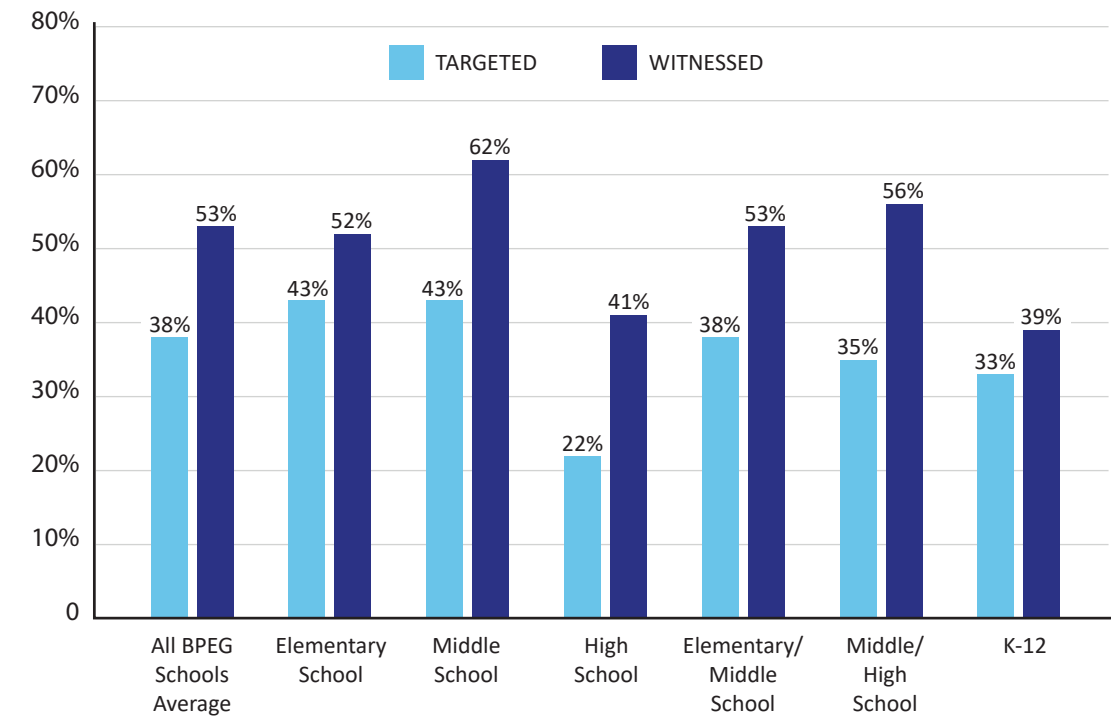
With grant funds being distributed to grantees in January of 2017, schools had until the end of the 2016-17 academic year to administer their first student survey. This established the baseline prevalence rate of bullying at each school. In total, over 11,000 students completed surveys reporting their involvement in bullying as either a target or witness for the first annual survey. Overall, 38 percent of students in grantee schools reported being the target of bullying and 53 percent reported witnessing bullying. See Figure 1 for a graph displaying BPEG student reported prevalence rates for being targeted and witnessing bullying.

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*“We clearly changed our systems in the cafeteria in hallway to provide a safer environment. We adapted our referral system and made it more clear. We also were able to better establish clear progressive discipline so the students know what is “next.”*

– Heather Wellman, Student Success Coordinator in Pueblo City Schools District 60

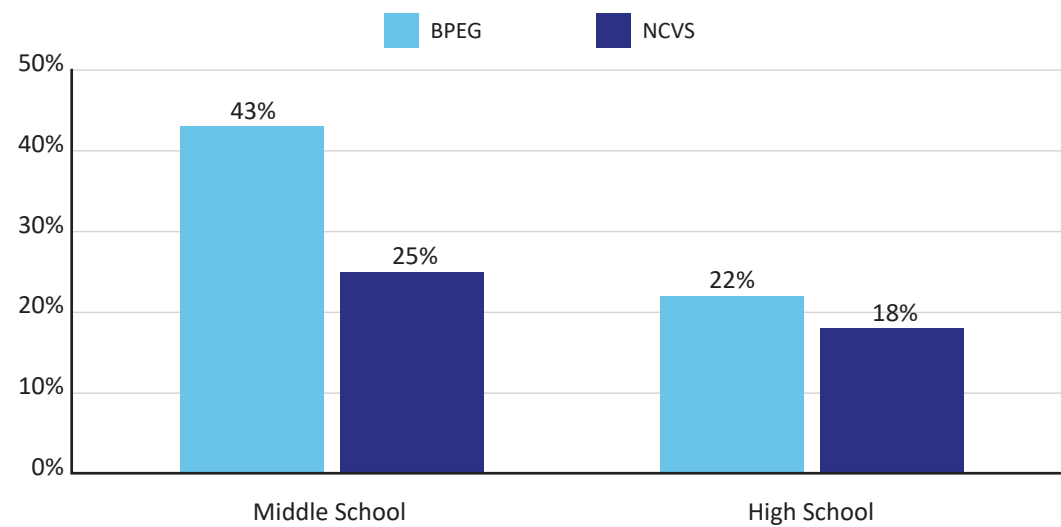
**Figure 1: The BPEG Student-Reported Prevalence Rates of Being the Target of and Witness to Bullying for the Baseline Reporting Period**



The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is a national survey with questions about being the target of bullying which offer a point of comparison for these scores. In their most recent data from 2015, schools across the nation reported a bullying prevalence rate of 25 percent in middle school and 18 percent in high school. By comparison, students in BPEG schools report being the target of bullying at average rates of 43 percent in middle schools and 22 percent in high schools. These findings suggest that students in BPEG schools report being targeted for bullying at rates higher than the national average. However, these rates were measured prior to any bullying prevention best practices being implemented in the schools. In June of 2018, schools will be required to report to CDE a second round of survey data, which will represent the prevalence of bullying after one year of engaging in bullying prevention best practices. At that time, CDE will be able to analyze the initial impact of the BPEG on reducing bullying.

Grantees must ensure the annual survey is confidential and voluntary. The confidentiality of the students taking the survey is to be maintained throughout the survey process. Grantees accomplish this in several ways including making surveys anonymous and providing students with a reasonable amount of privacy when taking the survey (e.g., spacing students, providing privacy dividers). To reinforce the voluntary nature of the survey, students are required to return a signed parent-permission form to the school before they can complete the survey. Additionally, surveys contain language that inform students that it is not required and that they will receive no negative consequences for refusing the survey.

**Figure 2: BPEG Students and a National Sample in Reported Prevalence Rates of Being the Target of Bullying**



“Our school implemented the WATCH Dogs Program this year with the use of the grant funds. Having dads in our school has provided another opportunity for families to connect with our staff and learn about what is happening at our school.”

– Dianna Smith, Counselor, Harrison School District 2

## Implementing Evidence-Based Bullying Prevention Practices

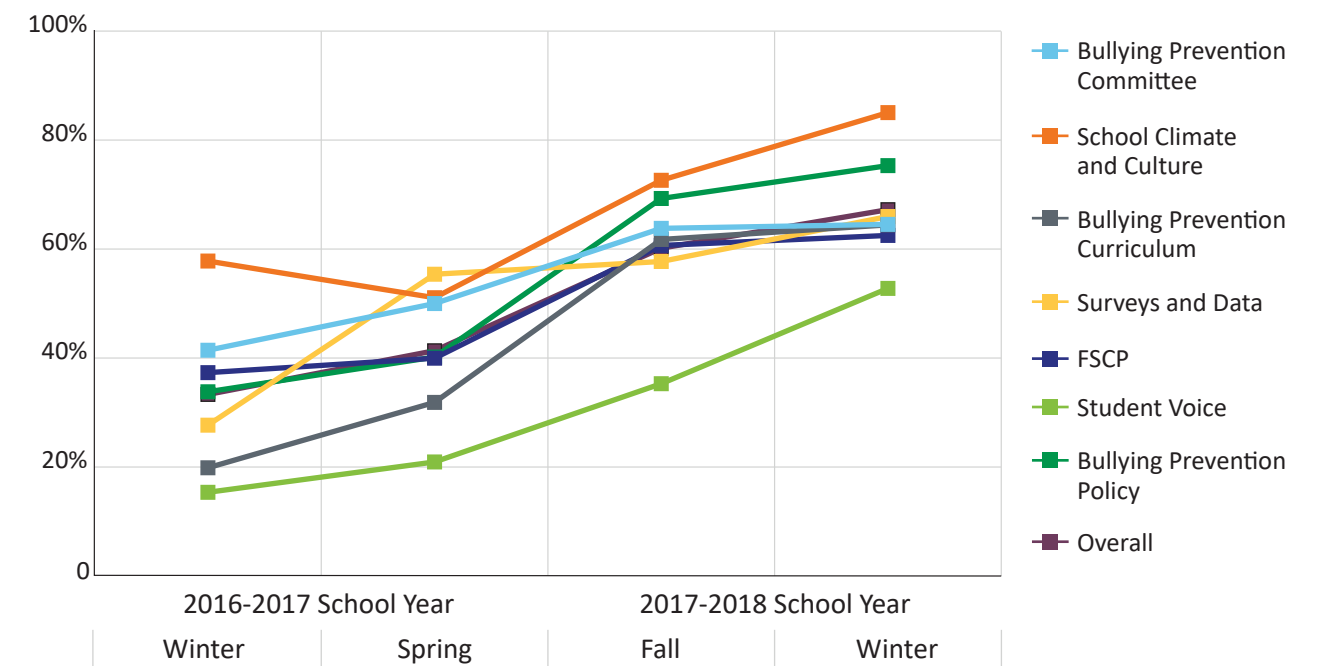
To support grantees with the implementation of bullying prevention best practices, CDE developed an implementation tool called the BPEG Self-Assessment. This tool is designed to assist grantees in monitoring the seven best practices of bullying prevention. These include:

- (1) bullying prevention committee,
- (2) school climate and culture,
- (3) bullying prevention curriculum,
- (4) surveys and data,
- (5) family, school, and community partnering,
- (6) student voice, and
- (7) bullying prevention policy.

Grantees are required to self-report scores at least once each school year on items within the seven sections of the Self-Assessment. Data collected from these assessments are grouped by season (i.e., winter, spring, and fall) for analyses.

Grantees completed their first BPEG Self-Assessment in March of 2017. The average total score across all grantees at that time was 33 percent, meaning the average BPEG school earned 33 percent of the possible points on the Self-Assessment. For the winter 2017-18 reporting period, the average score across all grantees increased to 67 percent. Figure 3 provides a graphical depiction of implementation across two project years. These score increases are a reflection of the implementation of research-based strategies that project schools have engaged in to reduce incidents of bullying.

**Figure 3: Average BPEG Self-Assessment Scores Over Time**



<sup>1</sup>Lessne D. & Yanez, C. (2016). *Student reports of bullying: Results from the 2015 school crime supplement to the national crime victimization survey* (Publication No. NCES 2017015). Retrieved from the National Center for Education Statistics website: <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2017/2017015.pdf>

## Conclusion

Now in its second year, the schools in the BPEG program have made positive strides in implementation. Seventy-two schools have implemented bullying prevention best practices and the teachers in these schools are working each and every day to make their schools safer. BPEG schools have now collected baseline data to better understand their prevalence of bullying and areas of need. In June 2018, schools will report to CDE their first round of intervention data. These data will show the change in bullying rates after one year of bullying prevention best practices. The focus on training staff, administering bullying prevention lessons, and engaging families in preventing bullying has just begun. As schools gain fluency with creating positive school climates to reduce bullying, it is expected that bullying prevalence rates will continue to drop.



*“Students are responding to the No Bully and SEL curriculum; they are reporting more than tattling; they are talking and resolving problems on their own; advocate for each other; and are comfortable talking to caring adults.”*

– Jason Wilson, Counselor in Pueblo City Schools District 60

*“...The teachers were very surprised and enthused by the quality of the lessons. Teacher buy-in is happening and many teachers are beginning to see the validity in the program and the importance of teaching the social emotional part. We were surprised that more and more teachers are eager to begin teaching the lessons without the help of the counselors.”*

– Jackie Horton, Counselor in Pueblo City Schools District 60

*“The data that was collected helped staff set goals on increased supervision. Staff was trained on active playground monitoring techniques and the playground was split into different sections for teachers to monitor”*

– Aron Jones, Principal in Lamar School District RE-2

*“We designed and launched a website that focuses on district and school policy around the topic of bullying. The target audience for the site is parents and staff, however, we aimed to make it appealing and informative to students as well.”*

– Matt Hughes, Learning Services Implementation Coach at Thompson School District





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