

## THE EFFORTS OF AKIDAH AKHLAK TEACHERS IN PREVENTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR AT MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH NEGERI 3 JAMBI CITY

Wildan Mukholid<sup>1</sup>, Khoirul Anwar<sup>2</sup>,

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Islamic Religious Education,

Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi

([rashdanziaad@gmail.com](mailto:rashdanziaad@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [khoirulanwarjambi@gmail.com](mailto:khoirulanwarjambi@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>)

### Abstract

*This study aims to describe the forms of bullying behaviour, the obstacles encountered, and the efforts of Akidah Akhlak teachers in preventing bullying at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City. A qualitative approach with a case study design was employed. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving the school principal, Akidah Akhlak teachers, and students of Class XII B. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, whilst trustworthiness was established through triangulation, persistent observation, and extended engagement. The findings reveal that bullying manifests in three forms: verbal, social, and physical, with verbal bullying being most prevalent. Key obstacles include limited instructional time, insufficient staff coordination, adverse family environments, and negative media influence. The teacher's preventive efforts encompass values-based instruction, empathy cultivation, individual counselling, disciplinary enforcement, and parental collaboration. These findings affirm the central role of Islamic moral education in addressing bullying within the madrasah setting.*

**Keywords:** Akidah Akhlak Teacher, Bullying Behaviour, Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Islamic Education, Qualitative Study

### A. Introduction

Educational institutions ought to serve as spaces that facilitate teaching and learning processes capable of developing learners' potential, spiritual capacity, personality, intelligence, noble character, self-control, and practical skills. However, the reality on the ground reveals a strikingly different picture. Over recent years, mass media has continued to highlight numerous cases of violence within school environments, one of the

most prominent being the increasingly alarming phenomenon of bullying. This situation places Indonesia's educational landscape in a deeply troubling condition, wherein environments that should be safe and conducive to learners' development have instead become arenas of intimidation and violence among peers.

Bullying constitutes a form of behaviour that coerces and intimidates an individual or a weaker group into acting against their own will, with the intent to



cause emotional, mental, or physical harm through harassment and assault. It is widely understood as an unacceptable act that, if left unaddressed, can escalate into far more dangerous and severe forms of aggression (Arif Firmansyah, 2021). Olweus (1993) defined bullying as negative behaviour that causes another person to feel uncomfortable or injured, occurring repeatedly and embodying three fundamental elements: aggressive and negative in character, repeated over time, and characterised by an imbalance of power between those involved (Novan, 2020).

The phenomenon of bullying in Indonesia has reached an alarming scale. Findings from the National Consortium for Character School Development in 2014 indicated that bullying incidents occur in nearly every school across Indonesia. Susanto, as Chairman of the Consortium, asserted that Indonesia had already entered the category of a "Bullying Emergency in Schools." This assessment is far from unfounded; a substantial body of research has documented the serious consequences of bullying on learners' psychological development and academic performance. Victims of bullying are likely to suffer from depression, diminished self-confidence, difficulties in social interaction, and a marked decline in academic achievement. Meanwhile, perpetrators of bullying tend to repeat

their aggressive behaviour if no appropriate intervention is provided.

Adolescence constitutes a critical phase in human development, during which individuals begin to establish their sense of identity. At this stage, many young people become susceptible to negative influences stemming from various external factors, including the pervasive influence of technology and peer pressure. Adolescents who lack adequate parental supervision tend to seek gratification beyond appropriate boundaries, rendering them vulnerable to social pathological behaviours, including delinquency and high-risk conduct such as bullying (Dafiq, 2020). Such conditions generate considerable stress for learners, which may give rise to complex problems, including conflict and violence within the school environment.

From the perspective of Islamic teaching, bullying constitutes a strictly prohibited act. Allah the Almighty has affirmed this through His words in Surah Al-Hujarat, verse 11, which states: *"O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule another people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule other women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by offensive nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after faith."* (QS. Al-Hujarat: 49). This verse unequivocally declares that demeaning, mocking, and



belittling others constitutes an act contrary to the values of faith and is categorised as an act of wrongdoing (*zulm*). This provides a robust normative foundation for why moral education through the Akidah Akhlak subject holds a central role in addressing bullying behaviour within the madrasah.

Educating the younger generation is a shared responsibility involving parents, teachers, and all elements of society. The process of education need not be confined to verbal advice alone; it equally encompasses nonverbal transmission through the attitudes and exemplary conduct of adults. Close collaboration between educators and learners is essential if the objectives of education are to be achieved to the fullest extent. Within this context, the Akidah Akhlak teacher occupies a highly strategic position. As the frontline agent in the moral formation of learners, the Akidah Akhlak teacher is obligated to educate students not merely in the acquisition of religious knowledge, but also in the cultivation of a religious disposition and noble character that manifests in everyday conduct.

The Akidah Akhlak teacher must be capable of addressing bullying behaviour through moral education, imparting exemplary character, and modelling conduct that learners can observe and emulate in their daily lives.

Every behaviour and stimulus displayed by the teacher will exert an influence upon the formation of the learner's character (Zakiah Daradjat, 2016). Islamic morality (*akhlak*) constitutes the very soul of Islamic education, and attaining perfection of character is the ultimate aim of education itself. For the goal of Islamic education is the formation of a servant of Allah who is obedient and submissive in carrying out His commandments, refraining from His prohibitions, and who possesses noble character and virtuous conduct.

Efforts to prevent bullying within schools cannot stand alone without the support of the entire educational ecosystem. According to Coloroso, several measures may be undertaken to address and prevent bullying behaviour, including: enforcing discipline, providing opportunities for acts of kindness, nurturing and practising empathy, teaching communication and friendship skills, monitoring children's media consumption, and involving students in activities that foster cooperation (Abu Huraerah, 2012). Furthermore, teachers' strategies for addressing bullying encompass: identifying the root causes of bullying, administering educative forms of punishment, forming study groups, and delivering guidance to students who are either potential perpetrators or victims of bullying (Fellinda, 2016).



A number of prior studies have examined related themes from varying perspectives. Dimas Wira Sambano (2020), in his research at SMA N 5 Muaro Bungo Regency, found that the forms of bullying observed included both physical and verbal bullying, and that preventive efforts involved the provision of guidance, supervision, punishment, and collaboration with parents. Richa Merry Puspitasari (2022) from IAIN Ponorogo examined the role of teachers in addressing bullying through religious guidance programmes, finding that strategies involving the teaching and cultivation of Islamic conduct proved effective. Nindya Alfian Muliasari (2019) found that the impact of bullying significantly undermines victims' mental wellbeing, as evidenced by manifestations of fear, withdrawal, lethargy, and diminished motivation to learn. Yusni and Marlina Bakri (2022) further found that bullying's impact on students' learning interest is complex whilst some students experience a decline in motivation, others maintain or even strengthen their interest in learning, suggesting that responses to bullying are substantially mediated by individual psychological factors.

These studies have made important contributions; however, research that specifically focuses on the efforts of Akidah Akhlak teachers employing an approach grounded in Islamic values

within the madrasah setting remains considerably limited. Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City, as an Islamic educational institution governed by binding regulations for all learners, aspires to create a conducive school environment and to cultivate learners who possess noble character and disciplined conduct across all aspects of life. Nevertheless, findings from the researcher's preliminary observation (*grand tour*) revealed that a number of learners were still engaging in verbal bullying towards their peers. This indicates that the internalisation of akidah and akhlak values into learners' lived behaviour has not yet been fully realised, despite the various efforts already undertaken by the school.

It is against this backdrop that the present study becomes both pertinent and timely. This research does not merely aim to describe the bullying phenomenon as it occurs; it also endeavours to explore in depth the concrete efforts made by Akidah Akhlak teachers in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City, including the challenges encountered and the solutions proposed. Accordingly, this study is expected to make a meaningful contribution towards developing more effective moral education strategies in pursuit of a madrasah environment free from



bullying, whilst simultaneously reinforcing the role of the Akidah Akhlak teacher as an agent of learners' character transformation.

## B. Research Method

### 1. Research Approach and Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was selected on the grounds that this research fundamentally aims to describe an ongoing phenomenon based on facts and information obtained directly from the field, which are subsequently analysed to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the Akidah Akhlak teacher's efforts in preventing bullying behaviour within the madrasah setting. As Kirk and Miller defined in Moleong, qualitative research is a particular tradition within the social sciences that is fundamentally dependent upon the observation of human beings within their own domain and in the context of their discourse (Lexy J. Moleong, 2014). The case study design was adopted given the research's concentration on a narrowly defined institutional setting examined intensively, thoroughly, and in considerable depth (Suharsimi Arikunto, 2014).

### 2. Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi

City over a period of approximately seven months, from October 2025 to April 2026. The issues examined encompassed the forms of bullying behaviour occurring within the institution, the obstacles encountered by the Akidah Akhlak teacher in addressing such behaviour, and the concrete strategies employed in its prevention and management.

Research participants were determined through purposive sampling, defined as the deliberate selection of informants based on specific characteristics, criteria, and standards considered relevant to the research focus (Lexy J. Moleong, 2014). The primary subjects comprised the school principal, the Akidah Akhlak teacher, and students of Class XII B, totalling 26 students. These participants were selected on the basis that they represent the parties most directly acquainted with and involved in the bullying phenomenon under investigation. The inclusion of multiple informant types administrative, instructional, and student was intended to ensure a comprehensive and multi-perspectival account of the phenomenon.

### 3. Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through three complementary methods: observation, interview, and documentation. Observation involved the concentrated direction of attention towards the research setting through the use of all the senses



(Ahmad Tanzeh, 2014). The researcher assumed the role of a participant observer, engaging directly in classroom learning activities particularly during Akidah Akhlak lessons accompanied by detailed field notes pertaining to behaviours, interactions, and events relevant to the research focus

Interviews were conducted as a form of verbal communication aimed at obtaining information through direct dialogue with informants (Nasution, 2016). Prior to each interview session, the researcher prepared a structured set of questions relevant to the research objectives.

Documentation served as a complementary data collection method, encompassing the systematic gathering of written records, institutional files, and visual materials pertaining to the research context (Sugiyono, 2014). Documentary data collected in this study included the historical background and geographical profile of the madrasah, the institutional organisational structure, the state of school facilities and infrastructure, as well as photographs of learning activities and interview sessions.

#### 4. Data Analysis

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, employing a deductive reasoning approach that proceeds from general propositions

towards specific conclusions (Sugiyono, 2014). The analytical process comprised three interrelated stages. The first stage, data reduction, involved systematically summarising, selecting the essential points, and identifying the themes and patterns most relevant to the research focus, whilst discarding information deemed peripheral. The reduced data provided a clearer and more manageable picture of the phenomenon, facilitating subsequent analysis (Sugiyono, 2014).

The second stage, data display, involved organising the reduced data into coherent narrative texts to enable meaningful interpretation and the identification of emerging findings. This stage was complemented by the analysis of both documentary and interview data, ensuring that conclusions drawn were grounded in a broad and diverse evidential base. The third and final stage, conclusion drawing and verification, entailed synthesising the analysed data into substantive conclusions representing new insights into the phenomenon under study.

#### 5. Trustworthiness of Data

The trustworthiness of the data was established through three principal techniques. First, extended engagement, whereby the researcher remained in the field until data saturation was achieved, served to minimise researcher bias and to



compensate for the potential influence of transient events upon the data collected (Sugiyono, 2014). Second, persistent observation entailed the sustained and focused examination of the most salient features of the research setting, reducing the risk of data distortion arising from superficial or hasty assessment (Sugiyono, 2012). Third, triangulation involved the cross-checking of data across multiple sources, methods, and informants, enabling the researcher to verify findings and to identify any inconsistencies requiring further investigation.

### C. Results And Discussion

#### 1. Forms of Bullying Behaviour at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City

The findings of this study reveal that bullying behaviour occurring at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City manifests in three principal forms: verbal bullying, social bullying, and physical bullying. These findings are consistent with the classification proposed by Coloroso (in Chakrawati, 2015), who categorised bullying into physical, verbal, relational, and cyber forms.

Verbal bullying was found to be the most prevalent form observed within the school environment. Based on interview data and direct observation, a number of students were found to engage in name-calling, mocking their peers' physical

appearances, and using offensive language directed at classmates. One of the Akidah Akhlak teachers interviewed stated:

*"What we most frequently encounter here is verbal bullying students calling each other by humiliating nicknames, making fun of a friend's physical appearance, or using harsh words when arguing. This happens both inside and outside the classroom."*

This finding is in line with Olweus (1993, in Novan, 2020), who identified verbal aggression as one of the most common yet frequently underestimated forms of bullying, given its less visible nature compared to physical violence. Rigby (in Sapitri, 2020) further affirmed that verbal bullying carries the same capacity to inflict lasting psychological harm upon its victims as physical forms of bullying.

Social or relational bullying was the second form identified in this study, manifesting as deliberate exclusion of certain students from peer groups, the spreading of rumours, and acts of social isolation. Findings from interviews with students indicated that some individuals felt deliberately left out during group activities, or found that negative stories about them had been circulated among their peers. This form of bullying is particularly insidious as it operates covertly and is thus more difficult for



teachers to detect and address (Priyatna, 2010).

Physical bullying, whilst less frequent than the preceding forms, was nonetheless documented in this study. Observational data and interviews with the school principal indicated that incidents of pushing, hitting, and the taking of personal belongings had occurred, predominantly among male students. The school principal noted:

*"Physical incidents do occur, though not as frequently as verbal ones. We have had cases where students push or shove each other in the corridor, or take a friend's stationery without permission, which escalates into conflict."*

These findings collectively affirm that bullying at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City is a multidimensional phenomenon that requires a comprehensive and sustained response from all educational stakeholders, particularly the Akidah Akhlak teacher, whose subject matter is most directly aligned with the cultivation of the moral values necessary to eradicate such behaviour.

## **2. Obstacles Encountered by the Akidah Akhlak Teacher in Preventing Bullying Behaviour**

The findings of this study identified several significant obstacles that impede

the efforts of the Akidah Akhlak teacher in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City. These obstacles can be broadly categorised into internal and external factors. The first and most prominent internal obstacle concerns the limited instructional time allocated to the Akidah Akhlak subject. The teacher interviewed expressed that the relatively small number of weekly classroom hours constrains the depth to which moral values can be cultivated and reinforced:

*"We only have two hours per week. That is simply not sufficient to instil values deeply, especially when students spend the remainder of their time in environments that may not support what we teach in class."*

This finding resonates with the observation of Ramayulis (2018), who noted that character formation through religious education requires consistent and sustained reinforcement across multiple contexts, and cannot be achieved through classroom instruction alone. The second obstacle pertains to the limited coordination between the Akidah Akhlak teacher and other subject teachers, as well as the school's counselling service (*Bimbingan Konseling*). Data gathered through interviews indicated that cases of bullying were not always reported promptly to the relevant teacher, and that follow-up actions were inconsistent across



different classroom settings. This fragmentation of response weakened the overall effectiveness of preventive efforts.

The third obstacle relates to the influence of the family environment. Several students identified as perpetrators of bullying were found to come from family backgrounds characterised by a lack of parental supervision, exposure to domestic conflict, or insufficient religious guidance at home. As one teacher observed:

*"Some children who bully others come from homes where they themselves are treated harshly, or where there is very little parental attention. They bring that behaviour to school."*

This is consistent with the findings of Sufriani and Eva Purnama Sari (2017), who identified the family environment as one of the most influential factors in the development of bullying behaviour among school-age children. The fourth obstacle involves the negative influence of digital media and peer culture. Students' exposure to aggressive or violent content through social media platforms and online video sharing was found to normalise aggressive behaviour and provide models for bullying conduct. The teacher noted that some students replicated behaviour they had witnessed online, including the use of derogatory language and intimidatory gestures sourced from popular media content. This finding is

consistent with research by Prasetyani (2018), who documented the significant role of digital media consumption in shaping adolescent behaviour patterns.

### **3. Efforts of the Akidah Akhlak Teacher in Preventing Bullying Behaviour**

Notwithstanding the obstacles described above, the Akidah Akhlak teacher at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City was found to have undertaken a range of deliberate and structured efforts to prevent and address bullying behaviour. These efforts are discussed across three principal domains: pedagogical strategies within the classroom, character-building activities beyond formal instruction, and collaborative approaches involving other educational stakeholders.

### **4. Integration of Anti-Bullying Values into Classroom Instruction.**

The most fundamental effort undertaken by the Akidah Akhlak teacher involved the deliberate integration of anti-bullying values into the content of classroom teaching. The teacher consistently utilised Qur'anic verses and Hadith that directly address the prohibition of mocking, belittling, and harming others most notably Surah Al-Hujarat verse 11 as the moral and theological foundation for discussions about bullying. By contextualising Islamic



teachings within real-life scenarios familiar to students, the teacher sought to render abstract moral principles actionable and personally meaningful.

The teacher further employed a narrative pedagogy approach, sharing stories of the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) conduct towards those who had wronged him as exemplars of patience, empathy, and forgiveness. This approach is consistent with the Islamic educational principle of *uswatun hasanah* (exemplary conduct), which holds that moral transformation is most effectively achieved through the presentation of living models rather than abstract instruction alone (Tafsir, 2005).

*"I always try to connect the lesson to what is actually happening among the students. When I discuss the prohibition of mockery in Surah Al-Hujarat, I ask them directly have you ever experienced this? How did it feel? This makes the lesson real for them."*

### 5. Cultivation of Empathy Through Active Learning Methods.

The Akidah Akhlak teacher was found to employ a range of active learning strategies designed to foster empathy and prosocial behaviour among students. These included cooperative learning activities in which students of differing social standings were intentionally grouped together, role-playing exercises

in which students were asked to assume the perspective of a bullying victim, and structured group reflection sessions (*circle time*) in which students shared personal experiences and collaboratively identified solutions.

These methods are theoretically grounded in the work of Coloroso (in Abu Huraerah, 2012), who identified the cultivation of empathy as among the most effective preventive strategies against bullying. By providing students with experiential opportunities to understand the impact of bullying from the victim's perspective, the teacher sought to weaken the psychological dispositions that underpin bullying behaviour, including the dehumanisation of the victim and the normalisation of aggression.

### 6. Provision of Individual Guidance and Counselling.

Beyond classroom instruction, the Akidah Akhlak teacher was found to engage in individual guidance sessions with students identified as either perpetrators or victims of bullying. These sessions were conducted informally, outside of scheduled lesson time, and were characterised by an empathetic, non-punitive approach that prioritised understanding the root causes of the student's behaviour rather than simply administering sanctions.



*"When I find out that a student has been bullying others, I do not immediately scold them in front of the class. I call them quietly, I ask them about their situation at home, about their friendships. Often there is something behind the behaviour that needs to be understood first."*

This approach aligns with the guidance of Zakiah Daradjat (2016), who emphasised that effective moral education requires teachers to establish affective relationships with their students relationships characterised by trust, sincerity, and genuine concern for the student's wellbeing before cognitive or behavioural change can be meaningfully achieved.

#### **7. Enforcement of Disciplinary Measures.**

Alongside guidance-based approaches, the Akidah Akhlak teacher also applied structured disciplinary measures in cases where bullying behaviour persisted. These measures included written behavioural agreements (*surat perjanjian*), the involvement of parents through formal school meetings, and in severe cases, the referral of students to the school principal for further action. The teacher maintained that disciplinary measures, when applied consistently and transparently, served as an effective deterrent against repeated bullying (Fellinda & Suyanto, 2016).

#### **8. Collaboration with Parents and the School Community.**

Recognising that the prevention of bullying cannot be achieved through the efforts of a single teacher alone, the Akidah Akhlak teacher actively sought to build collaborative relationships with parents and other members of the school community. This included communicating with parents regarding their child's behaviour, encouraging greater parental involvement in the moral education of their children at home, and coordinating with the school's counselling teacher to ensure a consistent and coherent response to bullying cases.

This collaborative approach is supported by the findings of Sambano (2020), who identified parental and community involvement as a critical component of effective anti-bullying strategies in Islamic school settings. It further reflects the Islamic educational philosophy that the formation of moral character is a collective responsibility shared by the family, the school, and the broader community (*tarbiyah ijtimai'iyah*).

#### **Discussion**

The findings of this study affirm that the phenomenon of bullying at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City is real, multifaceted, and requires a systematic and values-based response.



The predominance of verbal bullying over physical forms is consistent with national and international research trends, which have consistently identified verbal and relational aggression as the most pervasive forms of bullying in middle school environments (Olweus, 1993; Rigby, in Sapitri, 2020).

The obstacles identified in this study including limited instructional time, insufficient inter-staff coordination, adverse family environments, and negative media influence are not unique to this institution but reflect systemic challenges widely documented in the Indonesian educational literature (Sufriani & Eva Purnama Sari, 2017; Dafiq et al., 2020). These findings underscore the importance of institutional-level policies that support and extend the work of individual teachers.

Most significantly, this study demonstrates that the Akidah Akhlak teacher possesses a distinctive and irreplaceable capacity to address bullying through the integration of Islamic moral values into the pedagogical process. Unlike generic anti-bullying programmes that are premised solely on behavioural or psychological frameworks, the approach employed by the Akidah Akhlak teacher at this institution anchors moral formation in theological conviction in the belief that treating others with dignity and respect is not merely a social norm but a divine

obligation. This theological grounding, it is argued, imparts a depth and durability to moral education that secular approaches alone cannot replicate.

This finding is consonant with the position advanced by Ramayulis (2018), who held that the ultimate aim of Islamic education is the formation of the *insan kamil* the complete human being whose outward conduct is an authentic expression of inward faith. Bullying, in this framework, is not merely a disciplinary problem to be managed but a symptom of deficient moral and spiritual formation that must be addressed at its roots through sustained and integrated religious education.

#### D. Conclusion

This study has examined the forms of bullying behaviour, the obstacles encountered, and the efforts of the Akidah Akhlak teacher in preventing bullying behaviour at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City. Based on the findings and discussion presented, several conclusions may be drawn.

First, bullying behaviour at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Jambi City manifests in three principal forms, namely verbal bullying, social or relational bullying, and physical bullying, with verbal bullying constituting the most prevalent form encountered within the school environment. Second, the Akidah



Akhlak teacher faces a number of significant obstacles in addressing this phenomenon, including limited instructional time, insufficient coordination among school staff, the adverse influence of students' family environments, and the pervasive negative impact of digital media and peer culture upon students' behavioural dispositions. Third, in response to these challenges, the Akidah Akhlak teacher has undertaken a range of deliberate efforts encompassing the integration of Islamic anti-bullying values into classroom instruction, the cultivation of empathy through active learning methods, the provision of individual guidance and counselling for both perpetrators and victims, the consistent enforcement of disciplinary measures, and the development of collaborative relationships with parents and the broader school community. The findings of this study affirm that the role of the Akidah Akhlak teacher extends far beyond the transmission of religious knowledge; it encompasses the holistic moral formation of learners grounded in Islamic values and theological conviction. The effectiveness of the teacher's efforts, however, is contingent upon the existence of a supportive institutional environment, consistent parental engagement, and coherent school-wide policies that reinforce the values cultivated within the classroom.

It is recommended that future research explore the long-term impact of values-based moral education on the reduction of bullying behaviour in Islamic educational institutions, as well as the development of structured anti-bullying programmes that systematically integrate the pedagogical resources of the Akidah Akhlak curriculum. School leadership is further encouraged to strengthen cross-subject collaboration and to establish clear institutional protocols for the reporting, handling, and follow-up of bullying cases, so that the efforts of individual teachers may be sustained and amplified at the institutional level.

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