Literature Review – Teaching and Research Proposal Project
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<u>Introduction</u>
The focus of my research is to determine the rate of cyberbullying in our local high school. Examining the research data would help determine if our district's policies and educational practices are doing enough to help curb cyberbullying. This literature review examines perspectives and summarizes data from others who have already conducted research on the phenomenon of cyberbullying.

<u>Perspective</u>
With the explosion of texting, online blogging and social networking, bullying has expanded into cyberspace. According to the National Crime Prevention Center, 43% of teenagers were victims of cyberbullying in 2008. That's almost half of our nation's middle school and high school students.

To understand cyberbullying, and form a perspective on its rate of occurrence and its ramifications, it is first important to define cyberbullying. The National Conference on State Legislatures defines cyberbullying as bullying that can take many forms including online fights, impersonation, trickery, cyber stalking, and harassment. Examples include using someone else's user name to spread rumors or lies, sending mean or otherwise hurtful messages, or posting inappropriate pictures and messages. (2008)

Cyberbullying, as described in the Chicago Tribune, is similar to other types of bulling; teasing, tormenting, threatening, harassing or humiliating except it happens online and through mobile devices. (Sparano, 2010)

Although cyberbullying is a form of bullying, Dr. Dan Olweus, a pioneer in research on cyberbullying, identifies five characteristics of cyberbullying that differentiates it from bullying (2011):

- **Anonymity:** As bad as the "bully" on the playground may be, he or she can be readily identified and potentially avoided. On the other hand, the child who cyber bullies is often anonymous. The victim is left wondering who the cyber "bully" is, which can cause a great deal of stress.
- **Accessibility:** Most children who use traditional ways of bullying terrorize their victim at school, on the bus, or walking to or from school. Although bullying can happen elsewhere in the community, there is usually a standard period of time during which these children have access to their victims. Children who cyber bully can wreak havoc any time of the day or night.
- **Punitive Fears:** Victims of cyber bullying often do not report it because of: (1) fear of retribution from their tormentors, and (2) fear that their computer or phone privileges will be taken away. Often, adults' responses to cyber bullying are to remove the technology from a victim - which in their eyes can be seen as punishment.
- **Bystanders:** Most traditional bullying episodes occur in the presence of other people who assume the role of bystanders or witnesses. The phenomenon of being a bystander in the cyber world is different in that they may receive and forward emails, view web pages, forward images sent to cell phones, etc. The number of bystanders in the cyber world can reach into the millions.
- **Disinhibition**: The anonymity afforded by the Internet can lead children to engage in behaviors that they might not do face-to-face. Ironically, it is their very anonymity that allows some individuals to bully at all.

Because the round-the-clock opportunity to bully, some may think that cyberbullying mostly occurs outside the classroom, and schools should not concern themselves with the problem. While state legislative verbiage does not specifically call out the location of the cyberbullying, Nebraska is the only state that specifies that state action does not apply to off-campus bullying. "States often delegate the authority to control and punish bullying to individual school districts. However, because cyberbullying is a relatively new phenomenon that frequently originates off-campus, it is often unclear how far the school district's jurisdiction extends. Similarly, it is unclear whether school officials can be held responsible for cyberbullying between students, especially if the act is committed on a student's home computer. Controlling the online speech of students also raises concerns regarding the violation of free speech rights." (Iowa Policy Research Organization, 2009)

However, as Raskauskas and Stoltz state, "it is clear that although electronic bullying is often being perpetrated and experienced after school hours and off the schoolground, it is linked to what happens at school." (Woolley, 2010) Moreover, students who bully online are the same students who bully peers in person (Hinduja and Patchin, 2008); and, approximately 50% of victims report that they were cyberbullied by known bullies from school. (Ahlfors, 2010) "In many cyberbullying cases, the behavior may be a strong online <u>reaction</u> to a serious conventional bullying <u>action</u>, or vice versa, where schoolyard bullying may ensue from cyber-bullying". (Brown et al., 2006)

Cyberbullying goes beyond name calling or innocent taunting (e.g. 'sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me'). "Before one can tackle bullying in schools one must first be convinced of its harmfulness. Fortunately there is now a great deal of hard evidence regarding the physical and mental harm that continued bullying does to vulnerable children. It is known also that children who continually engage in bullying at school are more likely than others to engage in criminal activities after leaving school."(Olweus, 2011)

Not only do students who are bullied suffer long-term effects but the school and classroom environments suffer as well. Youth who experience cyberbullying are more likely to carry weapons to school, to skip school, or be suspended from school and to use alcohol or other substances. (Ybarra et al., 2007).

Pedagogy
Although this type of research does not directly pose a pedagogical question, it can provide data which will help us evaluate if our current teaching methods are doing enough to curb cyberbullying and develop additional educational opportunities if necessary. The fifth standard on learning with technology (NET·S Digital Citizenship), as outlined by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), requires that "students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students: advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology." Additionally, teachers have a responsibility to promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility. (Michigan Department of Education, 2011)

To prepare for the job, school teachers should be provided professional educational opportunities on the subject. A 2010 survey from the National Cyber Security Alliance reveals that only about half of the teachers who participated in the survey felt prepared to discuss cyberbullying with their classes. Moreover, "over three quarters of teachers surveyed spent less than six hours on any type of professional development education related to cyberethics, cybersafety, and cybersecurity within the last 12 months." (NCSA, 2010)

In 2009, the Seattle Public School District went beyond teaching solely about internet safety by launching a pilot curriculum to curb cyberbullying. First, the program includes professional development which educates teachers about cyberbullying and online terminology. The curriculum used in the classroom incorporates four prevention practices: debunking misperceptions about digital behavior, building empathy and understanding, teaching online safety skills, and equipping young people with strategies to reject digital abuse in their lives. The Seattle curriculum also offers parents prevention strategies and activities that can be shared with their students. (Holladay, 2010)

In their research with the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC), Snell and Englander report on their five-year fieldwork related to the issues of cyberbullying. The focus of their efforts is to promote student and parent-based programs that increase awareness and facilitate prevention. Their program is based on findings that indicate that girls are more often involved in cyberbullying both as a victim and as a perpetrator. (2010) Their work in suburban high schools in middle schools in southeastern Massachusetts targets girls and their parents, with a two-fold approach:
- assemblies during school, designed to increase student awareness and provide strategies for responses and managing reactions, which are delivered by (trained) peers rather than an adult
- informative evening presentations for parents, designed to help parents work with their children to prevent cyberbullying, and understand what student are potentially dealing with online

Kowalski, Limber, and Agatston, co-authors of *Cyber Bullying: Bullying in the Digital Age*, also suggest a multidimensional approach by encouraging discussions about safe online usage throughout the entire school community, including parents. (2007)

In Bay City, Michigan, the principal of Bay City All Saints Central School uses a unique approach to avert possible cyberbullying. Principal John Hoving set up a Facebook account of his own, designed to communicate with middle and high school students and parents. His goal is to promote school events and student achievement, but also to become more informed about what students are posting online. "In one case this summer, Hoving sent a private message to a student regarding what he said could be a "hurtful" comment. "After I did that, it stopped," he told The (Bay City) Times. "This can stop those confrontations before they escalate." (Michigan Education Report, 2010)

Government and media companies are joining the movement to curb cyberbullying. In March of 2010, the White House launched www.stopbullying.gov to serve as a resource for students, parents, and educators. Recently, MTV launched its site. www.athinline.org, designed to help students understand the 'thin line' between appropriate and inappropriate online communications. Nickelodeon has joined in the effort by creating a series of public service announcements on digital citizenship and healthy technology use.

Assessment
Research into the area of this phenomenon lends itself to both quantitative as well as qualitative data. Survey questions, polls, questionnaires and interviews collect demographic data, frequency of occurrence, as well as qualitative data about the type of bullying and how students feel about cyberbullying.

It is important to recognize that students are especially sensitive to the topic, and may or may not be willing to participate, so a variety of research platforms should be used. Take a look at an example on

YouTube of a student project (2011) that gathers peer data on bullying and asks the question if Facebook is a forum for cyberbullying:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9H7QAIa2xWk&feature=related

In order to gather some data from people of all ages, Stopcyberbullying.org posts an on-line survey, created using Survey Monkey. (2011) Their intention is to use the data to build programs with teens and pre-teen leaders. The survey questions are designed to collect quantitative data (age, profession, and number of cyberbullying occurrences), as well as qualitative data (e.g. Tell us what you think about cyberbullying). Participants are also given an opportunity to indicate whether or not they want to help-stop cyberbullying.
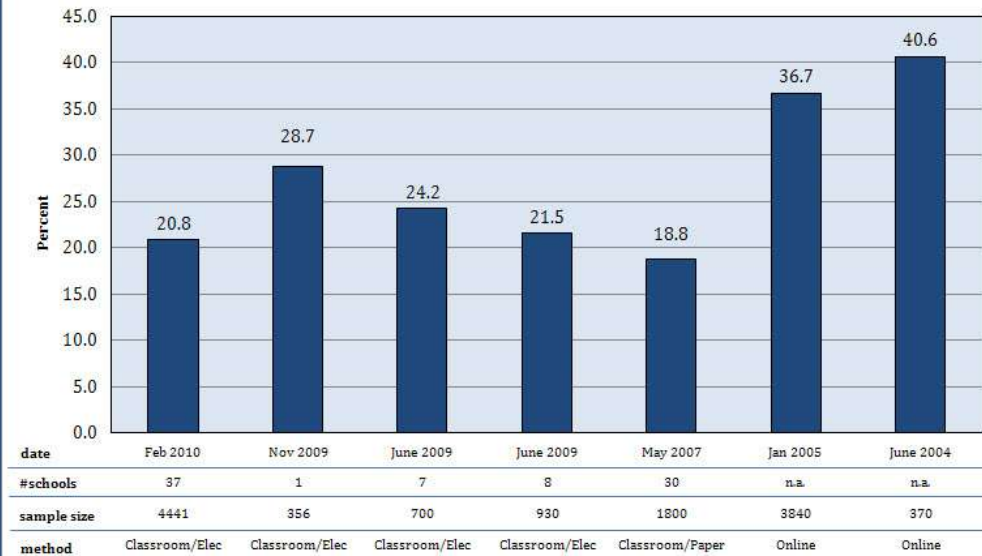
Another way to collect assessment data would be to 'go down under' and pose as another student online in chat rooms, on blogs, and in social networking sites. Interestingly, a site called formspring.com was designed as a social networking site, encouraging open communication in a question and answer format. It sounds like a site from which we could gather some data. Despite its original intentions, it has ironically become a forum for bullying.

Conducting half- or full-day conferences on cyberbullying have also been used as an informal assessment option. "In Westchester County in the State of New York, school officials invited 600 students, parents, educators and law-enforcement officials to a one-half day conference on cyber-bullying. When officials asked approximately 200 students how many had personally been a cyber-victim or perpetrator, or knew a friend who was either, 194 students raised their hands." (Brown et al., 2006)

Research from East Lansing's own Sameer Hinduja, Ph.D. and Justin W. Patchin, Ph.D. reveal some cyberbullying victimization rates and demographic data, from seven different studies from 2004 – 2010. Survey methods varied from online questionnaires to hard copy surveys and classroom interviews.

Lifetime Cyberbullying Victimization Rates
Seven Different Studies 2004-2010

date	Feb 2010	Nov 2009	June 2009	June 2009	May 2007	Jan 2005	June 2004
#schools	37	1	7	8	30	n.a.	n.a.
sample size	4441	356	700	930	1800	3840	370
method	Classroom/Elec	Classroom/Elec	Classroom/Elec	Classroom/Elec	Classroom/Paper	Online	Online

Cyberbullying Reseach Center
www.cyberbullying.us

Cyberbullying Victimization
N=4441
Random sample of 10-18 year-olds from large school district in the southern U.S.)
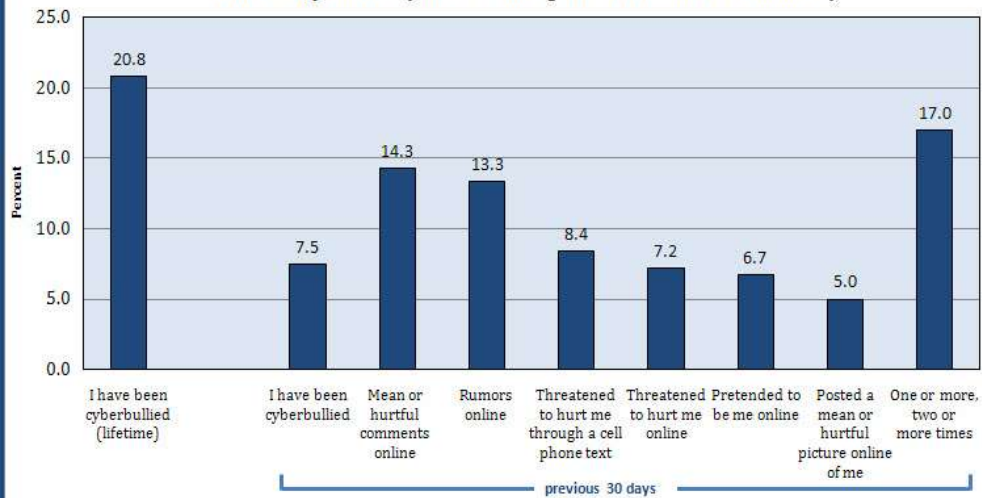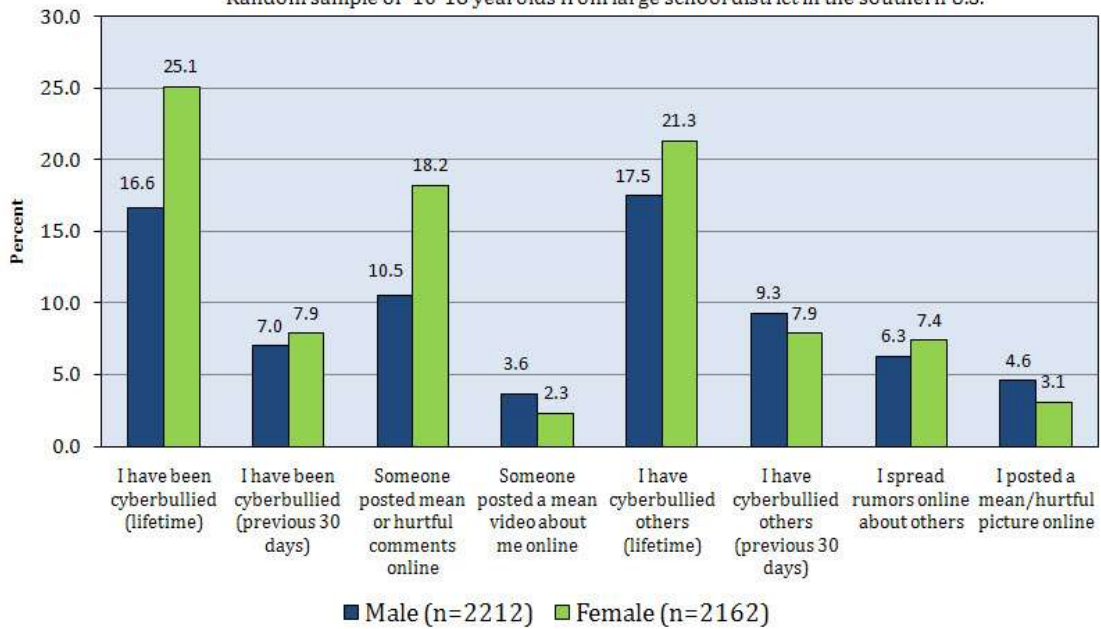

Cyberbullying Reseach Center
www.cyberbullying.us

Sameer Hinduja and Justin W. Patchin (2010)

Cyberbullying by Gender

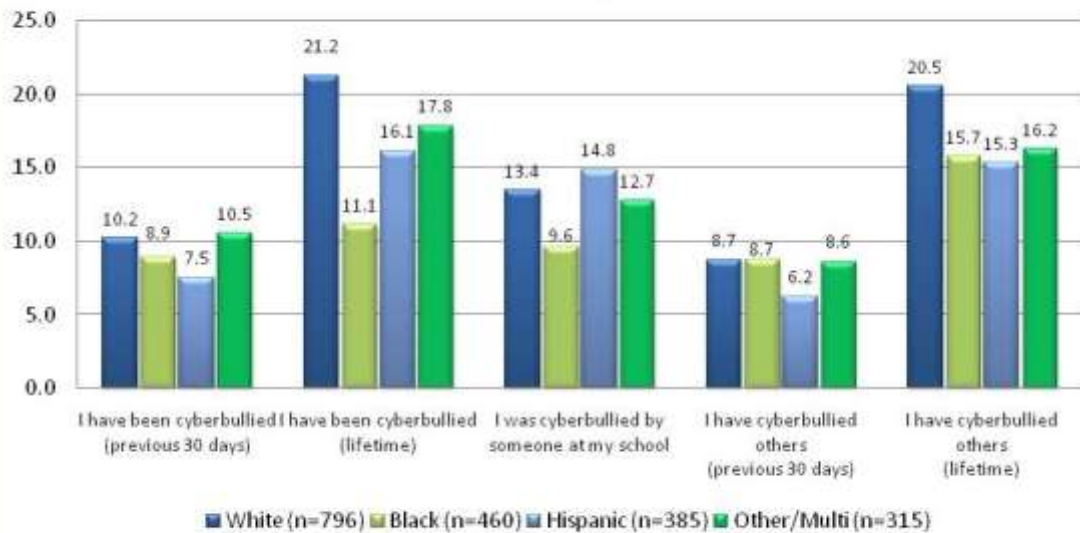Random sample of 10-18 yearolds from large school district in the southern U.S.

Male (n=2212)   Female (n=2162)

Cyberbullying Reseach Center
www.cyberbullying.us

Sameer Hinduja and Justin W. Patchin (2008)   www.cyberbullying.us

Cyberbullying by Race
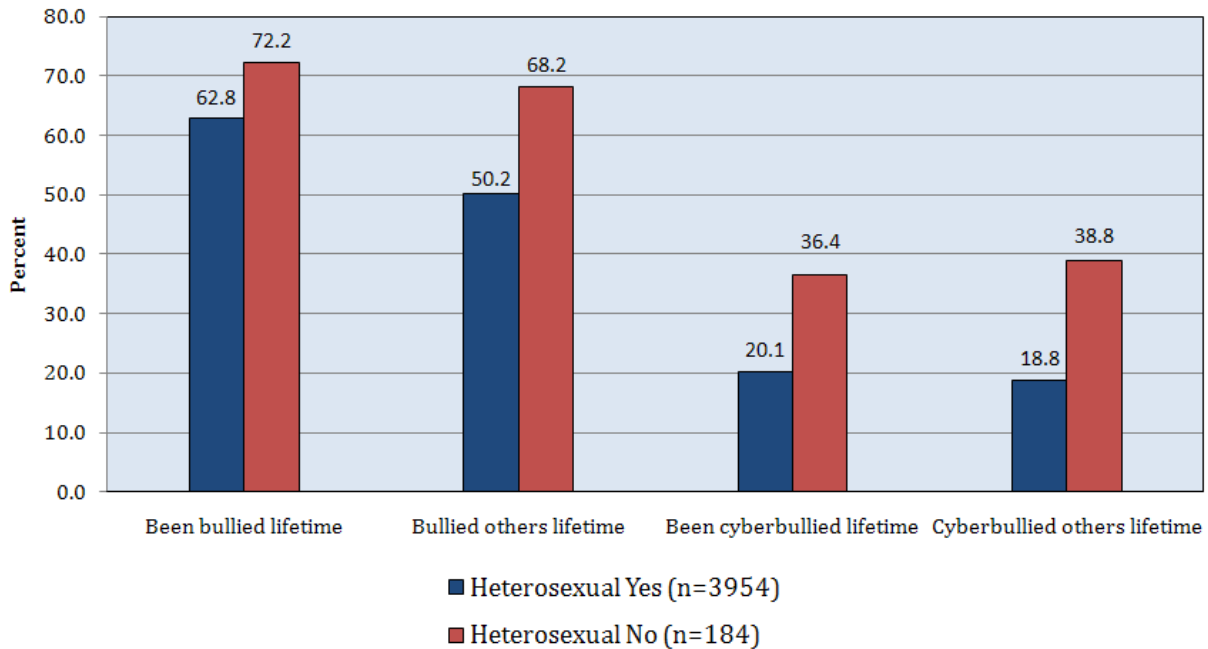
White (n=796)   Black (n=460)   Hispanic (n=385)   Other/Multi (n=315)

Note: Sample represents middle school students (grades 6-8) from a large school district in the United States.
For more information, email: research@cyberbullying.us

Chart 1: Bullying by Sexual Orientation
Random sample of 11-18 year-olds from large school district in the southern U.S.

Chart showing:
- Been bullied lifetime: Heterosexual Yes 62.8, Heterosexual No 72.2
- Bullied others lifetime: Heterosexual Yes 50.2, Heterosexual No 68.2
- Been cyberbullied lifetime: Heterosexual Yes 20.1, Heterosexual No 36.4
- Cyberbullied others lifetime: Heterosexual Yes 18.8, Heterosexual No 38.8

Legend:
■ Heterosexual Yes (n=3954)
■ Heterosexual No (n=184)

Cyberbullying Reseach Center
www.cyberbullying.us

*Statistically significant differences (p<.001; two-tailed)

Not surprisingly, Hinduja and Patchin have found that cyberbullying extends into online relationships and dating. "In research based on a random sample of approximately 4,400 11-18 year-old youth from a large school district in the southern United States from 2010, about 12% of students had been the victim of some form of electronic dating violence…The number of persons who have been victimized offline by romantic partners ranges from 10% to 47%, depending on how the behaviors are defined and measured in research studies."(2011)

Looking at surveys on cyberbullying in my own Grosse Pointe school district, I have found little evidence that formal student cyberbullying surveys have taken place. Grosse Pointe South's former principal, Allen Diver, comments on his blog about a recent seminar he attended, but it is more about an awareness of cyberbullying and its effects. (2011) It is difficult to find out more during the summer months, but I have been trying to dig a little deeper to determine if research has occurred, and the type of research that may have taken place in the district.

Conclusion
While bullying has been around for thousands of years, cyberbullying is a relatively recent phenomenon. The research data is revealing as well as disappointing. As a parent and as an educator, I have renewed my interest and concern for cyberbullying, and the importance of watching for signs of cyberbullying in

the students with which I come into contact. (Coincidentally, I have recently witnessed signs of bullying in my workplace, and wonder about how frequently it occurs at the office.)

While I believe all the data that I have read, I also believe that some of the statistics are underestimated. Students are hesitant to report cyberbullying in fear of additional bullying or that their access to the Internet might be limited/restricted. When conducting any type of research with students, it would be important to reassure them that their responses would be kept confidential, and provide a confidential forum in which they may participate. In a recent Girl Scout poll regarding cyberbullying and online solicitation, of those that had been bullied or solicited only 7 percent told their parents that they had been approached, and 30 percent said that they didn't tell anyone. (Shrum, 2008)

Lastly, the effects of cyberbullying are becoming more and more alarming. Recent reports of suicides cause one to pause. In 2010, Dr. Phil McGraw spoke during a House Education subcommittee hearing examining safety concerns for children and teens using the internet, social networking, and other technology. McGraw told the subcommittee that kids who are cyberbullied are almost twice more likely to attempt suicide than the general population. (Dorsett, 2010) This statistic, as well as recent national reports of suicides (Tyler Clementi, Phoebe Prince, Megan Meier, etc.) as a result of online harassment and cyberbullying, should cause us all to want to take a closer look how frequently cyberbullying occurs in our schools.

Sources and Summaries of Articles

Ahlfors, Rebecca. (2010). Many Sources, One Theme: Analysis of Cyberbullying Prevention and
Intervention Websites. *Journal of Social Sciences. 6(4),* 515-522*.*

> Ahlfors examined the general characteristics of 17 cyberbullying prevention and intervention
> websites. The four main topics on these websites included cyberbullying prevention, internet
> safety tips, availability of a commercial product, and methods for managing cyberbullying. Her
> research found that although the sites were somewhat oriented towards educators and
> children, the main target audience is parents. Ironically, many parents are unaware of incidents
> of cyberbullying that involve their children, so the websites may be underutilized by parents.

Brown, Karen, Jackson, Margaret, Cassidy, Wanda. (2006, December 18). Cyber-Bullying: Developing
Policy to Direct Responses that are Equitable and Effective in Addressing this Special Form of
Bullying [Abstract] *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy, Issue #57, p.101.*

> A lengthy abstract that examines research on cyberbullying 'through a policy lens'. Compares
> and contrasts conventional bullying and cyberbullying. Provides recommendations on ways to
> implement acceptable us policies and develop contracts that parents may devise for home use.

Cyber Bullying through Facebook- English 202-019 Spring 2011 IUP. [Video file]. Retrieved from
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9H7QAIa2xWk&feature=related

> A video that provides an example of a way to interview others, and explores the possibility that
> Facebook is a gateway to cyberbullying. Students used a quantitative questionnaire created in
> Google Docs that is used to interview other students. Introduced the term 'trolling' in the video.

Diver, D. Allen. (2011, February 10). Cyberbullying—Some Quick Facts. The Principal's Place. [Web log comment].
Retrieved from http://gpsprincipal.blogspot.com/2011/02/cyberbullying-some-quick-facts.html

> Dr. Allen Diver was the principal at Grosse Pointe South High School. His blog summarizes what
> he heard from Justin Patchin (also cited in this review) at a recent seminar. Many of the facts
> listed on the blog are similar to other research findings.

Dorsett, Katherine. (2010, June 24). Dr. Phil Tackles Cyberbullying. *CNNTech*. Retrieved from
http://articles.cnn.com/2010-06-24/tech/McGraw.cyber.bully_1_cyberbullying-talk-social-
networking?_s=PM:TECH

> This is a short article that summarizes Dr. Phil's discussions on Capitol Hill. The article also
> reveals that those that have been cyberbullied are almost twice as likely to commit suicide as
> the general population. Dr. Phil also expresses the concern that children often do not discuss
> cyberbullying with their parents because they are ashamed or embarrassed about it.

Hinduja, Sameer and Patchin, Justin. (2011). Cyberbullying Research Summary: Bullying, Cyberbullying,
and Sexual Orientation. [Graph illustrations: Lifetime Cyberbullying Victimization Rates,
Cyberbullying Victimization, Cyberbullying by Gender, Cyberbullying by Race, Bullying by sexual
Orientation]. Retrieved from http://www.cyberbullying.us

Several articles summarized data in an easy-to-understand format. Embedded charts show that when broken down by sexual orientation, heterosexual males are the least likely group to have experienced cyberbullying and non-heterosexual females are the most like to have been victims. Also displays data illustrating rates of victimization and measures of its prevalence.

Holladay, Jennifer. (Fall, 2010). *Teaching Tolerance.* Southern Poverty Law Center. Retrieved from http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-38-fall-2010/cyberbullying

This is one of the few sites or resources that provides some sort of detail about what a cyberbullying prevention curriculum might look like. The four-fold approach attacked using four strategies: debunking misperceptions about digital behavior, building empathy and understanding, teaching online safety skills, and equipping young people with strategies to reject digital abuse in their lives. The curriculum includes professional development and parental involvement.

Kowalski, Robin, Limber, Susan, Agatston, Patricia. (2007) *Cyber Bullying: Bullying in the Digital Age.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

This book is a comprehensive resource for teachers and parents. It provides research data, prevention strategies for teachers and parents, and promotes the idea that preventive education is more effective than discipline when dealing with this phenomenon.

Iowa Policy Research Organization. (2009, December 29). Legislation on Cyberbullying. Retrieved from http://www.uiowa.edu/~ipro/Papers%202009/Cyberbullying%20Final.pdf

This website presents perspectives on bullying and freedom of speech. Its many contributors examine legislation and trends in cyberbullying laws. A table on page 4 lists each state, and summarizes state action on cyberbullying.

International Society for Technology in Education. (2011). The ISTE NETS and Performance Indicators for Teachers (NETS•T) Retrieved from http://www.iste.org/Libraries/PDFs/NETS_for_Teachers_2008_EN.sflb.ashx

This site links to a PDF document which spells out the standards for teachers teaching in the digital age. Standard 4 on teaching online legal and ethical behavior particularly applies to this Literature Review.

Michigan Department of Education. (2009). Michigan Educational Technology Standards. Retrieved from http://techplan.edzone.net/METS/

Provides Michigan's guidelines in teaching technology literacy by grade level. More specifically, the Michigan Educational Technology Standards for Students (MET·S), approved by the Michigan state board of education in 2009, specify that by the end of:
- Grade 5, each student will discuss scenarios involving acceptable and unacceptable uses of technology (e.g., file-sharing, social networking, text messaging, cyberbullying, plagiarism)
- Grade 8, discuss the long term ramifications of participating in questionable online activities (e.g., posting photos of risqué poses or underage drinking, making threats to others)
- Grade 12, discuss and demonstrate proper netiquette in online communications

Michigan Education Report. (2010). Principal Sees Potential in Facebook. Retrieved from
http://www.educationreport.org/pubs/mer/article.aspx?id=13482

Edited in Midland, Michigan, the Michigan Education Report provides news and summaries of
issues in education in Michigan. According to the website, the Michigan Education Report is
produced by the Education Policy Initiative of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a
nonpartisan research and educational institute devoted to analyzing Michigan public policy
issues.

National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). (2011, January 26). State Cyberstalking,
Cyberharassment and Cyberbullying Laws. Retrieved from:
http://www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=13495

This site summarizes state laws that specifically reference electronic/online communication.
Includes a state chart with links to penal codes. Also articulates differentiation between
cyberstalking, cyberharassment, and cyberbullying.

National Cyber Security Alliance. (2011). The 2011 State of Cyberethics, Cybersafety and Cybersecurity
Curriculum in the U.S. Survey. Retrieved from
http://staysafeonline.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=43&item=77

This site contains a wealth of information on issues regarding cyber security. Offers email alerts
when NCSA releases news and NCSA's press releases on the topic.

Olweus, Dan. (2011). What is Cyber Bullying? Retrieved from
http://www.olweus.org/public/cyber_bullying.page?menuheader=1

Dr. Dan Olweus is one of the pioneers in research on bullying and cyberbullying. His
comprehensive website provides definitions, research summaries, links to books and articles,
and links to related publications. Ken Rigby references/utilizes the results of his research.

Rigby, Ken. (2010). Does bullying really do children any harm? Retrieved from
http://www.kenrigby.net/harm.html

Ken Rigby is a professor and educational consultant at the University of South Australia. Since
1993, he has authored over 100 publications/books and has become of the leading authorities on
bullying and peer victimization. He has addressed thousands at many conferences and seminars
all over the world, including the United States. According to his website, his book "Bullying in
schools and what to do about it" has been published in Australia, the United Kingdom, and North
America and is regarded as a standard text. His site provides numerous resources for schools
and parents, a series of questionnaires, and anti-bullying programs.

Shrum, Francis. (2008, April 24). The Dirty Work of Cyberbullying. *The Grosse Pointe News.* Retrieved
from http://www.grossepointenews.com/Articles-i-2008-04-24-217959.112112_The-dirty-work-
of-cyberbullying.html%202008

This is an article in our local newspaper. The syndicated columnist explains what cyberbullying is
and provides some survey statistics that reveals how few girls share incidents with their parents.

Snell, Patricia A and Englander, Elizabeth K. (2010). Cyberbullying Victimization and Behaviors Among Girls: Applying Research Findings in the Field. *Journal of Social Sciences.* 6 (4), 510-514.

Snell and Englanders study provides data on cyberbullying behavior in females, as part of research on gender differences and trends in cyberbullying. They also examine a pilot program conducted by the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center which focuses on prevention and strategies for girls and their parents.

Sparano, Nina. (2010, October 5). Cyberbullying Affects 40 Percent of Kids. *The Chicago Tribune.* Retrieved from http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/kdvr-cyberbullying-txt,0,327114.story

This article defined cyberbullying and summarized several interviews with students who had been bullied. Author also made recommendations to those who have been bullied: ask a trusted adult for help, never retaliate or it will make the problem worse, and save evidence of bullying for investigators. Article provided statistic from Cyberbullying Research Center that 40% of kids in the U.S say that they've been bullied on the Internet.

Stop Cyberbullying. (2011). We Can Stop Cyberbullying Together! Don't stand by! Stand up! Retrieved from http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/N6LBCYH

This survey collects demographic (quantitative) data as well as qualitative data (e.g., tell us what you think about cyberbullying).

Wong-Lo, Mickie. (2009). Cyberbullying: Responses of adolescents and parents toward digital aggression*.* University of North Texas. *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.* Retrieved from http://ezproxy.msu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/304962138?accouacco=12598

Wong-lo's dissertation is written and formatted much like this literature review. Her survey was divided into the following sections: personal and vicarious experiences of cyberbullying form the adolescent group, inquiries about the understanding of cyberbullying, and responses toward preventative measures of cyberbullying from both student and parent groups.

Woolley, William Lee. (2010). *Bullying in the Twenty-First Century: From Schoolyard to Cyberspace.* (UMI 3422759) Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations.

An extensive study on the link between a traditional bully and a cyberbully, as well as between a traditional victim and a cyber-victim. Study also looked at the correlation between gender and other demographics that characterize the bully and victim. Points out data from other researchers that links bullying to lifelong consequences and links what happens away from school affects what happens at school.

Ybarra, M.L., M. Diener-West and P.J. Leaf. (2007).Examining the overlap in Internet harassment and school bullying: Implications for school intervention. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41: S42-S50. DOI: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2007.09.004