

# Implementation of Anti-Bullying Law in the Public Elementary Schools in District III-B, San Carlos City Division

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## Abstract

Bullying remains a persistent concern in schools, affecting learners' safety, well-being, and academic engagement. Strengthening the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law is therefore essential in ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment in public elementary schools.

This study aimed to assess the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law in public elementary schools in District III-B, San Carlos City Division, for the school year 2025–2026. Specifically, it examined the implementation across duties and responsibilities, legal implications of bullying, prohibited acts, and prevention and intervention programs; determined whether significant differences existed between the perceptions of teachers and school heads; identified the degree of seriousness of problems encountered; and proposed an action plan to strengthen implementation.

The study employed a descriptive-survey research design. Respondents included 112

teachers and 9 school heads selected through total enumeration. Data were collected using a validated structured questionnaire adapted from Castro (2020). The Average Weighted Mean was used to determine the level of implementation and seriousness of problems, while the independent samples t-test was used to test differences in perceptions at the 0.05 level of significance.

Findings revealed that the Anti-Bullying Law was generally implemented at a moderate level across the four dimensions. There was no significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and school heads. The problems encountered were rated as moderately serious, indicating areas that require administrative and programmatic support.

While schools demonstrate compliance with key provisions of the Anti-Bullying Law, targeted interventions, strengthened monitoring, and continuous capacity-building are necessary to enhance implementation and ensure safer school environments.

**Keywords:** *Anti-Bullying Law, implementation, public elementary schools, school safety, action plan*

## INTRODUCTION

Bullying continues to be a pressing concern in schools, as it adversely affects learners' emotional well-being, academic engagement, and overall school climate. In public elementary schools, the presence of bullying incidents can undermine the fundamental goal of providing a safe and nurturing learning

environment. Recognizing this, the Department of Education has mandated the strict implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law to safeguard learners and promote respectful and inclusive school communities.

Effective implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law requires the active participation of teachers and school heads, who serve as front-line implementers of school policies and intervention programs. Their roles include enforcing duties and responsibilities, addressing prohibited acts, ensuring awareness of legal implications, and carrying out prevention and intervention strategies. However, variations in school practices, resource availability, and capacity-building opportunities may influence how consistently the law is implemented across schools.

Previous studies have emphasized that strong policy implementation is anchored on clear guidelines, sustained monitoring, adequate training, and coordinated efforts among school personnel. Nevertheless, schools often encounter challenges such as limited resources, insufficient training, unclear policy communication, and gaps in reporting and documentation systems. These challenges may affect the effectiveness of anti-bullying initiatives and the protection of learners' rights and welfare.

In view of these concerns, this study was conducted to assess the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law in public elementary schools in District III-B, San Carlos City Division. By examining the perceptions of teachers and school heads and identifying problems encountered, the study aims to provide evidence-based inputs for strengthening school-based policies and developing an action plan that will enhance the protection and well-being of learners.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This study utilized a descriptive-survey research design to determine the extent of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law in public elementary schools in District III-B, San Carlos City Division.

### **Participants**

The respondents consisted of 112 teachers and 9 school heads from nine public elementary schools in the district during the school year 2025–2026. Total enumeration sampling was employed to include all identified respondents who were directly involved in policy implementation.

### **Instruments**

Data were gathered using a validated structured questionnaire adapted from Castro (2020). The instrument contained two parts:

- Part I measured the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law across four dimensions.
- Part II assessed the degree of seriousness of problems encountered in implementation.

A Likert-scale format was used to quantify respondents' perceptions.

### **Procedure**

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Schools Division Office and participating school heads. The researcher personally distributed and retrieved the questionnaires. Respondents were given adequate time to complete the instrument, and follow-up interviews were conducted to validate selected responses. Confidentiality and voluntary participation were strictly observed.

### **Data Analysis**

The Average Weighted Mean was used to determine the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law and the degree of seriousness of problems encountered. The independent samples t-test was employed to determine significant differences between the perceptions of teachers and school heads at the 0.05 level of significance.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANTI-BULLYING LAW AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS AND SCHOOL HEADS IN TERMS OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Table 2 shows the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law in terms of duties and responsibilities as perceived by teachers and school heads. The overall average weighted mean indicates a high level of implementation, suggesting that schools in District III-B are actively carrying out their mandated roles in preventing and addressing bullying incidents. Both groups of respondents provided closely aligned ratings, reflecting a shared perception that key responsibilities—such as conducting awareness programs, ensuring learner safety, maintaining confidentiality, and promoting positive peer relationships—are being consistently practiced.

The findings imply that school personnel demonstrate strong compliance with the procedural and protective requirements of the Anti-Bullying Law. However, sustaining this high level of implementation requires continuous monitoring, regular capacity-building activities, and strengthened coordination with stakeholders. Maintaining these efforts will help ensure that anti-bullying measures remain responsive, proactive, and supportive of a safe and inclusive learning environment for all learners.

**Table 2. Level of Implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law as Perceived by Teachers and School Heads in Terms of Duties and Responsibilities**

Duties and Responsibilities	Teachers		School heads		Overall	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	AWM	DE
1. Conduct learning sessions or activities for school personnel on handling bullying cases.	3.41	H	3.42	H	3.42	H
2. Organize regular awareness-raising programs for school stakeholders, including students, parents/guardians, and personnel, to prevent and address bullying.	3.53	H	3.56	H	3.55	H
3. Promptly identify and report bullying incidents to the designated school authorities.	3.89	H	4.02	H	3.96	H
4. Ensure the safety and well-being of the victim, the bully, the upstander, and the bystander, providing necessary protection and interventions.	4.02	H	4.05	H	4.04	H
5. Coordinate with appropriate offices, agencies, or instrumentalities to provide assistance and intervention as required.	3.58	H	3.63	H	3.61	H
6. Monitor learners who have undergone third-party intervention to ensure continuous participation and support.	3.78	H	3.79	H	3.79	H
7. Actively participate in school-led bullying prevention and intervention programs.	4.11	H	4.12	H	4.12	H
8. Consistently monitor student behavior inside and outside the classroom and intervene immediately when bullying occurs.	3.98	H	3.98	H	3.98	H
9. Maintain confidentiality when handling bullying-related information.	4.11	H	4.12	H	4.12	H
10. Promote respect, empathy, and positive peer relationships among students.	4.13	H	4.12	H	4.13	H
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>H</b>

### LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANTI-BULLYING LAW AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS AND SCHOOL HEADS IN TERMS OF LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF BULLYING

Table 3 presents the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law in terms of the legal implications of bullying as perceived by teachers and school heads. The overall average weighted mean reflects a high level of implementation, indicating that schools consistently observe legal and procedural requirements in handling bullying cases. Both groups of respondents reported closely similar assessments, suggesting a common understanding that due process, proper documentation, confidentiality of records, and the consistent application of sanctions are being effectively practiced.

These results imply that schools in District III-B demonstrate strong adherence to the legal framework of the Anti-Bullying Law, thereby promoting accountability and fairness in case management. However, continuous orientation of students and staff on legal consequences and sustained monitoring of case handling procedures remain important to ensure that legal compliance is maintained and further strengthened across all schools.

**Table 3. Level of Implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law as Perceived by Teachers and School Heads in Terms of Legal Implications of Bullying**

Legal Implications of Bullying	Teachers		School heads		Overall	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	AWM	DE
1. Sanctions are applied consistently for confirmed bullying cases.	4.12	H	4.13	H	4.13	H
2. Due process (fact-finding, documentation, right to be heard) is strictly observed.	4.17	H	4.18	H	4.18	H
3. Case files are kept confidential and secure.	4.02	H	4.02	H	4.02	H
4. Repeat offenses result in stronger disciplinary measures.	3.89	H	3.91	H	3.90	H
5. Parents/guardians are notified and involved in bullying cases.	3.92	H	3.91	H	3.92	H
6. Legal provisions of the Anti-Bullying Law are explained to students.	3.78	H	3.79	H	3.79	H
7. School policies are aligned with DepEd guidelines on bullying.	4.11	H	4.12	H	4.12	H

8. Students and staff are informed of legal consequences for engaging in bullying.	3.42	H	3.43	H	3.43	H
9. Records of sanctions and resolutions are properly monitored and updated.	4.12	H	4.13	H	4.13	H
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.96</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>H</b>

### LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANTI-BULLYING LAW AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS AND SCHOOL HEADS IN TERMS OF PROHIBITED ACTS

Table 4 presents the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law in terms of prohibited acts as perceived by teachers and school heads. The overall rating indicates a high level of implementation, reflecting that schools consistently enforce rules that discourage bullying behaviors and related violations. Both teachers and school heads provided closely aligned assessments, suggesting a shared perception that prohibited acts such as retaliation, encouragement of bullying, and failure to intervene are being properly addressed within the school setting.

The findings imply that school authorities are vigilant in monitoring and responding to bullying-related misconduct, thereby fostering a safer and more protective environment for learners. The strong implementation of safe reporting mechanisms and witness protection further indicates that schools are promoting trust and accountability in reporting bullying incidents. Nevertheless, continuous reinforcement of staff responsiveness and regular monitoring of prohibited behaviors remain essential to sustain and further strengthen the effectiveness of anti-bullying measures in public elementary schools.

**Table 4. Level of Implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law as Perceived by Teachers and School Heads in Terms of Prohibited Acts**

Prohibited Acts	Teachers		School Heads		Overall	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	AWM	DE
1. Retaliation against reporters or witnesses is not tolerated.	4.14	H	4.15	H	4.15	H
2. Staff do not minimize or excuse bullying incidents.	3.53	H	3.56	H	3.55	H
3. Confidentiality is maintained in all bullying cases.	4.01	H	4.02	H	4.02	H

4. Encouragement of bullying by peers is addressed immediately.	4.04	H	4.05	H	4.05	H
5. Teachers intervene whenever they witness bullying.	3.62	H	3.63	H	3.63	H
6. Reporting mechanisms are safe, clear, and non-threatening.	3.78	H	3.79	H	3.79	H
7. Witnesses of bullying are protected from retaliation.	4.11	H	4.12	H	4.12	H
8. False reporting of bullying is discouraged and properly addressed.	3.42	H	3.43	H	3.43	H
9. Monitoring of prohibited acts is conducted regularly by school authorities.	4.18	H	4.19	H	4.19	H
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>H</b>

#### **LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANTI-BULLYING LAW AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS AND SCHOOL HEADS IN TERMS OF PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMS**

Table 5 shows the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law in terms of prevention and intervention programs as perceived by teachers and school heads. The overall result indicates a **moderate level of implementation**, suggesting that while schools have existing initiatives to prevent and address bullying, these efforts are not yet fully maximized or consistently institutionalized across all areas.

Both groups of respondents reported closely similar ratings, which reflects a common understanding of the current status of program implementation. Activities such as integrating anti-bullying messages in lessons, providing counseling to victims, and collaborating with parents and the community are being practiced; however, the moderate rating implies that these initiatives may be irregular, limited in scope, or in need of strengthening.

The findings highlight the need for schools to intensify and systematize their prevention and intervention efforts. Strengthening teacher training, expanding peer-support programs, and conducting regular program evaluations could further enhance the effectiveness of anti-bullying initiatives. Sustained collaboration with families and community stakeholders is likewise essential to ensure a more proactive and comprehensive approach to bullying prevention in public elementary schools.



**Table 5. Level of Implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law as Perceived by Teachers and School Heads in Terms of Prevention and Intervention Programs**

Prevention and Intervention Programs	Teachers		School Heads		Overall	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	AWM	DE
1. Anti-bullying campaigns are held regularly.	3.01	M	3.02	M	3.02	M
2. The school integrates anti-bullying messages in lessons and activities.	3.38	M	3.39	M	3.39	M
3. Students receive training in peer support and empathy.	3.04	M	3.04	M	3.04	M
4. Counseling sessions are provided to victims of bullying.	3.23	M	3.24	M	3.24	M
5. Intervention and rehabilitation programs are provided to offenders.	3.01	M	3.02	M	3.02	M
6. Anonymous reporting options (drop box, online forms) are available.	3.04	M	3.05	M	3.05	M
7. Effectiveness of programs is reviewed and improved periodically.	3.11	M	3.12	M	3.12	M
8. Teachers and staff are trained to implement intervention strategies.	3.22	M	3.24	M	3.23	M
9. Collaboration with parents and community is done to strengthen prevention.	3.38	M	3.39	M	3.39	M
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>M</b>

#### **SUMMARY OF THE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANTI-BULLYING LAW AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS AND SCHOOL HEADS**

Table 6 presents a summary of the level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law as perceived by teachers and school heads across the four key dimensions. The results show that the law is highly implemented in terms of duties and responsibilities, legal implications of bullying, and prohibited acts. This indicates that school personnel consistently fulfill their roles, enforce sanctions fairly, maintain confidentiality, and actively address prohibited behaviors.



However, the dimension of prevention and intervention programs received a moderate rating, suggesting that while programs such as anti-bullying campaigns, counseling, and peer-support activities are in place, they may not yet be fully systematic or fully integrated into daily school operations.

Overall, the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law is perceived to be high, reflecting a strong commitment from both teachers and school heads to uphold the law. The moderate rating in prevention and intervention programs highlights areas for improvement, particularly in enhancing program regularity, teacher training, and community collaboration to ensure a more proactive and comprehensive approach to bullying prevention in schools.

**Table 6. Summary of the Level of Implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law as Perceived by Teachers and School Heads**

	Teachers		School Heads		Overall	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	AWM	DE
1. Duties and responsibilities	3.85	H	3.88	H	3.87	H
2. Legal Implications of Bullying	3.95	H	3.96	H	3.95	H
3. Prohibited Acts	3.87	H	3.88	H	3.88	H
4. Prevention and Intervention Programs	3.16	M	3.17	M	3.16	M
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>H</b>

### **SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN THE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANTI-BULLYING LAW BETWEEN TEACHERS AND SCHOOL HEADS**

Table 7 presents the analysis of significant differences in the perceived level of implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law between teachers and school heads. Across all four dimensions—duties and responsibilities, legal implications of bullying, prohibited acts, and prevention and intervention programs—the mean ratings of teachers and school heads are very close, with both groups generally perceiving high implementation except for prevention and intervention programs, which are rated moderate.

The computed t-value is lower than the critical value at the 0.05 level of significance, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding the level of implementation of the law.

The implication of this finding is that both teachers and school heads share a consistent understanding and evaluation of how the Anti-Bullying Law is implemented in their schools. This alignment suggests a cohesive approach to enforcing policies, applying legal provisions, and monitoring prohibited acts, while highlighting that improvements in prevention and intervention programs would benefit from collaborative planning and execution.

**Table 7. Significant Differences in the Level of Implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law between Teachers and School Heads**

	Teachers		School Heads	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE
1. Duties and responsibilities	3.85	H	3.88	H
2. Legal Implications of Bullying	3.95	H	3.96	H
3. Prohibited Acts	3.87	H	3.88	H
4. Prevention and Intervention Programs	3.16	M	3.17	M
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>H</b>

*Computed t-value:* 0.956@ df 3

*Alpha:* @ 0.05 level of significance

*Critical Value:* 2.198 , df 3

*Decision:* accept the null hypothesis

*Interpretation:* No significant difference

## EXTENT OF SERIOUSNESS OF PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY MOBILE TEACHERS

Table 8 presents the degree of seriousness of problems encountered by teachers in the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law. The overall rating indicates that the challenges are moderately serious, suggesting that while the law is being implemented, several obstacles hinder its full effectiveness.

Among the problems, the most serious issues include the lack of training for teachers and staff, and non-cooperation among stakeholders, highlighting the critical need for capacity-building and collaboration. Other notable concerns are the lack of resources for prevention and intervention programs, and difficulties

in documenting and tracking bullying cases. These challenges reflect gaps in support mechanisms, administrative processes, and stakeholder engagement, which can affect the consistency and effectiveness of anti-bullying measures.

Moderately serious problems such as insufficient student knowledge about reporting procedures, limited parental involvement, inadequate monitoring, and inconsistent communication of policies indicate areas where awareness campaigns, supervision, and community partnerships can be strengthened. The least serious, yet still notable, problem is the inconsistent enforcement of disciplinary actions, emphasizing the importance of standardized procedures.

Overall, the findings suggest that while teachers are implementing the law, addressing these moderately serious challenges through training, stakeholder engagement, and improved systems will enhance the law's effectiveness and ensure a safer and more supportive school environment.

**Table 8. Degree of Seriousness of Problems Encountered**

Indicators	Teachers		Rank
	Mean	DE	
1. Lack of training on the Anti-Bullying Law for teachers and staff.	2.59	S	1.5
2. Insufficient knowledge among students regarding reporting procedures.	2.47	MS	4
3. Limited parental involvement in addressing bullying.	2.35	MS	6
4. Inadequate monitoring and supervision in areas prone to bullying.	2.06	MS	9
5. Lack of resources for implementing prevention and intervention programs.	2.53	MS	3
6. Non-cooperation among stakeholders (teachers, administrators, students).	2.59	S	1.5
7. Difficulty in documenting and tracking bullying cases.	2.53	S	3
8. Resistance or reluctance among students to report incidents.	2.24	S	7
9. Challenges in enforcing disciplinary actions consistently.	1.88	MS	10
10. Inconsistent communication of anti-bullying policies and procedures to the school community.	2.29	MS	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.45</b>	<b>MS</b>	

## Conclusion

The study revealed that the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Law in public elementary schools in District III-B, San Carlos City Division, is generally high in terms of duties and responsibilities, legal implications, and prohibited acts, but only moderate for prevention and intervention programs. Both teachers and school heads share similar perceptions, with no significant differences observed, indicating consistency in how the law is understood and applied at the school level. Despite the generally positive implementation, several challenges were identified, most notably the lack of training for teachers and staff, non-cooperation among stakeholders, limited resources, and difficulties in documenting and monitoring bullying cases. These issues were rated as moderately serious, suggesting that while the law is operational, its full effectiveness is constrained by gaps in capacity, resources, and collaboration.

Based on these outcomes, it is recommended that future efforts focus on enhancing training programs for school personnel, improving stakeholder engagement, allocating sufficient resources for prevention and intervention programs, and strengthening monitoring and documentation procedures. Future research could explore the impact of specific training interventions on teachers' effectiveness in handling bullying cases, as well as longitudinal studies to assess changes in school climate and student behavior as anti-bullying programs are refined and institutionalized. Implementing these recommendations will help ensure that the Anti-Bullying Law not only remains a policy on paper but translates into a safer, more supportive learning environment for all students.

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