



MINNESOTA VIKINGS
NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NEW BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM OFFERED TO
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BY THE MINNESOTA VIKINGS, VERIZON
AND PACER'S NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION CENTER**

Awareness Program Includes School Assemblies and Educational Workshops

Eden Prairie, MN (November 3, 2014) – The Minnesota Vikings have teamed with Verizon and PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center to offer "Viktor's Quest to S.T.O.P. Bullying," a bullying prevention program for Twin Cities area elementary schools during the 2014-2015 school year. A pilot assembly was conducted this morning at Cedar Ridge Elementary in Eden Prairie, where students and educators were able to view the program for the first time. The program will be available to twenty elementary schools this school year. Those interested can visit www.vikings.com/stopbullying for information about a free school assembly and accompanying educational workshop.

"Through our great partnership with Verizon and PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, we are excited to be involved in this program to stress bullying prevention in elementary schools in Minneapolis-St. Paul," said Lester Bagley, Vikings Executive Vice President – Public Affairs and Stadium Development. "This interactive school assembly will empower students to put an end to bullying in schools, and foster a safe and healthy environment."

During the assembly, Viktor the Viking and a master of ceremonies will deliver a live bullying prevention program designed with PACER's input that will equip students to identify bullying situations and empower them to respond appropriately to reduce bullying behaviors. The program features interactive call-in guests, including Vikings kicker Blair Walsh, the voice of the Vikings Paul Allen, and the Minnesota Vikings Cheerleaders.

In addition, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center and Verizon are offering participating schools a free educational training seminar for parents, school personnel, and community members. These seminars will cover topics such as identifying bullying, tips for preventing bullying behavior, and appropriate ways that bystanders can take action. Participants will also learn how to reduce cyber-bullying with mobile and Internet safety tips.

"Bullying impacts more than 13 million American students every year," said Paula Goldberg, executive director and co-founder of PACER Center. "We are excited to work with Verizon and The Minnesota Vikings to show students in Minnesota how to identify and stop bullying to make their schools and communities safer."

Verizon is participating in the program as part of the company's commitment to building healthy relationships. Through its HopeLine® from Verizon device recycling program, the



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company funds awareness and prevention efforts in Minnesota and nationwide. For more information visit: www.verizonwireless.com/hopeline.

This program continues the Vikings organization's community commitment.

"In 2009, we launched the Fuel Up to Play 60 school program with our mascot, Viktor, and we have seen great success in participating schools as we encourage youth to live an active and healthy lifestyle," said Bagley. "We continue to work to positively impact youth throughout Minnesota."

Everyone is invited to visit the website to Take the Pledge to stop bullying behavior and gain more information about this important issue.

About PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center: Founded in 2006, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center actively leads social change, so that bullying is no longer considered an accepted childhood rite of passage. PACER provides innovative resources for students, parents, educators, and others, and recognizes bullying as a serious community issue that impacts education, physical and emotional health, and the safety and well-being of students. PACER offers tools to address bullying in schools, the community, and online. For more information, visit PACER.org/Bullying.

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