

BULLYING

Policy 5131.911

In accordance with state law, it is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of bullying behavior, whether in the classroom, on school property or at school-sponsored events, is expressly forbidden.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing and implementing administrative regulations in furtherance of this policy. As provided by statute, such regulations shall: (1) enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators, and require that students to be notified annually of the process by which they make such anonymous reports, (2) enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying, (3) require teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying to notify school administrators in writing, (4) require school administrators to investigate any written reports filed pursuant to subdivision (2) and to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report, (5) include a prevention and intervention strategy for school staff to deal with bullying, (6) provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct and in all student handbooks concerning bullying, (7) require school administrators to notify both the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed, and invite them to attend at least one meeting, (8) require each school within the district to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection, and to report such number annually in a manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Education to the Department of Education, (9) direct the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline, and (10) require the identification of appropriate school personnel which may include, but shall not be limited to, administrators, social workers, nurses, school psychologists, for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint.

The notification required pursuant to subdivision (7) shall include a description of the response of school staff to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying. Any information provided under this policy shall be provided in accordance with the confidentiality restrictions imposed under the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act ("FERPA") and the district's Confidentiality and Access to Student Information policy and regulations.

For purposes of this policy, "Bullying" shall mean any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity, or on a school bus, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Bullying outside the school setting may be addressed if it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school.

For purposes of this policy, “School-Sponsored Activity” shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board of Education.

Students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subject to school discipline up to and including expulsion in accordance with the Board's policy on student discipline, suspension and expulsion.

Prevention and Intervention Strategy

The District shall implement, as required by C.G.S. 10-221d, as amended, a prevention and intervention strategy.

A bullying prevention program shall be implemented which strives to develop a school and home environment:

- ❖ characterized by warmth, positive interest and involvement by adults;
- ❖ where firm limits to unacceptable behavior exist;
- ❖ where non-hostile, non-physical negative consequences are consistently applied in cases of violations of rules and other unacceptable behaviors;
- ❖ where adults act as authorities and positive role models; and
- ❖ where students are included in efforts to improve school climate.

Prevention and Intervention should also include:

- a. Respectful responses to bullying concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
- b. Planned professional development programs addressing bully/victim problems;
- c. Data collection to document bully/victim problems to determine the nature and scope of the problem;
- d. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- e. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping (e.g., males need to be strong and tough);
- f. Awareness and involvement on the part of staff and parents with regards to bully-victim problems;
- g. A curriculum that promotes communication, friendship, assertiveness skills, and character education;
- h. Modeling by teachers of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
- i. Creating a school atmosphere that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;
- j. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes
10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student's records.
Inspection and subpoena of school or student records.
10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160.
10-233a Definitions.
10-233b Removal of pupils from class.
10-233c Suspension of pupils.
10-233d Expulsion of pupils.
10-233e Notice as to disciplinary policies and action.
10-233f In-school suspension of pupils. Reassignment.

PA 06-115 An Act Concerning Bullying Policies in Schools and
Notices Sent to Parents or Legal Guardians.

Policy revised: January 6, 2009