

STUDENTS

Bullying Behavior in the Schools

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, on a school bus, or at school-sponsored events, is expressly forbidden. For Cyber Bullying, see Policy 5131.9.

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 be notified annually of the process by which they may 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 and to review any anonymous reports (provided that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report), (5) include a prevention and intervention strategy, as defined by this policy, for school staff to deal with bullying, (6) provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying, (7) require school administrators of each school 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 to 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 within available appropriations, report such number annually to the Department of Education, in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner 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) identify the appropriate school personnel responsible for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint. Such personnel may include, but shall not be limited to, pupil services personnel.

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, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Disciplinary action may also be taken when the conduct is determined to be disruptive of the educational process.

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.

For the purposes of this policy, “Prevention and Intervention Strategy” may include, but shall not be limited to, (1) implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying, including any such program identified by the Department of Education; (2) a school survey to determine the prevalence of bullying; (3) establishment of a bullying prevention coordinating committee with broad representation to review the survey results and implement the strategy; (4) school rules prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts; (5) adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur; (6) inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school; (7) individual interventions with the bully, parents and school staff, and interventions with the bullied child, parents and school staff; (8) school-wide training related to safe school climate; and (9) promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions.

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

Effective July 1, 2009, this policy and the applicable regulations shall be included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222d

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 10-233a through 10-233f

Public Act No. 08-160

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