

**ENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Enfield, Connecticut**

**Students**

**5131.911**

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention**

The Board of Education (Board) promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

The Board believes that a school environment in which students feel safe, supported, engaged and helpfully challenged is optimal for learning and healthy development. The Board seeks an educational environment in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe; an environment that is free of harassment, discrimination, teen dating violence, intimidation and bullying.

**Definitions**

**“Bullying”** means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to an individual,
- B. places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or,
- C. infringes on the rights and opportunities of an individual at school.

Bullying shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

**“Cyberbullying”** means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

**“Teen dating violence”** means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening that occurs between two students who are currently in or have recently been in a dating relationship.

**“Mobile electronic device”** means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted.

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Definitions** (continued)

**“Electronic communication”** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.

**“Hostile environment”** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.

**“Outside of the school setting”** means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education.

**“School employee”** means (a) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (b) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education.

**“School climate”** means the quality and character of school life based on patterns of students, parents’ and guardians’ and school employees’ experiences of school life, including, but not limited to, norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.

**“Positive school climate”** means (A) a school climate in which the norms, values, expectations and beliefs that support feelings of social, emotional and physical safety are promoted, (B) students, parents and guardians of students and school employees feel engaged and respected and work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision, (C) educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning, and (D) each person feels comfortable contributing to the operation of the school and care of the physical environment of the school.

**“Emotional intelligence”** means the ability to (A) perceive, recognize and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to, reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C) understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in oneself and others.

**“Social and emotional learning”** means the process through which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

**Examples of Bullying** include, but are not limited to:

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Bullying** (continued)

1. physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethnically based or gender-based verbal put-downs
3. threats and intimidation
4. extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
5. exclusion from peer groups within the school
6. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school (“cyberbullying”)
7. Targeting of a student based on the student’s actual or perceived “differentiating” characteristics such as race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; socioeconomic or academic status; physical appearance; or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability.

Such conduct is disruptive of the educational process and, therefore, bullying is not acceptable behavior in this district and is prohibited.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

1. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
2. infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school,

are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

A comprehensive program, to improve the school climate, involving everyone in the schools and the community, to address bullying at all school levels is essential to reducing incidences of bullying. Such a program must involve interventions at all levels, school wide, classroom and individual.

The District’s program: *(Also outlined in the section pertaining to the “Safe School Climate Plan.”)*

1. Requires the development and implementation of a safe school climate plan by the Board of Education to address the existence of bullying and teen dating violence in its schools and requires at the beginning of each school year that students and their parents/guardians be notified of the process by which students may make such reports;

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Bullying** (continued)

2. Permits anonymous reports of bullying by students to school employees and written reports of suspected bullying by parents or guardians and requires at the beginning of each school year that students and their parents/guardians be notified of the process by which students may make such reports;
3. Requires school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying to orally notify the safe school climate specialist or another school administrator if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such an oral report;
4. Requires the safe school climate specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written report, and that the parents or guardians of the student alleged to have committed an act or acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such alleged act or acts were directed receive prompt notice that such investigation has commenced;
5. Requires the safe school climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
6. Requires each school to have a prevention and intervention strategy, as defined by statute, as amended, for school employees to deal with bullying or teen dating violence, including language about bullying in student codes of conduct and in all student handbooks;
7. Provides for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;
8. Requires each school to notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation of the results of such investigation and verbally and by electronic mail, that such parents/guardians may refer to the plan language explanation of the rights and remedies posted on the district's website. (available under CGS 10-4a and 10-4b);
9. Requires each school to invite the parents/guardians of a student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the students against whom such act of bullying was directed and the policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying;

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Bullying** (continued)

10. Requires each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying to a meeting, separate and distinct from the meeting of the parents/guardians of the student against whom the act of bullying was directed, to discuss specific interventions undertaken by the school to prevent further acts of bullying;
11. Establishes a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and to make such list publicly available; and annually report such number to the Department of Education and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
12. Requires the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing reported incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
13. Prohibits discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
14. Requires the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that addresses safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying;
15. Requires the principal of a school or the principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such principal or the principal's designee believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;
16. Prohibits bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education, and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;
17. Requires, at the beginning of each school year, for each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan; and
18. Requires all school employees to annually complete the training required by C.G.S. 10-220a, or 10-222j, as amended. Such training shall include identifying and responding to bullying and preventing and responding to youth suicide;

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Bullying** (continued)

19. As required, the Board of Education shall approve the safe school climate plan developed pursuant to statute and submit such plan to the Department of Education for its review, analysis, cooperative assistance and approval not later than July 1, 2014; and
20. Requires that not later than thirty calendar days after approval by the State Department of Education, the safe school climate plan shall be made available on the Board's and each individual school in the District's Internet website and such plan is to be included in the District's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

The Board expects prompt and reasonable investigations of alleged acts of bullying and teen dating violence. The safe school climate specialist of each school is responsible for handling all complaints of alleged bullying and teen dating violence. The safe climate specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and teen dating violence promptly.

In addition, the norms that are established by adults through consistent enforcement of all policies pertaining to conduct and modeling appropriate behavior at school and at home will reduce the instances and damage of bullying and teen dating violence. It is necessary for students to promote the concept that caring for others is a valued quality, one that is accepted and encouraged.

**Prevention and Intervention Strategy**

The District shall implement, as required by C.G.S. 10-222g, as amended, a prevention and intervention strategy which may include, but is not 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 and teen dating violence identified by the Department of Education.
2. School rules prohibiting bullying, teen dating violence, harassment, and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts.
3. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom, and other specific areas where bullying or teen dating violence is likely to occur.
4. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying and teen dating violence education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school.

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Prevention and Intervention Strategy (continued)**

5. Individual interventions with the bully or student who commits teen dating violence, parents and school employees and interventions with the students against whom the acts of bullying and teen dating violence are directed, parents, and school employees.
6. School wide training related to safe school climate.
7. Student peer training, education and support.
8. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying and teen dating violence prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings, and individual interventions.
9. Culturally competent school-based curriculum focusing on social-emotional learning, self-awareness and self-regulation.

**Note:** Funding for the school-based bullying intervention and school climate improvement may originate from public, private, or philanthropic sources. For purposes of this section, “interventions with the bullied child” includes referrals to a school counselor, psychologist or other appropriate social or mental health service, and periodic follow-up by the safe school climate specialist with the bullied child.

**District Safe School Climate Coordinator**

Annually, the Superintendent of Schools shall appoint, from among existing District staff, a District Safe School Climate Coordinator.

**The Coordinator shall:**

1. Implement the District’s safe school climate plan;
2. Collaborate with safe school climate specialists, the Board, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying and teen dating violence in the schools of the district.
3. Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Superintendent to the Department of Education;
4. Respond to bullying and teen dating violence in District schools;

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****District Safe School Climate Coordinator** (continued)

5. Meet with the safe school climate specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying and teen dating violence issues in the District and make recommended changes to the District's safe school climate plan.
6. Successfully complete the mental health first aid training provided by the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services. (Such training only required once.)

**Safe School Climate Specialist**

Annually, each school Principal shall serve, or designate someone to serve, as the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school.

**The Specialist in each school shall:**

1. Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school in accordance with the District's Safe School Climate Plan;
2. Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in the school; and
3. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying and teen dating violence reports in the school.

**Safe School Climate Committee**

Annually, the Principal of each District school shall establish a new committee or designate at least one existing committee that is responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying in the school. The committee must include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, appointed by the Principal.

Such committee shall also include: (a) school personnel, including, but not limited to, at least one teacher selected by the exclusive bargaining unit representative for certified employees, (b) medical and mental health personnel assigned to such school, and (c) at the high school level at least one student enrolled at the school. The student is to be selected by the students in a manner determined by the school Principal.

**The Safe School Climate Committee shall:**

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying and teen dating violence;
2. Identify and address patterns of bullying and teen dating violence among students in the school;



**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Safe School Climate Committee** (continued)

3. Implement the provisions of the school security and safety plan regarding the collection, evaluation and reporting of information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying or teen dating violence (defined in Connecticut General Statutes 10-222d) and report such information, as necessary, to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator and to the school's security and safety committee;
4. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
5. Review and make recommendation to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator regarding the District's Safe Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
6. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
7. Collaborate with the District Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and teen dating violence; and
8. Perform any other duties as determined by the School Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence for the school.

Parent and student members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #3 or any other activity that may compromise the confidentiality of a student.

**Safe School Climate Plan**

The Board of Education shall develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan to address the existence of bullying and teen dating violence in its schools. Such plan shall:

1. Require school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying to orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist, or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report;
2. Require the Safe School Climate Specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports made under this section and that the parents or guardians of the student alleged to have committed an act or acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such alleged act or acts were directed to receive prompt notice that such investigation has commenced;

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Safe School Climate Plan** (continued)

3. Require the Safe School Climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
4. Include a prevention and intervention strategy for school employees to deal with bullying and teen dating violence;
5. Provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;
6. Require each school to notify 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 not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation of the results of such investigation, and verbally and/or by electronic mail, if such parents or guardians electronic mail addresses are known, that such parents or guardians may refer to the plain language explanation of the rights and remedies available under C.G.S. 10-4a and 10-4b published on the District's website;
7. Require each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying;
8. Establish a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection, and annually report such number to the Department of Education, and 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;
10. Prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
11. Direct the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that addresses safety measures the school will take to protect such student against further acts of bullying or teen dating violence;
12. Require the Principal of a school, or the Principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such Principal, or the Principal's designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;
13. Prohibit bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention****Safe School Climate Plan** (continued)

or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;

14. Require, at the beginning of each school year, each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's Safe School Climate Plan; and
15. Require that all school employees annually complete the training described in C.G.S. 10-220a, as amended.

The Board of Education shall publish on the District's website the plain language explanation of the rights and remedies available under C.G.S. 10-4a and C.G.S. 10-4b.

The Board of Education, in consultation with the State Department of Education (SDE) and the social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative, shall provide on the SBE's website training materials to school administrators regarding bullying prevention and intervention.

- (cf. 0521 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
- (cf. 5114 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
- (cf. 5131 – Conduct)
- (cf. 5131.21 – Violent and Aggressive Behavior)
- (cf. 5131.8 – Out-of-School Misconduct)
- (cf. 5131.912 – Aggressive Behavior)
- (cf. 5131.913 – Cyberbullying)
- (cf. 5131.91 – Hazing)
- (cf. 5144 – Discipline/Punishment)
- (cf. 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.51 – Peer Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 6121 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 6121.1 – Equal Educational Opportunity)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student's records. Inspection and subpoena of school or student records.  
10-220a Inservice training

**Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Intervention**

Legal Reference (continued)

10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160, P.A. 11-232, P.A. 14-172 and PA 18-15 and PA 19-166.

10-222g Prevention and intervention strategy re bullying and teen dating violence

10-222h Analysis of school districts' efforts re prevention of and response to bullying in schools. School climate assessment instruments

10-222k District safe school climate coordinator. Safe school climate specialist. Safe school climate committee (as amended by PA 21-95, Section 14)

10-233 Review of school climate plans by Department of Education

10-233a through 10-233f

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

P.A. 19-166 An Act Concerning School Climates

P.A. 21-95 An Act Concerning Assorted Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes

**Adopted: January 24, 2012**

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