

BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CT

Policy Committee Meeting

Monday, March 2, 2015 Education Center
501 Kings Highway East
Superintendent's Conference Room
4:15 p.m.

Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of February 19, 2015, Minutes
- III. Policy
 - Policy #5330 Students – Bullying Policy
 - Administrative Regulations for #5330, Safe School Climate Plan
- IV. Open Discussion/Public Comment
- V. Adjournment
- VI. Future Items:
 - Policy #5225 Students – Requirements for Graduation
 - Policy #5314 Students – Smoking
 - Policy ##3270.2 Business - Grants
 - Policy #4240 Personnel – Electronic Mail
 - New policy request for Monthly Financial Reporting to BOE

Future Mtg. Dates and Times: All meetings held on **Monday unless otherwise noted, March 30, April 27, May 11, June 1, June 15, August 31, September 21, September 28, October 12, November 9, November 30, 2015.**

All meetings will be held at 501 Kings Highway East, Superintendent's Conference Room unless otherwise noted.

BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FAIRFIELD, CT

Policy Committee Meeting
THURSDAY, February 19, 2015 Education Center

DRAFT Minutes

- I. Call to Order - Meeting called to order at 4:34 by the Chair, Jennifer Kennelly. John Convertito and Donna Karnal, committee members, were also in attendance along with Mike Rafferty and Karen Parks representing the administration and Josh Wyatt, from the Durant Nichols Law Firm, representing the Board of Education.
- II. Approval of January 5, 2015, Minutes – Approved 2:0:1, with Donna Karnal abstaining.
- III. Policy
 - Policy #5516 Students – Life Threatening Allergies and Glycogen Storage Disease Management Policy

Several grammatical errors were corrected as well as language changes, primarily in Section V Prevention. Those changes are reflected in the policy document. After the changes were discussed and amended, John Convertito moved that the policy go to the next BOE meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 24 for a First Read. Donna Karnal seconded the motion.
 - Policy #5330 Students – Bullying Policy

Discussion postponed to March 2 Meeting
 - Administrative Regulations for #5330, Safe School Climate Plan

Discussion postponed to March 2 Meeting
- IV. Open Discussion/Public Comment:

Several elementary teachers expressed their concerns regarding hand washing before and after snack as well as desk cleaning after snack. Most spend 15 minutes on snack now and they believe the new protocol may add 10 to 15 minutes to snack time. Their concerns are delivering the existing curriculum. They asked if the Curriculum Leaders would be looking at the Language Arts and Math Curriculum to determine what can be cut or eliminated. Ten to 15 minutes per day adds up to significant lost instructional time, and the teachers are concerned that the lost time will impact student learning. Eric Fisher, representing the CEA in the absence of Robert Smoler, President of FEA, indicated that the requirement for teachers to read labels should be removed to prevent mandatory subject to bargaining by the FEA. John Convertito indicated that this language has been removed. Mr. Fisher also indicated that the FEA has concerns about teachers cleaning desks as well, especially if it impeded their ability to teach. Several parents expressed concerns about how teachers would be held accountable to the new rules and how these changes will be communicated to all staff. They emphasized the importance of education for all staff and that teachers who do not implement these procedures are putting their children at risk.
- V. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING/Teen Dating Violence

5330

5330

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 and teen dating violence. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying and/or teen dating violence committed against 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 environment in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe; an environment that is free of harassment, intimidation, teen dating violence and bullying.

Definitions

“**Bullying**” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but 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. *(The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.)*

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING

5330

Definitions (continued)

“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 who have recently been in a dating relationship

“**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.

“**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.

“**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, photo-electronic 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, 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 with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults. (and reflects norms, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.)

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING (continued)

5330

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling ~~and disparaging~~ and disparaging language including ethnically-based or gender-based ~~verbal disparaging~~ verbal disparaging language
3. sexual harassment including unwanted sexual attention or insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct
4. threats and intimidation
5. extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
6. exclusion from peer groups within the school
7. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school (“cyberbullying”)
8. teen dating violence
98. 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 and teen dating violence ~~are~~ not acceptable behavior in this district and ~~is~~ are prohibited.

Students who engage in any act of bullying and/or teen dating violence, 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 and escalating disciplinary action up to and including suspension and; expulsion from school, 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 and teen dating violence at all school levels is essential to

reducing incidences of bullying and teen dating violence. Such a program must involve interventions at all levels, school wide, classroom and individual.

Board of Education
Policy Guide

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING (continued)

5330

The District's program: *(Also outlined in 5330AR "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;
2. Permits anonymous reports of bullying and teen dating violence by students to school employees and written reports of suspected bullying by parents or guardians;
3. Requires school employees who witness acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence or receive reports of bullying and /or teen dating violence 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/or teen dating violence, 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~~ investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and/or teen dating violence and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written report 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 parent 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 and/or teen dating violence, including language about bullying and/or teen dating violence in student codes of conduct and in all student handbooks;
7. Provides for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying and teen dating violence;

8. Requires each school to notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of ~~bullying~~ bullying and/or teen dating violence not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and to the other parent/guardian if requested. The notice must describe the school's response and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence;

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING (continued)

5330

9. Requires each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and/or teen dating violence ~~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 safety of the student against whom such act was directed and the to prevent further acts of bullying; policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence;
10. Requires each school to invite 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 safety of the student against whom such act was directed and policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence
11. Establishes a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying and/or teen dating violence in such school and make such list publicly available and report such number to the Department of Education and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
121. Requires the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing reported incidents of bullying and/or teen dating violence against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying and/or teen dating violence incidents by the same individual that may include, but are not limited to referrals for both counseling, positive behavioral support plans and discipline;
132. Prohibits discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
143. 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;
154. 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 and/or teen dating violence constitutes criminal conduct;
165. Prohibits bullying and/or teen dating violence (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 and/or teen dating violence (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying and/or teen dating violence was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying and/or teen dating violence was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;

176. ~~Requires, at the beginning of each school year,~~ Requires that for each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the ~~school~~ district's Ssafe Sschool Celimate Pplan, and

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING (continued)

5330

- 187. Requires all school employees to annually complete the training required by C.G.S. 10-220a, as amended. Such training shall include identifying and responding to bullying and/or teen dating violence and preventing and responding to youth suicide;
- 198. Requires students and the parents/guardians of students to be notified annually, at the beginning of each school year of the process by which they may make reports of bullying, including anonymous reports;
- 2019. As required, but not later than, January 1, 2012, 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, and cooperative assistance; and
- 210. Requires that not later than thirty calendar days after approval by the Board, 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/or teen dating violence. The safe school climate specialist of each school is responsible for handling all complaints of alleged bullying. The safe school climate specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bully 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/or 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.

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING (continued)

5330

Prevention and Intervention Strategy

The District shall implement, as required by C.G.S. 10-222d, as amended, a prevention and intervention strategy which may include, but is not limited to:

1. Implementation of ~~a positive behavioral intervention~~ a positive behavioral intervention 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, harassment, teen dating violence 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 and/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.
5. Individual interventions with the bully, parents and school employees and interventions with the bullied child, 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 prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings, and individual interventions.

District Safe School Climate Coordinator

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, 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/or teen dating violence in District schools;
- ~~2.~~ 3. Collect and evaluate information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying, in the district schools as reported by the school climate specialist or administration

3. Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education; and
4. Meet with the safe school climate specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying and/or teen dating ~~issues~~ violence issues in the District and make recommended changes to the District's safe school climate plan.

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING (continued)

5330

Safe School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, 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 and/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, teen dating violence,
3. Collect and evaluate information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying, in the school; and
- 2.4. Report such information, as necessary, to the district safe school climate coordinator
- 3.5. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying and/or teen dating violence reports in the school.

Safe School Climate Committee

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, 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.

The Safe School Climate Committee shall:

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying and/or teen dating violence;
2. Identify and address patterns of bullying and/or teen dating violence among students in the school;
3. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying and/or teen dating violence;

4. 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;
5. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying and/or teen dating violence;
6. Collaborate with the District Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and/or teen dating violence; and

Board of Education
Policy Guide

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING

5330

Safe School Climate Specialist (continued)

7. Perform any other duties as determined by the School Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to ~~school~~ bullying and/or teen dating violence for the school.

Parent members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #2 above and from any other committee activities that may compromise student confidentiality.

Safe School Climate Plan

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

1. Enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence to school employees and require students and the parents or guardians of students to be notified annually, at the beginning of the school year, of the process by which they may make such reports;
2. Enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying and/or teen dating violence;
3. Require school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying and/or teen dating violence 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;
4. Require the Safe School Climate Specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and/or teen dating violence 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 students alleged to have committed an act or acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence 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. 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;
6. Include a prevention and intervention strategy for school employees to deal with bullying;
7. Provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;
8. 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. The required notification and invitation shall include a description of the response of school employees to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying;

Board of Education
Policy Guide

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING

5330

Safe School Climate Plan (continued)

- ~~9. 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;~~
9. Requires each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and/or teen dating violence to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed and the policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence;
10. 10. Requires each school to invite 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 safety of the student against whom such act was directed and policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence
- ~~10.~~11. Establish a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying and/or teen dating violence in such school and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence 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;

- 11.12. Direct the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying and/or teen dating violence against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying and/or teen dating violence incidents by the same individual that may include, but are not limited to referrals for ~~both~~ counseling, a positive behavioral support plan, and discipline;
- 12.13. Prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying and/or teen dating violence;
- 13.14. Direct the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying and/or teen dating violence was directed that addresses safety measures the school will take to protect such student against further acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence;
- 14.15. 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 and/or teen dating violence constitute criminal conduct;
- 15.16. Prohibit bullying and/or teen dating violence (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 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 and/or teen dating violence (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying and/or teen dating violence was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying and/or teen dating violence was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;
- 16.17. 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
- 17.18. Require that all school employees annually complete the training described in C.G.S. 10-220a, as amended.

Board of Education
Policy Guide

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING (continued)

5330

Safe School Climate Assessment

The Board requires each school in the District, on and after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, to complete an assessment using school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the Department of Education pursuant to C.G.S. 10-

222h, as amended by PA 11-232. The Board will collect the school climate assessments of each District school and submit them to the Department of Education.

The Superintendent shall develop rules and procedures, which carry out the provisions of this policy. In designing administrative regulations (School Climate Plan), the Superintendent will consult with the greater school community, including parents and students. In addition, the Superintendent shall provide that students and parents of students are notified of this prohibition against bullying and/or teen dating violence and the penalties for violating the prohibition by ensuring the posting of such information at each school and by ensuring inclusion of such information in student and parent handbooks.

This policy shall not be interpreted to prohibit a reasonable and civil exchange of opinions, or debate that is protected by state or federal law.

- (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)

Students

Code of Behavior

BULLYING (continued)

5330

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student's records. Inspection and subpoena of school or student records.
10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160 and PA 11-232.
PA 06-115 An Act Concerning Bullying Policies in Schools and Notices Sent to Parents or Legal Guardians.
PA 11-232 An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws.
[P.A. 14-172 An Act Concerning Improving Employment Opportunities Through Education and Ensuring Safe School Climates](#)
[P.A. 14-196 \(tangentially\) An Act Concerning A State-Wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program](#)
[P.A. 14-232 An Act Concerning The Review and Approval of Safe School Climate Plans by the Department of Education and a Student Safety Hotline Feasibility Study](#)
[P.A. 14-234 An Act Concerning Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault](#)
[P.A. 13-3 An Act Concerning Gun Violence Prevention and Childrens' Safety](#)

Policy Adopted:
Revised 6/06
Revised 7/08
Revised 11/10
Revised 7/11
Revised & Approved 11/22/2011

Safe School Climate Plan – Creating and Sustaining Supportive and Engaging Schools – Version ~~1.0~~2.0

Fairfield Public Schools
January 10, 2012
Ammended: (INSERT DATE)

Approved by Board of Education Date: ~~January 10, 2012~~(INSERT DATE)
Submitted to Connecticut State Department of Education Date: ~~January 12,~~
~~2012~~(INSERT DATE)
Posted on District and School Websites Date: ~~January 18, 2012~~(INSERT DATE)

Table of Contents

Mission and Beliefs of the Fairfield Public Schools

District School Climate Plan

Appendices

1. National School Climate Standards
2. Assessing School Climate using Multiple Measures
3. School Climate Improvement Process
4. Fairfield Public Schools – Incident Report
5. Fairfield Public Schools – Bullying Determination Form
6. Fairfield Public Schools - School Safety and Intervention Plan – ~~Victim~~Target
7. Fairfield Public Schools - School Safety and Intervention Plan – Perpetrator
8. Frequently Asked Questions
9. Suggested Timeline for Implementation
10. Resources
 - Staff
 - Parents
 - Students

Fairfield Public Schools

Mission:

The mission of the Fairfield Public Schools is to inspire students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be life-long learners, responsible citizens, and successful participants in an ever changing global society by providing, in partnership with families and community, a comprehensive, rigorous educational program.

Beliefs:

- We believe all individuals can learn.
- We believe high expectations drive high achievement.
- We believe family and community, in partnership, play an essential role in the development and education of a child.
- We believe kindness, respect, and compassion enhance life and improve performance.
- We believe that growth occurs when independent thinking, creativity, and appropriate risk taking are encouraged.
- We believe valuing and nurturing diversity promotes learning.
- We believe everyone has the ability and responsibility to make a positive difference.
- We believe that positive self-image is built through high expectations, honesty and accomplishment.
- We believe that knowledge and skills acquired should be relevant and adaptable for lifelong learning.
- We believe all students should have equitable access to educational opportunities.
- We believe in promoting a healthy life.
- We believe that collaboration and commitment promote the common good.

District School Climate Plan

On November 22, 2011 the Fairfield Board of Education adopted Policy #5330 which prohibits bullying in any form. The Fairfield Board of Education subsequently amended the policy on (INSERT DATE). The policy states, "The Board of Education promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to 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 further states that, "the Board seeks an environment in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally intellectually and physically safe; an environment free of harassment, intimidation and bullying."Policy 5330 states, "The Board of Education (Board) promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment, any type of bullying behavior and teen dating violence. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying and/or teen dating violence committed against 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 environment in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe; an environment that is free of harassment, intimidation, teen dating violence and bullying."The plan outlined below is meant to support the creation and sustainability of such an environment, and will serve as the Administrative Regulations to BOE Policy # 5330.

Definitions

"Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but 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. (The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.)

“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 who have recently been in a dating relationship

“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.

“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.

“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, photo-electronic 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, 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 with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults. (and reflects norms, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.)

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling, disparaging language including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal disparaging language

3. sexual harassment including unwanted sexual attention or insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct
4. threats and intimidation
5. extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
6. exclusion from peer groups within the school
7. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school ("cyberbullying")
8. teen dating violence
9. 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 and teen dating violence are not acceptable behavior in this district and are prohibited.

Students who engage in any act of bullying and/or teen dating violence, 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 target.
2. infringes on the rights of the target at school, or
3. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

And are subject to appropriate and escalating disciplinary action up to and including suspension and , expulsion from school, 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 and teen dating violence at all school levels is essential to reducing incidences of bullying and teen dating violence. Such a program must involve interventions at all levels, school wide, classroom and individual.

District School Climate Coordinator

Beginning in the 2011-2012 School Year the Superintendent of Schools will designate, from existing staff, a District School Climate Coordinator.

The District School Climate Coordinator shall:

- Facilitate the District School Climate Team;
- Ensure the implementation of the District School Climate Plan;
- Provide leadership to the School Climate Specialists;

- Plan and implement, along with administrators and School Climate Specialists, annual training for School Climate Team members;
- Create, along with School Climate Team members, annual training modules for school employees;
- Insure that all school employees receive annual training;
- 3. Collect and evaluate information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying, in the district schools as reported by the school climate specialists at each site;
- Provide timely and accurate data to the Superintendent, district, and CSDE as requested and as required by state statute;
- Facilitate annual revisions to the District School Climate Plan based on feedback from School Climate Teams ;
- Review all reports of suspected bullying and investigation reports.

District School Climate Team

Beginning in January of 2012 the District School Climate Coordinator shall establish a District School Climate Team. Membership shall include:

- All School Climate Specialists (In the case of Co-School Climate Specialists, one representative from each school shall serve on the district team)
- Community members
- Parents
- Students

This Team shall:

- Meet quarterly (at minimum);
- Review and amend, as necessary, the District School Climate Plan;
- Review all school climate improvement plans;
- Review all district data and measurements of school climate;
- Make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding necessary changes to Board of Education Policy;
- Perform any other duties as determined by the School Climate Coordinator that are related to improving school climate (including, but not limited to the prevention, intervention, and response to school bullying for the district);
- Gather and disseminate to school climate committees best practice information on the prevention, intervention, and response to bullying and youth suicide.

School Climate Specialist

Beginning in the 2011-2012 school year each school principal will serve as, or designate, from existing staff, a School Climate Specialist (Co-School Climate Specialists are allowable).

The School Climate Specialist, in collaboration with the school principal shall:

- Provide leadership to the school community in the prevention, intervention, and response to reports of bullying, discrimination, teen dating violence, and otherwise mean-spirited behavior*** in the school;
- Ensure implementation of District School Climate Plan;
- Coordinate the provision of annual training to all staff on the prevention, intervention, and response to bullying, discrimination, teen dating violence and otherwise mean-spirited behavior in schools and on the prevention, intervention and response to youth suicide in collaboration with the School Climate Committee;
- Ensure that all students, parents, and school employees are notified annually, at the beginning of the school year of process by which they can make reports of bullying, including anonymous/discrete reports;
- Chair the School Climate Committee;
- Coordinate the school's efforts in gathering multiple measures of school climate data;
- Use the above mentioned data to lead the development of the School Climate Improvement Plan in alignment with the district plan;
- Serve as their schools' representative on the District School Climate Committee;
- Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying in accordance with the District School Climate Plan and Board of Education Policy;
- Ensure the implementation of intervention/response plans for all verified acts of bullying
- Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying in the school
- Collect and evaluate information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying, in the school and report such information directly to school administration and the district school climate coordinator

Forma

*** There are two kinds of mean-spirited behavior

1. Unintentional mean-spirited behavior – where the perpetrator does not intend to hurt the victimtarget. This presents a “teachable moment” where informing the perpetrator that their behavior has caused hurt feelings and the perpetrator responds to change behavior.
2. Intentional mean-spirited behavior – where the perpetrator intentionally behaves in a way that is meant to humiliate, isolate, or diminish the victimtarget. If repeated this type of mean-spirited behavior may meet the statutory definition of bullying. Early and consistent intervention at this point on the part of all school community members (bystanders to allies) will significantly reduce incidents of bullying and improve school climate

School Climate Committee

For each school year commencing July 1, 2012 each school principal shall establish a committee or designate at least one existing committee in the school to be responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate. Team membership shall be designated by the school principal and shall include at least one parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the school. It is strongly encouraged that the school leadership considers a diverse membership of staff, students, parents, and community members.

The School Climate Committee shall:

- Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying (parents, students, or community members will not receive copies of reports as sharing these reports would violate student confidentiality rights under federal law - FERPA);
- Identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the school;
- Review and amend school policies/practices relating to bullying;
- Review and make recommendations to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator regarding the District Safe School Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
- Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to school climate and bullying;
- Collaborate with the School Climate Specialist in the collection of data regarding school climate and bullying in accordance with the District Safe School Climate Plan and state statute;
- Perform any other duties as determined by the school principal that are related to improving school climate and to the prevention, intervention, and response to school bullying, discrimination, or otherwise mean-spirited behavior for the school.

Note:

Any parent or guardian, student, or community member serving as a member of any such committee shall NOT participate in the activities described above that may compromise any students' and families' rights to privacy under the Federal Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA).

Training and Professional Development

All School Employees

The Fairfield Public Schools shall require that all school employees receive annual training that will include information addressing the prevention of, identification of and response to bullying, teen dating violence, discrimination and otherwise mean-spirited behavior in schools and the prevention of and response to youth suicide. This training will be determined by the District School Climate Team and made available to all School Climate Teams. As a part of the school climate improvement process and based on data from assessment, additional training and professional development may be necessary at a school level or at a specific level (elementary, middle, or high school).

These professional development plans will be articulated annually as part of each school's school climate improvement plan.

*** *CT General Statute 10-222d* defines "School employee" as:

- (A) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance 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

All School Climate Specialists

All School Climate Specialists shall receive annual professional development that will assist in the continuous improvement of school climate. Training may include, but is not limited to:

- Conducting bullying/teen dating violence investigations
- Intervention and Response to bullying and/or teen dating violence for both victimtarget and perpetrator
- Restorative disciplinary procedures
- School-wide best practices in improving school climate
- School Improvement Committee facilitation

All School Climate Committee members

All School Climate Committee members will receive annual training to assist with the school climate improvement planning process. This training may include, but is not limited to:

- School Climate Improvement Planning
- Intervention and Response to bullying and teen dating violence
- ~~School-wide best practice initiatives~~
-

Assessment

Beginning in 2012-13 School Year and subject to available funding, the Fairfield Public Schools will conduct ~~an annual~~ bi-annual survey of students (minimally in grades 3-12), parents (PreK-12), and school employees (as defined above). This survey will cover the 5 dimensions of school climate:

- Norms,
- Relationships (student to student, adult to student, adult to adult)
- Teaching and Learning,
- Student, family, and staff voice and engagement,
- Physical environment

Any assessment survey instrument should meet the following criteria:

- ~~Be reliable and valid,~~
- Recognize student, parent/guardian, and school personnel "voice",

Form
Aligned

- Be aligned between students, parents, and school employees
- Assess the major aspects of school climate
- ~~Result in a detailed report that provides a summary of findings, in-depth profiles that describe how people responded overall and in key subgroups~~
- Provide data to School Climate Improvement Team and school community ~~within 2-3 weeks of completion,~~
- Provide practical and concrete information to assist each school climate committee as to how it might use the data as a springboard for action planning

School Climate Improvement, ~~and~~ Bullying, Teen Dating Violence Prevention

As part of the school climate improvement process, each school's School Climate Team shall annually review current practices meant to address creating and sustaining a positive school climate that is free from harassment, bullying, discrimination, teen dating violence and otherwise mean-spirited behavior. Beginning November 1, 2012 each school will submit as part of its School Improvement Plan, a School Climate Improvement Plan. This Plan shall include annual prevention activities that are aligned with school data and goals for climate improvement. This plan shall be submitted to the District School Climate Team for review in order to allow for alignment and best practice sharing between and among schools. This plan shall be published on the district website and on each school website by ~~December 1, 2012~~ January 15th of each year- and annually thereafter. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- implementing an evidence-based program utilizing positive behavioral supports,
- implementing evidence-based practices that not only intervene with the perpetrator and the victim target, but also with bystanders,
- review, revise, and/or create and implement grade-appropriate bullying-prevention curricula a culturally competent school-based curriculum focusing on social-emotional learning, self-awareness, and self-regulation.
- ensure annually that all students know how to report any incidents of mean-spirited behavior that might be bullying – including anonymous reports
- ensure that all new staff members receive annual training in their responsibility to report incidents and intervene with students

Forma

Bullying Reports

Students may file:

- Oral Reports to school employees
- Written reports - Fairfield Public Schools – Incident Report Form (See Appendix #1)
- Anonymous reports
 - Each school shall inform students of the process for anonymous reporting annually at the beginning of the school year
 - District will investigate-implement an electronic means for anonymous /discrete -reporting

NOTE: There are two kinds of anonymous reports – those when the student wishes to remain anonymous (discrete) and those that are truly anonymous.

***CT General Statute 10-222d - The safe school climate specialist must review anonymous reports, but no disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of any anonymous report.

Parents may file:

- Written reports (parental reports must be signed)

School employees who witness acts of bullying, teen dating violence, harassment, or mean-spirited behavior or receive reports of bullying **MUST** report it to the school administration or school climate specialist.

School employees must:

- Orally notify the school climate specialist or school administrator (if the school climate specialist is unavailable) as soon as possible, but not later than one (1) school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying (school climate specialist shall maintain a list of oral and written reports), and;
- File a written report as soon as possible, but not later than two (2) school days after making such an oral report.

Bullying Investigations

ALL reports of suspected bullying, teen dating violence, or-or discrimination must be investigated. The school climate specialist must investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying incident reports including anonymous reports (no disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report) and ensure that such investigations are completed thoroughly and 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/or teen dating violence and the parent or guardians of the student against whom such alleged act or acts were directed receive prompt notice that such investigation has commenced. -Upon completion of the investigation the school climate specialist or the investigator shall complete the Bullying Determination Form (see Appendix #2).

Verified Acts of Bullying

When an investigation concludes that there has been a verified act of bullying and/or teen dating violence the parents of both the victimtarget and the perpetrator will be notified not later than 48 hours after the conclusion of the investigation. The notice must:

- Describe the school's response and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying;
- Invite the parents or guardians of both the victimtarget and the perpetrator to communicate to such parent or guardian the measures being taken by the school.

~~to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed (See appendix #3—School Safety and Intervention Plan—VictimTarget) and to prevent acts of retaliation (against the individual who reports, any individual who assists in the investigation and the victimtarget) or further acts of bullying (see Appendix #4—School Safety and Intervention Plan—Perpetrator). Invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and/or teen dating violence to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed and the policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence;~~

- ~~10. Requires each school to invite 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 safety of the student against whom such act was directed and policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence~~

Forme
numbe

Note: Each meeting is to be separate. At no time are the parents of the victimtarget and perpetrator to meet together to discuss consequences.

***Parents of the victimtarget often demand to know the disciplinary actions taken against the perpetrator. It would be a violation of the student's rights to confidentiality under the Federal Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) for staff to discuss such actions. The focus of the meeting should remain on both the actions taken by the school to protect the student from further bullying AND an intervention plan designed to teach the skills and dispositions that will decrease the likelihood of further victimization-victimization.

Notification of Law Enforcement

The Principal or his/her designee MUST notify the appropriate law enforcement agency when such principal or his/her designee believes that any act(s)-behavior of bullying may constitute criminal activity. When a principal or his/her designee makes such a report the principal or his/her designee shall inform the District School Climate Coordinator within one (1) school day of making such a report.

School Safety and Intervention Plans

For each verified act of bullying and/or teen dating violence a written plan must be developed for both the victimtarget and the perpetrator.

For the victimtarget this plan must:

- Include a school safety plan that describes what school staff will do to ensure safety in the school environment.
- Include an intervention strategy to teach the skills and dispositions necessary to decrease the likelihood of further victimizationvictimization.
- Identify a case manager

- Be provided to the parent and shared with the student
- Be monitored by the School Climate Specialist or his/her designee (to be identified in the plan) to ensure implementation fidelity and adjusted as necessary to provide a safe environment

Note: At no time should the plan for the victimtarget further isolate the victimtarget. If changes to schools, schedule, programs, and activities need to be made to provide safety, they should not negatively impact the victimtarget in any way.

For the perpetrator this plan must:

- Include any disciplinary action to be taken,
- Next steps should bullying occur again (repeated acts of bullying may lead to suspension and/or expulsion in accordance with Board of Education Policy #5119)
- Clearly state that retaliation against the victimtarget, the reporter, or any individual participating in the investigation is prohibited;
- Identify a case manager
- Be provided to the parent and shared with the student
- Include an intervention strategy designed to teach the skills and dispositions necessary for participation in a safe school climate
- Include actions to be taken to restore the student into the community (Restorative Discipline)

Publication of School Climate Plan

No later than thirty (30) calendar days after approval by the Board of Education the Safe School Climate Plan shall be made available on:

- The district website
- Each individual school website

At the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year this plan will be published in:

- All district publications of rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools
- The Family Guide to the Fairfield Public Schools

At the beginning of each school year this plan will be provided to all school employees in either written or electronic form.

Appendices

1. National School Climate Standards
2. Assessing School Climate using Multiple Measures
3. School Climate Improvement Process
4. Fairfield Public Schools – Incident Report
5. Fairfield Public Schools – Bullying Determination Form
6. Fairfield Public Schools - School Safety and Intervention Plan – ~~Victim~~Target
7. Fairfield Public Schools - School Safety and Intervention Plan – Perpetrator
8. Frequently Asked Questions
9. Suggested Timeline for Implementation
10. Resources
 - Staff
 - Parents
 - Students