

Bullying Information

Effective July 1, 2011, The Connecticut Legislature passed a new school bullying prevention law, An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws, Public CT No. 11-232, which contains significant revisions aimed at strengthening the existing statute. The new law greatly expands the definition of "bullying," provides definitions of new terms, and imposes additional obligations on school employees and school district. While the new law took effect on July 1, 2011, some of its provisions do not apply until July 1, 2012.

Bullying is now defined as 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 district (communicative acts), or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district (physical acts) that: (1) causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property; or (2) places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property; or (3) creates a hostile environment at school for such student (a hostile environment is a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to alter the conditions of the school climate); or (4) infringes on the rights of the student at school; or (5) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. This new law also defines cyberbullying, and explicitly requires school districts to prohibit bullying which occurs outside the school setting if such bullying (1) creates a hostile school environment 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.

Among its many requirements, Public Act 11-232 now requires districts to: (1) develop and implement a "safe school climate plan" and to submit such plan to the State Department of Education ("SDE") no later than January 1, 2012; (2) appoint a safe school climate coordinator, starting on July 1, 2012; and (3) provide in-service training for certified teachers, administrators, and pupil personnel. Starting with the 2012-2013 school year, this new law also requires that the principal of individual schools or his/her designee serve as the safe school climate specialist, and that the principal establish a committee (or designate an existing committee) to be responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying in school.

In the fall of 2011, The Board of Education will be revising its current bullying policy to comply with the new legislation. All district administrators have received training pertaining to the new law.

District Safe School Climate Coordinator

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On-line Policy Manual Link - <http://www.policy.cabe.org/granby/>

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