

Safe School Climate Plan

Woodbridge School District Safe School Climate Plan Revised March 2015

Purpose/Priority Statement

The Woodbridge School District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. The goal is the establishment of a positive school climate in which norms, values, and expectations make students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process. The District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The purpose of the Safe School Climate Plan is to promote consistency of approach and to create a climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable. Attitudes and practices can contribute to bullying, to lower levels of confidence, self-esteem and lack of achievement.

The following plan, **The Woodbridge School District Safe School Climate Plan**, addresses the mandated areas of compliance, which are required under C.G.S.10-222d as amended by P.A. 11-232. In addition to the following current efforts, the administration, faculty and staff of this District commit to continue to improve, enhance, and update both the Plan and its implementation biennially in order to best serve the students, parents, guardians and the community.

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.

I. Prohibition Against Bullying

The Board of Education (Board) 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 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 victim, (ii) infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school.

II. Definitions

“Bullying” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at or referring to 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.)*

“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 who 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.

“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.

II. Definitions (continued)

“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. *(It is based on people’s experiences of school and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.)*

III. Reporting and Responding to Bullying, Teen Dating Violence and Retaliation (Complaint Process)

A. Publication of the Prohibition against Bullying , Teen Dating Violence and Related Procedures

The prohibition against bullying and teen dating violence shall be publicized by including the following statement in the Beecher Road School Parent and Student Handbook:

“Bullying behavior and teen dating violence by any student in the Woodbridge School District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. “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 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

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- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal 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, gender identity, or physical mental, 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.

An incident of bullying will be suspected if a student engages in repeated activities, 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 that:

1. create a hostile environment at school for the victim,
2. infringe on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

“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.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, or teen dating violence and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying or teen dating violence to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior or teen dating violence will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

B. Appropriate School Personnel

All school employees are charged with the responsibility of taking reports of bullying and teen dating violence or if witnessing acts of bullying or teen dating violence to notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another administrator when the Safe School Climate Specialist is not available. Reports shall be appropriately investigated by the Safe School Climate Specialist or another administrator when the Safe School Climate Specialist is not available.

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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 teen dating violence in District schools;
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 teen dating violence issues in the district and make recommended changes to the District's safe school climate plan.

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 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.

C. Annual Notification of the Complaint Process

The process by which students may make formal, informal, and anonymous complaints as set forth below shall be publicized annually in the student handbook of each of the District schools. In addition, this Safe School Climate Plan shall be placed on the District website.

D. Formal Written Complaints

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file written reports of conduct that they consider to be bullying or teen dating violence. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying or teen dating violence, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying or teen dating violence, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school employee, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator, if the Safe School specialist is unavailable, for review and action in accordance with Section IV below.

E. Informal/Verbal Complaints by Students

Students may make an informal complaint of conduct that they consider to be bullying or teen dating violence by verbal report to the Safe School Climate Specialist, or to any school employee, as defined, or administrator. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school employee, or administrator or the Safe School Climate Specialist who receives an informal complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided. Such written report by the school employee, administrator, if not the Safe School Climate Specialist, shall be promptly forwarded to the Building Principal for review and action in accordance with Section IV below

F. Anonymous Complaints

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school employee who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the Safe School Climate Specialist, if not the Principal or his/her designee, shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact that maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation of the complaint and/or possible remedial action. At such meeting, the student shall be given the choice as to whether to maintain the anonymity of the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

IV. Staff Responsibilities and Intervention Strategies

A. Teachers and Other School Staff

School employees who witness acts of bullying or teen dating violence, as defined above, or who receive reports of bullying shall promptly 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 employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying or dating violence. A written report must be filed not later than two school days after making such an oral report concerning the events witnessed or reported.

School employees who receive student or parent reports of suspected bullying or teen dating violence shall promptly notify the Safe School Climate Specialist of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, such complaint shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a school employee, he or she shall prepare a succinct written report of the informal complaint, which shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable.

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school employees and others are encouraged to address the issue of bullying and teen dating violence in other interactions with students. Teachers and other professionals may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and teen dating violence and help eliminate bullying and dating violence behavior through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially-appropriate behavior.

All school employees including teachers and other professional employees should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of “bullying or teen dating violence.”

B. Responsibilities of the Safe School Climate Specialist

1. Investigation

The Safe School Climate Specialist shall be promptly notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected bullying or teen dating violence received by any school employee. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school in accordance with the District’s Safe

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School Climate Plan. All such complaints shall be investigated promptly. The investigation must be completed promptly after the receipt by the Safe School Climate Specialist of any written report. In order to allow the District to adequately investigate all formal complaints, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied or victimized by teen dating violence must complete a consent form that allows their District to release that student's name to those third parties who the District contacts as part of its investigation of that complaint with regard to the investigation of informal complaints, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied or victimized must complete the above-referenced consent form so long as that student has not requested anonymity.

A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of bullying or teen dating violence were verified, and, when acts of bullying are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

The school shall notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and in the case of a divorced/split situation, to the other parent/guardian if requested. The notice must describe the school's response, measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the students against whom such act was directed, and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying or teen dating violence.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complainant. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

2. Remedial Actions

Verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence shall result in intervention by the Building Principal or his/her designee that is intended to address the acts of the perpetrator and the needs of the victim and to assure that the prohibition against bullying behavior and teen dating violence is enforced, with the goal that any such bullying behavior will end as a result.

Bullying behavior and teen dating violence can take many forms and can vary dramatically in how serious it is, and what impact it has on the victim

and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence. While conduct that rises to the level of “bullying” or “teen dating violence” as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying or teen dating violence, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (detention, in-school suspension; suspension or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the Building Principal (or responsible program administrator or his/her designee.) The following sets forth possible interventions for building principals to enforce the Board’s prohibition against bullying and teen dating violence. No disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.

The following sets forth permissible interventions for building principals (or other responsible program administrators) to enforce the Board’s prohibition against bullying and teen dating violence.

a. Non-disciplinary Interventions

When verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence are identified early and/or when such verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of bullying and teen dating violence, their prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying or teen dating violence.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring such cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

In any instance in which bullying or teen dating violence is verified, the building Principal (or other responsible program administrator) shall invite the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, and the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying, or teen dating violence 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 or teen dating violence. In the discretion of the building Principal or other responsible program administrator, the meeting(s) described in this section may be held jointly or separately, however the Connecticut

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State Department of Education recommends such meetings be separate.

b. Disciplinary Interventions

When acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, shall not be the basis for disciplinary action.

In-school suspension and suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation, in accordance with the Board's Student Discipline policy.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with Board policy. This consequence shall be reserved for serious incidents of bullying or teen dating violence and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior or teen dating violence.

c. Interventions for Students Bullied or Victimized by Teen Dating Violence

The Safe School Climate Specialist/Building Principal (or other responsible program administrator) or his/her designee shall intervene in order to address repeated incidents of bullying or teen dating violence against a single individual. Intervention strategies for a bullied student or student victimized by teen dating violence may include the following:

- Counseling;
- Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene in bullying/teen dating violence situations;
- Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization;
- Peer mediation where appropriate.

3. General Prevention and Intervention Strategies

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying or teen dating violence and direct intervention when acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified, other District actions may ameliorate any potential problem with bullying in school or at school-sponsored activities. A focus will be placed on district and school efforts to improve school climate based upon the National School Climate Standards.

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While no specific action is required and school needs for such interventions may vary from time to time, the following list of potential intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers and other professional staff members in each school:

- a. 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, including any such program identified by the Department of Education;
- b. A safe school climate assessment on or after July 1, 2012 and biennially thereafter to determine the prevalence of bullying and teen dating violence. Such assessments may include, in addition to those approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education, in collaboration with CAS, the National School Climate Standards Self-Assessment Tool and the Connecticut State Department of Education's "Improving School Climate Team Rubric;"
- c. Establishment by the school Principal of a Safe School Climate Committee in each District school or the designation of an existing committee that is responsible for fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying and teen dating violence in the school.

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;
3. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying and 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 teen dating violence;
6. Collaborate with the District Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and teen dating violence; and

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7. 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.
 8. 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.
- d. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying and teen dating violence are likely to occur;
 - e. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying and teen dating violence education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through grade six;
 - f. Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student or the student victimized by teen dating violence, parents and school employees;
 - g. School-wide training related to safe school climate;
 - h. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying and teen dating violence prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
 - i. Respectful responses to bullying and teen dating violence concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
 - j. Planned professional development programs addressing bully/victim problems;
 - k. Student peer training, education and support. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
 - l. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping (e.g., males need to be strong and tough);
 - m. Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of staff and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;
 - n. Modeling by all school employees of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
 - o. Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;
 - p. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

V. Reporting Obligations

A. Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator

If after investigation, acts of bullying or teen dating violence by a specific student are verified, not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation, the Building Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian of the perpetrator in writing of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in such notification. In addition, the school shall invite the parent/guardian of a student who commits any verified act of bullying or teen dating violence (after the completion of the investigation) to a meeting to communicate to the parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety and measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying and teen dating violence. Records will be maintained by the School Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist of the bullying and teen dating r reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

B. Reports to the Targeted Student and his/her Parent or Guardian

If after investigation, acts of bullying or teen dating violence against a specific student are verified, the Building Principal/Safe Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian of the victim of such finding, not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such bullying or teen dating violence. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the perpetrator, as reflected in the student's educational records, shall not be disclosed to the parents or guardian of the victim, except as provided by law (e.g., court order/subpoena). In addition, the school shall invite the parent/guardian of the student against whom the verified act of bullying or teen dating violence was directed, after the completion of the investigation, to a meeting to communicate to the parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the targeted student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying or teen dating violence. Records will be maintained by the School Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist of the bullying and teen dating violence reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

Notices shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and the other parent/guardian if requested. This mailing requirement shall be in effect for as long as the student attends the school in which the original request is made.

C. List of Verified Acts of Bullying/ Teen dating Violence

The Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist of the school shall establish a procedure to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in the school and maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying and teen dating violence in the school, and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. The list shall be reported annually to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. Given that any determination of bullying or teen dating violence involves repeated acts over time, each report prepared in accordance with Section III (1) above that includes verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying or teen dating violence unless the specific actions that are the subject of the report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying or teen dating violence. The list shall be limited to the number of such verified acts of bullying and teen dating violence in the school, and it shall not set out the particulars of each verified act, including but not limited to any personally identifiable student information, which is confidential information by law.

VI. Prohibition against Discrimination and Retaliation

A. Safety

Discrimination and/or retaliation against any person who reports bullying or teen dating violence, provides information during an investigation of an act of bullying or teen dating violence, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying or teen dating violence is prohibited.

The continuation and perpetuation of bullying or teen dating violence of a student through the dissemination of hurtful or demeaning material by any other student is prohibited.

The District will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, teen dating violence, cyberbullying, discrimination or retaliation in our school building, on school grounds, or in school related activities. All reports and complaints of bullying, teen dating violence, cyberbullying, discrimination and retaliation will be investigated promptly and prompt action will be taken to end that behavior and restore the student's against whom such bullying was directed (target's) sense of safety. This commitment is to be supported in all aspects of the school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

Before formally investigating the allegations of bullying or teen dating violence, discrimination or retaliation, the Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist or

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designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged student against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed (target) and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but are not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the alleged victim (target) and/or the alleged perpetrator in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the alleged student against whom such bullying was directed (target); and altering the alleged perpetrator’s schedule and access to the alleged target. The Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation a student who has reported bullying, dating violence or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying, dating violence or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying, dating violence or retaliation.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will contact the victim to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If determined necessary, the Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

B. Law Enforcement Notification

The School Principal or his/her designee shall notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such Principal or the Principal’s designee believes any acts of bullying or teen dating violence constitute criminal conduct.

VII. Training Requirements for School Staff

- A. Certified staff of the District shall be provided in-service training on the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence and the prevention of and response to youth suicide. *(The Board, subject to the approval of the State Department of Education, is not required to offer an in-service program regarding bullying or youth suicide prevention and intervention if it instead implements an evidence-based model approach to this issue.)*
- B. Beginning teachers shall satisfactorily complete instructional modules as required by C.G.S. 10-145a which shall include a module in classroom management and climate, which shall include training regarding the prevention, identification, and response to school bullying , teen dating violence and the prevention of and

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response to youth suicide.

- C. Non-certified staff of the District will participate in annual training to be provided, within available appropriations, by the Connecticut State Department of Education. The training may be presented in person by mentors, offered in state-wide workshops, or through on-line courses. Such training may include, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying and teen dating violence among students in school and outside the school setting,
 - 2. Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate and effective interventions to stop bullying and teen dating violence,
 - 3. Information regarding the interaction and relationship between students committing acts of bullying or teen dating violence, students against whom such acts of bullying/violence are directed and witnesses of such acts of bullying/violence,
 - 4. Research findings on bullying and teen dating violence, such as information about the types of students who have been shown to be at-risk for bullying and teen dating violence in the school setting,
 - 5. Information about the incidence and nature of cyberbullying as defined in C.G.S. 10-222d, or
 - 6. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

VIII. Notification Requirements

- A. A copy of this District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be provided in written or electronic format to all District employees annually at the beginning of each school year.
- B. The District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be made available on the Board's website and on the school website. Such posting shall occur within thirty (30) days of the approval of such plan by the Board.
- C. The District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be included in the District's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct. The District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be included in the Beecher Road School Parent and Student Handbook

IX. School Climate Assessments

- A. On or after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, the Board requires each school within the District to complete an assessment using the school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education.

- B. Completed assessments shall be shared with the Board and then submitted by the Board to the State Department of Education.

X. Bullying./Teen Dating Violence Through the Use of Technology (Cyberbullying)

An emerging form of bullying and teen dating violence is the use of technology to threaten, intimidate, ridicule, humiliate, insult, or harass. Technology enables aggressive expression toward others and does not rely on physical strength or physical contact. By using a cell phone or the Internet, a student can quickly and aggressively spread rumors, threats, hate mail, or embarrassing photos through text messages, e-mails, or instant messages.

There are a number of social networking sites (MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) available to our students that can be misused and/or abused for bullying or teen dating violence purposes. Any alleged misuse or abuse must be reported to any staff member or the Safe School Climate Specialist.

The District's discipline policy states that misuse, on or off campus, of electronic devices, for threatening/bullying/hazing or harassment or committing teen dating violence is a violation and can be the basis for discipline on or off campus. When information is received that a student or students are involved in bullying or teen dating violence through the use of technology either as the actor or a member of a group, or the victim, the following will be considered:

- If it takes place on campus or at a school sponsored event, disciplinary action will be taken.
- If it takes place off campus a school may take disciplinary action if the incident poses a likelihood of substantial disruption to the educational process or the orderly day to day operations of the school.

XI. Relationship to Other Laws

- A. Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the district and school rules, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the "Plan" prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or district policies.
- B. In addition, nothing in the "Plan" is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action under applicable laws, or local school or District policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the "Plan" covers the behavior.

XII. Immunity for Board of Education, School Employees, Others

Members of the Board of Education and school employees are protected by statute against damage claims in the implementation of a safe school climate plan and, in accordance with a school district safe school climate plan, report, investigate, or respond to bullying. PA 11-232 also extends this immunity to reports of bullying incidents by parents, students, and others to a school employee according to a safe school climate plan.

To be immune, these parties must act in good faith and, in the case of a school employee or Board of Education, within the scope of their duties. The immunity does not cover gross, wanton, reckless, or willful misconduct.

Woodbridge School District
ANNUAL BULLYING NOTICE

Bullying/Teen Dating Violence behavior by any student in the Woodbridge School District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. “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, verbal 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 physical, mental, 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.

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.

An incident of bullying will be suspected if a student engages in repeated activities, 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 that:

- A. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- B. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- C. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying or teen dating violence behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

Woodbridge School District
Report of Bullying/Teen Dating Violence
Consent to Release Student Information

Date: _____

Student _____

To Parent / Guardian:

A complaint of bullying has been filed on behalf of your child alleging that he / she has been the victim of bullying or teen dating violence. In order to facilitate a prompt and thorough investigation of the complaint, the Woodbridge School District may need to disclose the name of your child and/or other information which may otherwise disclose your child's identity.

(Please check one):

_____ I hereby give permission for the Woodbridge School District to disclose my child's name, along with any other information necessary to permit the district to adequately and appropriately investigate such complaint, to third parties contacted by the district as part of its investigation.

_____ I do NOT give permission for the Woodbridge School District to disclose my child's name, along with other information necessary to permit the district to adequately and appropriately investigate such complaint, to third parties contacted by the district as part of its investigation.

Signature of Parent / Guardian Date

Name (Please Print)

**Woodbridge School District
Bullying Report Form**

The Woodbridge 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.

Bullying as defined in P.A. 11-232 is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district that: causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, creates a hostile environment at school for such student, infringes on the rights of such student at school, or substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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.

Complainant (student report may be anonymous)

Describe relationship to alleged victim(s) / bully(ies) _____

Home Address _____

Work Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell _____

Date(s) of alleged incident(s) _____

Location(s) of alleged incident(s) _____

Names of alleged bully(ies) _____

Name(s) of alleged victim(s) _____

List any witness(es) _____

Describe the incident(s) as clearly as possible, including such things as: what force or physical contact, if any, was used and any verbal statements such as threats, requests, demands, etc. (attach additional pages if needed)

I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

_____ *Complainant Signature* _____ *Date*

Received by: _____ Date _____

**Woodbridge School District
Report of Bullying/ Teen Dating Violence
Investigation Summary**

School _____ Date _____

Location(s) _____

Reporter Information

- Anonymous Student Report
- Staff Member Report
- Parent / Guardian Report
- Student Report

Student reported as committing act: _____

Student reported as victim: _____

Description of alleged act(s): _____

Time and place: _____

Names of potential witnesses: _____

For Staff Use Only

Action of Reporter: _____

Administrative Investigation Notes (use separate sheet if necessary) _____

Bullying Verified? Yes _____ No _____

Remedial Actions Taken: _____

**Woodbridge School District
Report of Bullying/Teen dating Violence
Investigation Summary
(continued)**

If bullying or ten dating violence verified, report sent to parent(s) / guardian(s) of students?

Parent / Guardian Name _____ Date sent: _____

Parent / Guardian Name _____ Date sent: _____

Parent / Guardian Name _____ Date sent: _____

Parent / Guardian Name _____ Date sent: _____

(Attach bullying/teen dating violence complaint, witness statements and notification of parents of students involved if bullying verified)

Woodbridge School District

**Beecher Road School
Student Acknowledgement of Anti-Bullying Policy**

I understand the policy against bullying at Beecher Road School as explained to me by _____ (school personnel).

I am aware that if I engage in any of the actions or behaviors that constitute bullying in school, before or after school on school grounds, on the bus, or at school sponsored events, I can be subjected to school discipline for bullying. This could include: after school detention, school community service, loss of privilege, suspension in or out of school and / or possible expulsion.

I promise that I will not engage in any actions or behaviors that could be considered bullying. I promise to respect the rights of other students and to act appropriately towards other students.

Name: (print) _____

Signature: _____ Grade _____

Parent / Guardian (if present) _____ Date _____

School Administrator or designee:
Name _____ Position _____

Current Practices Promoting a Safe School Climate

Responsive Classroom is the foundation of the Beecher Road School approach to academic and social learning. The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum. Coaching and embedded professional development is available weekly at teacher request and provided by a national RC trainer.

Beecher Road School School-Wide Behavioral Supports: Guidelines for Positive Behavioral Supports for all Students – Faculty/Staff handbook that is frequently updated and provided to support adults with consistent approaches related to school-wide behavioral expectations.

Bully-Proofing the Classroom: Grace Halsey, national trainer for Responsive Classroom, collaborates with teachers to provide classroom lessons, across primary and intermediate grades, using literature focused on realistic situations that help students develop strategies to “Bully-proof the Classroom”. Mrs. Halsey also provides support to the faculty through coaching and model lessons.

Faculty and staff, as individuals and as teams, foster positive interactions, recognize that appropriate behavior often requires explicit instruction, and provide differentiated opportunities for student success.

School Resource Officer - full time uniformed presence of SRO provides security community building and educational opportunities.

The **Mission** and **Vision** of the Woodbridge School District are prominently displayed to bring the learning community together with common goals.

Communication – a district commitment to reaching all constituents through the *Bridge*, a comprehensive report to citizens of Woodbridge, Parent Updates, faculty/Staff updates, all provided by the Superintendent. A new and comprehensive website continues to be enhanced and updated to reach out to parents, the community and beyond.

Superintendent’s Parents Academy – opportunities for parents to learn explore, share and discuss important school topics related to curriculum, social/emotional development, assessment and other current topics.

Primary Mental Health Project – for almost 20 years, BRS has provided parent activities, community collaboration and student services through the PMHP grant funding and in-kind supports.

Yoga sessions in the primary grades (K-3) begin the process of teaching self- control through body-mind awareness.

Play sessions, lunch groups, and counseling sessions support individuals and small groups of students in developing strategies for positive interactions with peers and adults.

Board Certified Behavior Analyst – contracted through ACES, the BCBA provides program support, assessment, behavior plan development and consultation as appropriate.

Current Practices Promoting a Safe School Climate

Continued (2)

Sixth Grade Health: Students in sixth grade health classes study the concepts of teasing and bullying in depth. The unit of study concludes with an assignment for students to design a poster to educate the student population at Beecher Road School about bullying. These posters are prominently displayed outside the North Gymnasium and the Cafeteria and have been used to spark conversations about the topic throughout the entire school.

Student Council: Fifth and sixth grade students acquire leadership skills while representing their peers in matters that impact their school life. Student Council members promote whole school activities and volunteer their time, participating in school and community events.

Professional Learning Communities – Grade level teams meet weekly to plan, collaborate and make data driven decisions, for classes, groups and individual students.

Differentiated Instruction – with a school-wide focus on differentiated instruction, the faculty at BRS strives to challenge each student appropriately. Differentiated instruction means tailoring instruction and assessment to meet individual needs. Teachers consider students’ modes of learning, interests and readiness. They adjust the content, presentation, and learning environment. They provide varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning.

Successful Outcomes for Students – SRBI Team meets once per cycle to review data, collaborate to plan intervention, and determine next steps for students with academic and or social/emotional/behavioral needs.

Student artwork and academic work are displayed to maintain a vibrant and creative learning environment.

Arts Week – Organized by the Arts Week Committee, with the BRS Visual Arts and Music faculty, the week-long event focuses on the Arts, culminating with an evening of sharing with families and friends. Arts Week demonstrates that the Arts remain a focus of our learning community. Through instrumental music, choral singing, dancing, drama, murals, art studios and other aspects of the visual arts, a valuable learning experience is created for our children and our school community.

WBRS News – Sixth graders present the WBRS News weekly to inform all classes in the building of upcoming news, events, menus and special interest stories. This is news “for kids, by kids”.

Safety Patrol – Students demonstrate leadership and self-control as they open doors, greet adults and students, facilitate pedestrian crossings and encourage a safe ingress and egress for all. Safety Patrol is overseen by faculty/staff at both the North and South entrances.

Sixth Grade Reading Mentors - A group of 6th graders helps to “grow a reader.” The older students mentor children in kindergarten by reading to them twice a week. They chose books, practiced early reading strategies, and have discussions.

Current Practices Promoting a Safe School Climate

Continued (3)

Environmental Stewards are sixth grade students who are interested in issues involving sustainability. They meet once a week either before or after school, and, depending upon the weather and their interests, they maintain the biofiltration swales by A-wing and the parking lot, they pick up litter on the school campus, and they prepare presentations and posters to educate students throughout the school about recycling in the cafeteria, in classrooms and in their lives outside of school.

Owls Pals - 5th and 6th Grade students are "tutoring" during the school day in both literacy and numeracy, strengthening relationships, and learning for younger students.

DARE - Drug Abuse Resistance Education is an international substance abuse prevention education program that seeks to prevent use of controlled drugs, membership in gangs, and violent behavior.

PTO Involvement/ Cultural Activities – in-school field trips, guest authors, musicians, artists and more expands student experiences intellectually and culturally.

Multicultural Mindset - Robust Spanish instruction across all grade levels based on a proficiency model, Sister School affiliations in China and Morocco, academic studies and cultural experiences, such as the partnership with the British Art Museum in New Haven, all serve to promote a multicultural understanding and appreciation.

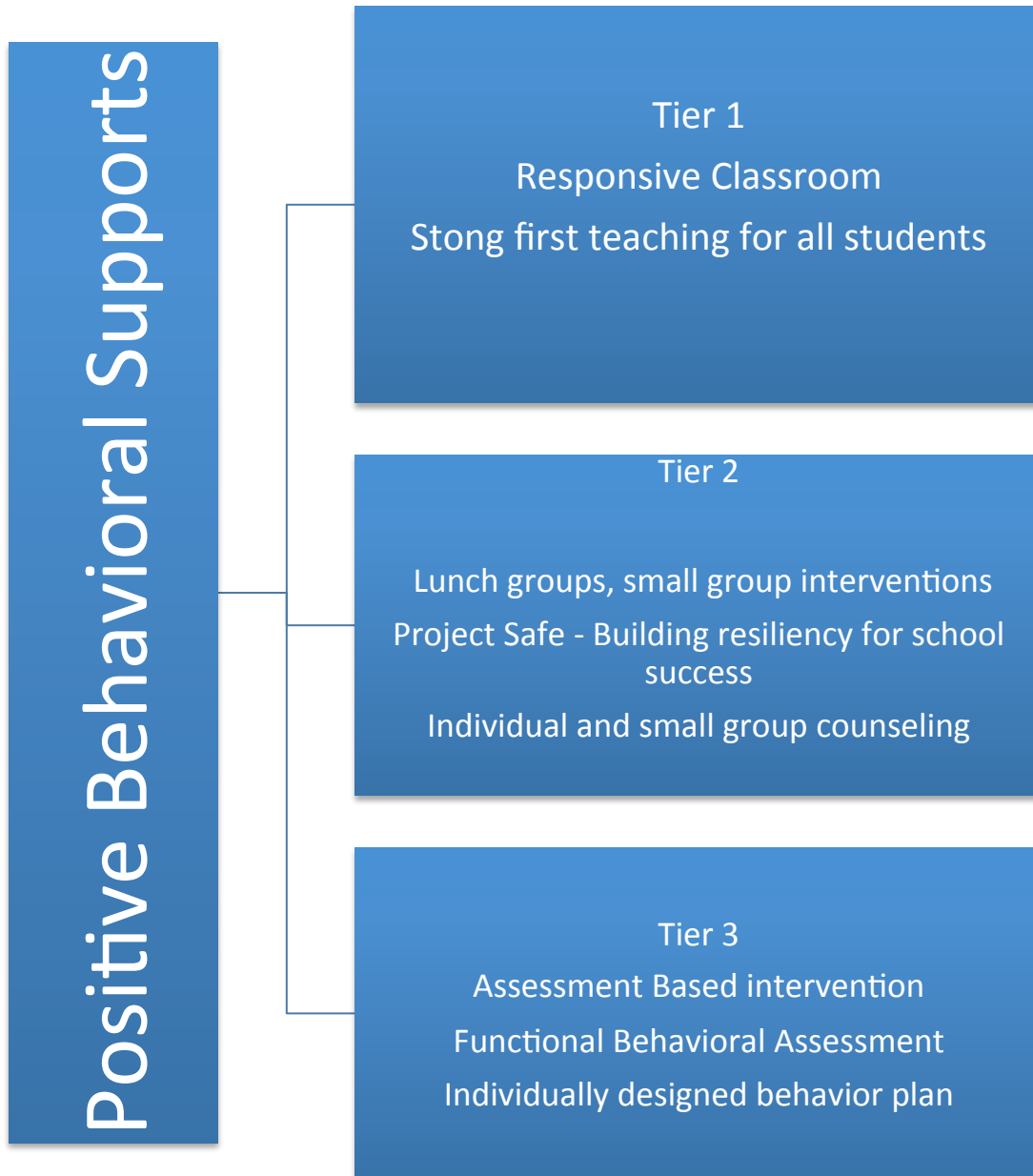
Social Action Committee - Faculty and staff at Beecher Road School participate in fund raising activities. Funds raised are used to support BRS families in need as appropriate and possible.

BRS Extended Day Program – Provides families with a safe and productive after-school program. Mainly BRS faculty and teacher assistants staff Extended Day. The staff provides a relaxing environment where children from kindergarten to sixth grade may play with friends in both structured and unstructured activities.

Guided Study - BRS and Woodbridge Youth Services collaborate to support an afterschool program that provides intervention and homework/study skills support for recommended students

Current Practices Promoting a Safe School Climate
Continued (4)

**Positive Behavioral Supports
A Tiered Approach**



Current Practices Promoting a Safe School Climate

Continued (5)

New Initiatives

Cafeteria Experience – Continue to improve the lunchtime experience for all grade levels through increased adult supervision, common rules and expectations, acoustic and environmental improvements and healthy food choices.

Peaceful Bus Initiative – Implement a Responsive Classroom approach to improve the travel experiences of students, engaging students and faculty/staff in the responsibility for safe, calm and appropriate travel on school transportation.

Safe School Climate Committee/Student Council Collaboration – Engage students in the process of continued work to provide the school community with a warm, safe and nurturing environment by having representatives at each meeting and by expanding on school wide collaborative efforts begun in 2014-2015.

Professional Development – Continue to support the BRS Educator Evaluation and Professional Learning Committee in the provision of appropriate and differentiated professional learning for faculty related the social/emotional/behavioral development of students.

Ongoing Review – Safe School Climate Committee meets monthly to meet the requirements for Safe School Climate Plan, including the review of bullying data, to review survey data and act as advisory group to the administrative team, to consider and address school needs as they arise,