

Bullying: Safe School Climate Plan

The Trumbull Public Schools is committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, teen dating violence, harassment, and discrimination. To foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, the Board has developed this regulation containing the District's Safe School Climate Plan (Plan), consistent with state law and Board Policy.

This Plan represents a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying, cyberbullying, and teen dating violence and sets forth the Board's expectations for how schools will create a positive school climate and thus prevent, intervene, and respond to incidents of bullying and teen dating violence in its schools.

Bullying behavior and teen dating violence are strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. The District's commitment to addressing bullying behavior and teen dating violence, however, involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate in which bullying and teen dating violence will not be tolerated by students or school staff.

I. Prohibition Against Bullying, Teen Dating Violence and Retaliation

- A. The Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior and 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 Trumbull Board of Education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by Board of Education.
- B. The Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- C. The Board further prohibits any form of teen dating violence outside of the school setting if such violence substantially disrupts the educational process.

- D. In addition to prohibiting student acts that constitute bullying and teen dating, the Board also prohibits discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying.
- E. Students who engage in bullying behavior or teen dating violence in violation of Board Policy and the Safe School Climate Plan shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with the Board's policies on student discipline, suspension and expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

II. Definition of Bullying

- A. **"Bullying"** means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:
 - 1. causes physical or emotional harm to an individual,
 - 2. places an individual in reasonable fear of harm, or
 - 3. infringes on the rights and opportunities of an individual at school.
- B. **"Bullying"** shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and 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.

III. Other Definitions

- A. **"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.
- B. **"Electronic communication"** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.
- C. **"Emotional intelligence"** means the ability to (1) perceive, recognize and understand emotions in oneself or others, (2) use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to, reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (3) understand and identify emotions, and (4) manage emotions in oneself and others.
- D. **"Hostile environment"** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.

- E. **"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.
- F. **"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.
- G. **"Positive school climate"** means a school climate in which (1) the norms, values, expectations and beliefs that support feelings of social, emotional and physical safety are promoted, (2) students, parents, and guardians of students and school employees feel engaged and respected and work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision, (3) educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning, and (4) each person feels comfortable contributing to the operation of the school and care of the physical environment of the school.
- F. **"Prevention and intervention strategy"** may include, but is not limited to:
- (1) implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying and teen dating identified by the Department of Education.
 - (2) school rules prohibiting bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and intimidation and retaliation 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 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, or student who commits teen dating violence, parents and school employees, and interventions with the student against whom the acts of bullying and teen dating violence are directed, parents and school employees.
 - (6) school-wide training related to safe school climate.
 - (7) student peer training, education, and support,
 - (8) promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings, and individual interventions, and

- (9) culturally competent school-based curriculum focusing on social-emotional learning, self-awareness and self-regulation.
- G. **"School climate"** means the quality and character of school life based on patterns of students', parents' and guardians' and school employees' experiences of school life, including, but not limited to, norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.
- H. **"School employee"** means (1) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (2) 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.
- I. **"School-Sponsored Activity"** shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board of Education.
- J. **"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.

IV. Leadership and Administrative Responsibilities

A. Safe School Climate Coordinator

The Superintendent shall appoint, from existing school district staff, a District Safe School Climate Coordinator ("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 in the District's schools.
- (3) provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education.
- (4) respond to bullying and teen dating violence in District schools.

- (5) meet with Safe School Climate Specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss issues relating to bullying the school district and to make recommendations concerning amendments to the District's Plan.
- (6) successfully complete the mental health first aid training provided by the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services (such training only required once).

B. Safe School Climate Specialist

The Principal of each school (or principal's designee) shall serve as the Safe School Climate Specialist. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall:

- (1) investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying.
- (2) collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in the schools, and
- (3) act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and responding to reports of bullying in the school.

V. Development and Review of Safe School Climate Plan

A. The Principal of each school shall establish a committee or designate at least one existing committee ("Committee") in the school to be responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues relating to bullying in the school. Such committee shall include:

- (1) at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, as appointed by the school principal.
- (2) (2) school personnel, including, but not limited to, at least one teacher selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees.
- (3) medical and mental health personnel assigned to such school, and
- (4) in the case of a committee for a high school, at least one student enrolled at such high school who is selected by the students of such school in a manner determined by the school principal.

B. The Committee shall:

- (1) receive copies of completed reports following bullying and teen dating violence investigations.
- (3) identify and address patterns of bullying and teen dating violence among students

in the school.

- (4) implement the provisions of the school security and safety plan, regarding the collection, evaluation and reporting of information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying or teen dating violence and report such information, as necessary, to the Safe School Climate Coordinator and to the school's security and safety committee.
 - (4) review and amend school policies relating to bullying and teen dating violence.
 - (5) review and make recommendations to the Coordinator regarding the Safe School Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school.
 - (6) educate students, school employees and parents/guardians on issues relating to bullying and teen dating violence.
 - (7) collaborate with the Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and teen dating violence, and
 - (8) perform any other duties as determined by the Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence.
- C. Any parent/guardian or student serving as a member of the Committee shall not participate in any activities which may compromise the confidentiality of any student, including, but not limited to receiving copies of investigation reports, or identifying or addressing patterns of bullying or teen dating or other disturbing or threatening behavior among students in the school.
- D. The Board of Education shall approve the Safe School Climate Plan developed pursuant to Board policy and submit such plan to the Department of Education. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days after approval by the Board, the Board shall make such plan available on the Board's and each individual school in the school district's web site and ensure that the Safe School Climate Plan is included in in all student and faculty handbooks and placed in other locations as deemed appropriate.

VI. Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Bullying

- A. Students and parents (or guardians of students) may file written reports of bullying. Written reports of bullying shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the alleged conduct, the number of incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of potential witnesses. Standardized forms may be developed for such use and ease in facilitating reporting. Such reports may be filed with any building administrator and/or the Safe School Climate Specialist (i.e., building principal), and all reports (verbal or written) shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for review and actions consistent with this Plan.

- B. Students may make anonymous reports of bullying to any school employee. Students may also request anonymity when making a report, even if the student's identity is known to the school employee. In cases where a student requests anonymity, the Safe School Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall meet with the student (if the student's identity is known) to review the request for anonymity and discuss the impact that maintaining the anonymity of the complainant may have on the investigation and on any possible remedial action. All anonymous reports shall be reviewed, and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that does not disclose the source of the report and 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 based on an anonymous report.
- C. School employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying shall orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, not later than one (1) school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying. The school employee shall then file a written report not later than two (2) school days after making such oral report.
- D. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall be responsible for reviewing any anonymous reports of bullying and shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall also be responsible for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of the student alleged to have committed an act or acts of bullying, and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such alleged act or acts were directed, that an investigation has commenced. To allow the district to adequately investigate complaints filed by a student or parent/guardian, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied should be asked to provide consent to permit the release of that student's name in connection with the investigation process, unless the student and/or parent has requested anonymity.
- E. In investigating reports of bullying, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegations and the ages of the students involved. The Safe School Climate Specialist will interview witnesses, as necessary, reminding the alleged perpetrator and other parties that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

VII. Responding to Verified Acts of Bullying

- A. Following investigation, if acts of bullying are verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall notify the parents or guardians of the students against whom such acts were directed as well as the parents or guardians of the students who commit such acts of bullying of the finding **not later than forty-eight (48) hours** after the investigation is completed. This notification shall the results of such investigation; and verbally or by electronic mail, if such parents' or guardians' electronic mail addresses are known, that such parents or guardians may refer to the plain language explanation of the

rights and remedies available under Conn. Gen. Stat. Sections 10-4a and 10-4b. In providing such notification, however, the Trumbull Public Schools will take care to respect the statutory privacy rights of other students, including the perpetrator of such bullying. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the perpetrator, or personally identifiable information about a student other than the parent/guardian's own child, may not be disclosed except as provided by law.

- B. In any instance in which bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall invite the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student/victim and policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying to a meeting, separate and distinct from the previously described meeting, to discuss specific interventions undertaken by the school to prevent further acts of bullying. The invitation may be made simultaneously with the notification described above in Section VII.A.
- C. If bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall develop a student safety support plan for any student against whom an act of bullying was directed. Such support plan will include safety measures to protect against further acts of bullying.
- D. A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. The written intervention plan may include counseling, discipline and other appropriate remedial actions as determined by the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee, and may also incorporate a student safety support plan, as appropriate.
- E. Notice to Law Enforcement

If the Principal of a school (or designee) reasonably believes that any act of bullying constitutes a criminal offense, he/she shall notify appropriate law enforcement. Notice shall be consistent with the Board's obligations under state and federal law and Board policy regarding the disclosure of personally identifiable student information. In making this determination, the Principal or designee, may consult with the school resource office, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

- F. If a bullying complaint raises concern about discrimination or harassment on the basis of a legally protected classifications (such as race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or gender identity or expression), the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also coordinate any bullying investigation with other appropriate personnel within the district as appropriate (e.g. Title IX Coordinator, Section 504 Coordinator, etc.), so as to ensure that any such bullying investigation complies with the requirements of such policies regarding nondiscrimination.

VIII. Teen Dating Violence

- A. The school strictly prohibits, and takes very seriously any instances of, teen dating violence, as defined above. The school recognizes that teen dating violence may take many different forms and may also be considered bullying and/or sexual harassment.
- B. Students and parents (or guardians of students) may bring verbal or written complaints regarding teen dating violence to any building administrator. The building administrator shall review and address the complaint, which may include referral of the complaint to the Safe School Climate Specialist and/or Title IX Coordinator.
- C. Prevention and intervention strategies concerning teen dating violence shall be implemented in accordance with Section X below. Discipline, up to and including expulsion, may be imposed against the perpetrator of teen dating violence consistent with Board policy and federal and state law.

IX. Documentation and Maintenance of Log

- A. Each school shall maintain written reports of bullying and teen dating violence, along with supporting documentation received and/or created as a result of bullying investigations, consistent with the Board's obligations under state and federal law. Any educational record containing personally identifiable student information pertaining to an individual student shall be maintained in a confidential manner and shall not be disclosed to third parties without prior written consent of a parent, guardian, or eligible student, except as permitted under Board policy and state and federal law.
- B. The Principal of each school shall maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in the school and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. Consistent with district obligations under state and federal law regarding student privacy, the log shall not contain any personally identifiable student information, or any information that alone or in combination would allow a reasonable person in the school community to identify the students involved. Accordingly, the log should be limited to basic information such as the number of verified acts, name of school and/or grade level and relevant date. Given that any determination of bullying involves repeated acts, each investigation that results in a verified act of bullying for that school year shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying unless the specific actions that are the subject of each report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying. The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of bullying in each school and 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.
- C. The Principal of each school shall report the number of verified acts of bullying in the school annually to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

X. Other Prevention and Intervention Strategies

- A. Bullying behavior and teen dating violence can take many forms and can vary dramatically in the nature of the offense and the impact the behavior may have on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying or to teen dating violence. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying", or "teen dating violence," as defined above, will generally warrant traditional disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying or teen dating violence, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (e.g., 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). No disciplinary action may be taken solely based on an anonymous complaint of bullying. As discussed below, schools may also consider appropriate alternatives to traditional disciplinary sanctions, including age-appropriate consequences and other restorative or remedial interventions.
- B. A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. This plan may include safety provisions, as described above, for students against whom acts of bullying have been verified and may include other interventions such as counseling, discipline, and other appropriate remedial or restorative actions as determined by the responsible administrator.
- C. The following sets forth possible interventions which may also be utilized to enforce the Board's prohibition against bullying and teen dating violence:

(1) Non-disciplinary interventions

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

Students may also be subject to other forms of restorative discipline or remedial actions, appropriate to the age of the students and nature of the behavior.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer or other forms of 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.

When an act or acts of teen dating violence are identified, the students involved as to the seriousness of the conduct, the prohibition of teen dating violence, and their duty to avoid any such conduct. Students may also be subject to other forms of restorative discipline or remedial actions, appropriate to the age of the students and nature of the behavior.

(2) Disciplinary interventions

When acts of bullying are verified or teen dating violence occurs, and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints of bullying, 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 the Board's Student Discipline policy. This consequence shall normally be reserved for serious incidents of bullying and teen dating violence, and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior.

(3) Interventions for bullied students and victims of teen dating violence

The building principal (or another responsible program administrator) or designee shall intervene to address incidents of bullying or teen dating violence against a single individual. Intervention strategies for a bullied student or victim of teen dating violence may include the following:

- a. Referral to a school counselor, psychologist or other appropriate social or mental health service.
- b. Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene in bullying situations or instances of teen dating violence.
- c. Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization.
- d. Peer mediation or other forms of mediation, where appropriate.
- e. Student Safety Support Plan.
- f. Restitution and/or restorative interventions, and
- g. Periodic follow-up by the Safe School Climate Specialist and/or Title IX Coordinator with the bullied student or victim of teen dating violence.

(5) General Prevention and Intervention Strategies

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying and direct intervention when acts of bullying are verified, other district actions may ameliorate potential problems with bullying in school or at school-sponsored activities. Additional district actions may also ameliorate potential problems with teen dating violence. While no specific action is required, and school needs for specific prevention and intervention strategies may vary from time to time, the following list of potential prevention and intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers, and other professional employees in each school.

Such prevention and intervention strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- a. School rules prohibiting bullying, teen dating violence, harassment, and intimidation and retaliation establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts.
- b. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom, and other specific areas where bullying or teen dating violence are likely to occur.
- c. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying and teen dating violence education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school, which may include instruction regarding building safe and positive school communities including developing healthy relationships and preventing dating violence as deemed appropriate for older students.
- d. Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student, parents, and school employees.
- e. School-wide training related to safe school climate, which training may include Title IX sex discrimination/sexual harassment prevention training, Section 504/ADA training, diversity/multicultural education or other training in federal and state civil rights legislation or other topics relevant to safe school climate.
- f. Student peer training, education and support.
- g. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions.
- h. 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.
- i. Respectful responses to bullying and teen dating violence concerns raised by students, parents or staff.
- j. Planned professional development programs addressing prevention and intervention strategies, which training may include school violence prevention, conflict resolution and prevention of bullying and teen dating violence, with a focus in evidence-based practices concerning same.
- k. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities.
- l. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping.
- m. Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of school employees and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;
- n. Modeling by teachers 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; and
- q. Culturally competent school-based curriculum focusing on social-emotional learning, self-awareness, and self-regulation.

- D. In addition to prevention and intervention strategies, administrators, teachers and other professional employees may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and help eliminate bullying behavior through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. Administrators, teachers, and other professional employees should intervene promptly whenever they observe mean-spirited student conduct, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of "bullying."
- E. Funding for the school-based bullying intervention and school climate improvement strategy may originate from public, private, federal or philanthropic sources.

XI. Improving School Climate

The Trumbull Public Schools are committed to improving school climate. District curricula, including a comprehensive social skills curriculum and developmental counseling curriculum instruct students in pro-social behaviors such as respect, tolerance, and safety. These concepts and behaviors are reinforced through our academic curriculum. District Health curriculum addresses developing healthy behaviors and relationships, and respecting others in person and through social media. District staffing includes school psychologists, counselors, social workers, teachers, and administrators used to develop relationships with students at all levels and provide a variety of prevention and intervention efforts for all students. Individual schools through their school climate teams review and analyze data from a variety of sources to continuously improve climate and address student, faculty, and parent needs related to fostering a positive school climate. Schools and district level staff members collaborate with community agencies to coordinate efforts for students and families in need.

XII. Annual Notice and Training

- A. Students, and parents or guardians of students shall be notified annually of the process by which students may make reports of bullying.
- B. The Board shall provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying.
- C. At the beginning of each school year, each school shall provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan and require that all school employees annually complete training on the identification, prevention and response to bullying as required by law.
- D. As required by state law, the Board, after consultation with the Department of Education and the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, shall also provide on its website training materials to school administrators regarding the prevention of and intervention in discrimination against and targeted harassment of students based on such students' (1) actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, 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 (2) association with individuals or groups who have or are perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

- E. Any person appointed by the district to serve as district safe school climate coordinator shall complete mental health and first aid training offered by the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

XIII. School Climate Assessments

Biennially, the Board shall require each school in the district to complete an assessment using the school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the Department of Education. The Board shall collect the school climate assessments for each school in the district and submit such assessments to the Connecticut State Department of Education.