

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

***Bethany Orange Woodbridge
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525***

***Dr. Jennifer P. Byars
Superintendent of Schools***

AMITY REGIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

***January 29, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, CT
District Presentation Room***

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
 - a. Policy Committee Meeting December 18, 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Review of revisions to First Read Policies from December 18, 2023 Committee Meeting
 - a. Policy 5141.5 - Suicide Prevention/Suicide Attempts
 - i. Policy 1180 - Memorials For Deceased Students Or Staff
 - b. Discussion and Possible Action on Bylaw 9132 - Committees
5. Discussion and Possible Action on Policies from the 5000 Series
 - a. Policy 5141.6 - Crisis Prevention/Response
 - b. Policy 5142.1 - Relations with Non-Custodial Parents
 - c. Policy 5142.2 - Safety: Student Dismissal Precautions
 - d. Policy 5143.1 - Insurance
6. Discussion and Possible Action on Policy 1110.1 - Communications with the Public; Parent Involvement
7. Discussion and Possible Action on Policies revisions as a result of changes to State Statutes
 - a. Policy 4111.3 - Minority Recruitment Plan
 - b. Bylaw 9323 – Construction of the Agenda
 - c. Policy 5131.911 - Connecticut School Climate Policy
 - i. CABE Connecticut School Climate Policy
8. Adjourn



Jennifer P. Byars, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

pc: Town Clerks: Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge

***Working to "enable every Amity student to become a lifelong learner
and a literate, caring, creative and effective world citizen."***

PLEASE POST

PLEASE POST

District Mission Statement

If you require accommodations to participate because of a disability,
please contact the office of the Superintendent of Schools in advance at 203-397-4811.

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

***Bethany Orange Woodbridge
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525***

***Dr. Jennifer P. Byars
Superintendent of Schools***

AMITY REGIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

***December 18, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, CT
District Presentation Room***

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairperson Christina Levere-D'Addio, Dr. Carol Oladele (arrived 5:40 p.m.), Donna Schuster (left 6:36 p.m.)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Dr. Byars

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Levere-D'Addio called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

2. Approval of Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

- a. Policy Committee Meeting November 20, 2023

MOTION BY Donna Schuster to approve Policy Committee Meeting minutes, as submitted, November 20, 2023.

VOTES IN FAVOR, 2 (Schuster, Levere- D'Addio)

MOTION CARRIES

3. Public Comment

None

4. Review of revisions to Policies from November 20, 2030 Committee Meeting

- a. 5131.81 (Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Communication Devices)
- b. 6141.321 (Acceptable Use of Computers and Technology)

Revise as discussed and post updates.

5. Discussion of Policies on Complaints About Staff

- a. (Policies 4118.22; 4118.112/ 4218.112; 4115; 4115.3; 4117.4; 4117.41; 4215; 4216; 4217.4)

PLEASE POST

PLEASE POST

Revised as discussed and post updates.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on Policies from the 5000 Series
 - a. Policy 5141.5 - Suicide Prevention/Suicide Attempts
 - i. Policy 1180 - Memorials For Deceased Students Or Staff

*MOTION BY Donna Schuster to move Policy 5141.5 - Suicide Prevention/Suicide Attempts and Policy 1180 - Memorials for deceased students or staff to first read at January BOE
VOTES IN FAVOR, 3 (UNANIMOUS)*

Agenda items 6 b-e Postpone to January meeting.

- b. Policy 5141.6 - Crisis Prevention/Response
 - c. Policy 5142.1 - Relations with Non-Custodial Parents
 - d. Policy 5142.2 - Safety: Student Dismissal Precautions
 - e. Policy 5143.1 - Insurance

7. Discussion and Possible Action on Bylaw 9132 – Committees

*MOTION BY Dr. Oladele to move Bylaw 9131 to first read at January BOE
VOTES IN FAVOR, 2 (UNANIMOUS)
MOTION CARRIES*

8. Discussion and Possible Action on Policy 1110.1 - Communications with the Public; Parent Involvement

Agenda Item 8 Postpone until January meeting.

9. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned, without objection, by Chairperson Levere- D'Addio at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Zaleski

Lisa Zaleski
BOE Recording Secretary

Students

Suicide Prevention/Suicide Attempts

The Amity Regional School District No. 5 (District) Board of Education (Board) recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that, while the school may recognize a potentially suicidal youth, it cannot make a clinical assessment of risk and provide in-depth counseling but must refer the youth to an appropriate place for such assessment and counseling. ~~Instead, the Board directs school staff to refer students who may be at risk of attempting suicide to an appropriate community agency for professional assessment, counseling, and treatment outside of the school.~~

The Board of Education recognizes the need for ~~suicide prevention procedures and will establish program(s) to identify risk factors for suicide among our students, procedures to intervene with such students, referral services and training for teachers, other school professionals and students to provide assistance in these programs.~~

~~The Board directs all school personnel to be alert to the student who exhibits signs of potential self-destruction or who threatens or attempts suicide.~~

~~Any school employee who may have knowledge of a suicide threat, attempt, or ideation must take the proper steps to immediately report this information to building administration and/or appropriate building mental health staff (School Counselor, School Psychologists, and/or School Social Worker).~~

~~Any school employee who may have knowledge of a suicide threat or attempt must take the proper steps to report this information to the building Principal or his/her designee who will, in turn, notify the appropriate school officials, the student's family and appropriate resource services.~~

~~In addition, information regarding the 988 crisis line should be made widely available in schools and district offices. The Board shall include the 9-8-8 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number on the student identification card distributed to each student in grades seven to twelve.~~

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

~~10-221(e) Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies, and procedures.
(e) re “policy and procedures for dealing with youth suicide prevention and youth suicide attempts.”~~

~~10-222x Inclusion of 9-8-8 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number on student identification cards.~~

Community Relations

Memorials for Deceased Students or Staff

~~From time to time requests are made to honor a deceased student or employee of the Amity Regional School District. Recognizing that the loss of a member of the school community is deeply felt, our schools provide support for staff, students and families who feel the loss, and assist with connections to appropriate community resources.~~

The Amity Regional School District No. 5 (District) recognizes the far-reaching impact a student's or staff member's death may have on other students, staff, families and the community. The District believes that remembrance of a student or staff member whose life ended during his/her years in the School District should be consistent and equitable from case to case, and considerate of the grief process of family, friends, and coworkers, and in accordance with Board policy. Further, the District recognizes that decisions made about memorials immediately after traumatic events may not take into full consideration the potential impacts to students, staff, and community members. Memorials set a precedent for the future and need to be equitable. The purpose of this policy is to assist staff, students, and families affected by a death by providing guidelines for decision-making regarding memorials and memorialization activities.

Memorial gifts/fund raisers organized in school must have the consent of the school administration and any other consent as required by District policies and/or procedures. The District's established processes and procedures for fund raisers should be followed. Students and staff may be given direction as to what is appropriate as a memorial. Suggested memorials include a blood drive, partnering with local nonprofit organizations and related activities, or establishing a scholarship. It is required that the family of the deceased student or staff member should also provide consent before engaging in the activity.

The preferred method for memorializing a deceased member of the school community is by means of a memorial scholarship. Criteria for the memorial scholarship may be developed by the individual or group wishing to honor the deceased member of the community. Criteria shall be finalized in consultation with the high school Principal and the Director of Counseling Services. Memorial scholarship awardees shall be selected solely by the high school scholarship committee following the criteria established. Individuals or groups conveying the scholarship shall be invited to present the scholarship to the selected student(s) at the appropriate awards event.

Physical memorials are not encouraged.

Bylaws of the Board

Committees

The Board of Education (Board) shall act as a committee of the whole on all matters coming before it except that committees may be created by vote of the Board for the consideration or investigation of certain matters, or for the performance of certain Board functions.

1. Committees

a. Standing Committees

The Board may create standing committees. Any standing committee shall remain in effect indefinitely or until such time as the committee is abolished by the Board.

b. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be established by the Board with a fixed objective and for a limited period of time. The Board shall take formal action to dissolve such committees when their stated purposes have been carried out and/or the services of the committee are no longer required.

2. Scope of Authority

A committee's only authority is to make recommendations to the Board regarding matters that have been referred to it, unless the Board specifically authorizes otherwise; however, the Board cannot delegate the powers granted it under the State Statutes to such committees.

3. Committee Membership

The Board Chairperson shall appoint the members of all committees, and the Board Chairperson shall also appoint a Chairperson for each committee. The Board Chairperson may serve as ex-officio member of any standing or ad hoc committee. As ex-officio, the Chairperson can vote but cannot count as part of a quorum.

The Board Chairperson is empowered to appoint alternate member(s) to each committee. When performing the duties of an absent committee member, the alternate(s) shall count as part of a quorum. Alternate(s) may perform all the duties, including motioning and voting, of a committee member in the absence of an assigned committee member. Alternate(s) may not vote on action items if a quorum of assigned committee members are present. Alternates may not serve as Chair of the committee in the absence of the Chair.

4. Meetings and Reports

- a.** Meetings of committees shall be posted as required by the Freedom of Information Act. Minutes of each posted committee meeting shall be prepared.

Bylaws of the Board

Committees

- b. Committees shall submit their recommendations and/or reports at meetings of the Board.

5. Electronic Committee Meetings

The Board recognizes that due to the schedule, time, frequency and content of committees, committee meetings may be best accomplished through a meeting by electronic means. The decision to conduct a committee meeting electronically shall be determined by mutual consensus between the committee chair and the school personnel who serve on the committee. In the event that a committee meets by electronic means, the following shall be adhered to:

- a. All members of the committee shall meet by electronic means. A hybrid meeting is not permissible.
- b. Committee members shall make every attempt to participate through a technology portal where they can be viewable, or at a minimum heard, by each other and members of the public.
- c. Notice of the committee meeting's virtual location shall be published through the traditional means and outlets as well as being noticed on the District (ARSD) website and in the Board of Education Office no less than 48 hours in advance.
- d. ARSD shall post the agenda for the committee meeting no later than 24 hours in advance for review and reference by members of the public. The agenda will also be posted on the ARSD website.
- e. The live public comment portion of the committee meeting shall be temporarily suspended during an electronic meeting. However, members of the public can submit their comments to be added to the public record by emailing the Clerk of the Board of Education prior to 2:00 pm on the day of the meeting. These comments will be summarized by the Committee Chairperson in the place so designated in the agenda for the meeting. The public may also email the Clerk of the Board by 2:00 pm on the day of the meeting and request to speak during public comment as noted on the agenda. Those members of the public making such request will be provided with the information necessary to join the meeting electronically to provide public comment.
- f. ARSD shall provide any member of the public with a physical location and the electronic equipment needed to attend a fully remote meeting in real-time. Members of the public must request this provision by emailing the Clerk of the Board of Education by the close of the last business day before the day of the fully remote meeting.

Bylaws of the Board

Committees

- g.** When a committee meeting is conducted by electronic means, a recording of the meeting with video, in addition to minutes, will be posted. These recordings will not stand as the minutes; only the written record as approved will do so.
- h.** The Board shall take the steps necessary for the public to view electronic committee meetings and proceedings in real time.
- i.** Executive session will not be conducted during an electronic committee meeting.

(cf. 9131 – Committee of the Whole)

(cf. 9132.2 – Amity Finance Committee)

(cf. 9312 – Time, Place, and Notification of Meetings)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-200 through 1-241 of the Freedom of Information Act 1-200 Definitions
1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public

Students

Crisis Prevention/Response

The **Amity Regional School District No. 5 (District)** recognizes that schools are subject to a number of potentially disruptive events. These events include major crises. No school is immune no matter the size or location. The challenge, however, is to protect students as much as possible ~~in an increasingly violent world~~. While the very nature of a crisis may make preparation difficult, the Board of Education (Board) believes that staff and students should be ready to respond quickly and appropriately to emergency situations. The Board recognizes that all District staff and students must be prepared to respond quickly and responsibly to emergencies, disasters, and threats of disaster. Being prepared for crises can enhance the district's effectiveness in responding to smaller incidents.

Although there is no guarantee that a district (school) will ever be completely safe from crisis, the district will take the appropriate security measures to **provide a safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environment for students, staff, and visitors**, ~~lessen the chances of violence occurring on school grounds~~, including development, implementation, and regular updating of a **comprehensive** crisis/emergency management plan. **Such plans shall be based on the school security and safety plan standards and the accompanying School Security and Safety Plan Template developed by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, pursuant to section 86 of PA 13-3.**

In developing the District and school security and safety plans, the Superintendent or their designee shall collaborate closely with law enforcement, fire and emergency services personnel and community partners, including public health and mental health professionals who can assist with the development of a plan that addresses a wide range of crises.

The Superintendent or their designee shall also develop and maintain emergency plans for each school site, with the cooperation of the school's security and safety committee.

The Board shall annually, by November 1st of each year, submit the school security and safety plan for each school to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, via submission to the District's DEMHS Regional Coordinator in the manner prescribed by said agency.

The Board shall grant the use of school buildings, grounds, and equipment to public agencies, including the American Red Cross, for mass care and welfare shelters during disasters or other emergencies affecting the public health and welfare. The Board shall cooperate with such agencies in furnishing and maintaining whatever services they deem necessary to meet the community's needs.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes

10-154a Professional communications between teacher or nurse and student.

10-207 Duties of medical advisors.

10-209 Records not to be public.

10-210 Notice of disease to be given parent or guardian.

Policy Revised:

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Students

Crisis Prevention/Response

10-221e Boards of education to prescribe rules.

10-222m - School security and safety plans. School security and safety committees

10-222n - School security and safety plan standards

19a-221 Quarantine of certain persons.

52-557b Immunity from liability for emergency medical assistance, first aid or medication by injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.

PA 13-3 An Act Concerning Gun Violence and Children's Safety

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, 45 C.F.R. 99.

Students

Relations with Noncustodial Parents

The Amity Regional School District No. 5 (District) Board of Education (Board), unless informed otherwise, assumes that there are no restrictions regarding the noncustodial parent's right to be kept informed of the student's school progress and activities. If restrictions are made relative to these rights, the custodial parent will be required to submit a certified copy of the court order to the superintendent which curtails these specific rights.

Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, such as a final divorce decree which includes specific denial of visitation rights or a restraining order denying such rights, the noncustodial parent, upon written request **and in accordance with Board of Education records policies 5124 and 5125** may view the student's educational, medical, or similar records maintained in such student's cumulative record, receive school progress reports, visit the child briefly at school, and have an opportunity to conference with the student's teacher(s).

In addition, upon written request to the child's school principal, the school will subsequently and routinely mail to the parent making the request copies of all school information which is normally sent home with the child. This will include mailings of copies of report cards and class and school newsletters during the school year in which the request is made. Noncustodial parents and parents with shared custody not normally receiving materials from the school may annually request this service.

The Board of Education presumes that the person who enrolls a student in school is the student's custodial parent. Further, the parent with whom the student resides is known as the custodial parent unless a legal document or signed parental agreement indicates otherwise. Verification may be required from the custodial parent.

While both parents can visit the student at school, only the custodial parent has the right to remove the student from school property. Only a verified note from the custodial parent will be cause for exception to this provision. If school personnel anticipate a possible student abduction, law enforcement personnel are to be notified immediately.

The custodial parent has the responsibility to keep the school office informed as to the address of residence, in a manner determined by the school, and how he/she may be contacted at all times. Any legal documents which restrict the rights of the noncustodial parent must be provided by the custodial parent and updated annually.

(cf. 5113.2 - Attendance and Excuses) (cf. 5118 - Nonresident Students)

(cf. 5124 - Reporting to Parents)

(cf. 5125/5125.1 - Student Records/Confidentiality) (cf. 5142.2 - Student Dismissal Precautions)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student's records

46b-56 Access of records of minor children by non-custodial parent

Policy Revised:

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.5
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Students

Relations with Noncustodial Parents

Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

Department of Education 34 C.F. R. Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45FR 30802) regs. implementing

FERPA enacted as part of 438 of General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) - parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to educational records.

Students

Safety: Student Dismissal Precautions

The school district is legally responsible for the safety of its students during the school day. Therefore, each building Principal will establish procedures to validate requests for early dismissal, to assure that students are released only for proper reasons, and only to authorized person(s).

Staff members shall not excuse any student from school prior to the end of the school day, or into any person's custody without the direct prior approval and knowledge of the building Principal or ~~his or her~~ **their** designee.

In keeping with these precautions, the following procedures will be adhered to:

- The building Principal or designee shall not excuse a student before the end of the school day without a request for early dismissal by the student's **custodial** parent or guardian.
- Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student shall be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's **custodial** parent or guardian.
- ~~Children of single parent families will be released only upon the request to the custodial parent; i.e., the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child, and who is identified as such on the school record.~~
- **Only the custodial parent has the right to remove the student from school property. Only a verified note from the custodial parent will be cause for exception to this provision.**
- Students are only released (Middle School) to responsible adult upon signing the student out.

Additional precautions may be taken by the school administration, appropriate to the age of students, and as needs arise. Parents shall provide documentation concerning parental rights, including divorce decrees and restraining orders, if any.

Students

Insurance

The Board of Education will provide students with opportunity to participate at low cost in an accident insurance program, providing medical **and/or dental** coverage of at least \$10,000 per student. Coverage includes all school supervised activities and **school-sponsored extracurricular activities** at school or elsewhere, with the exception of interscholastic sports, and travel to and from school and on school-sponsored trips.

Coverage for Participants in Interscholastic Sports

The Board of Education will pay the cost of accident insurance for all participants in interscholastic athletic programs.

Community Relations

Communication with the Public

Parental Involvement

The Amity Regional District No. 5 (ARSD) Board of Education (Board) recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and family during the entire period the child spends in school. To support the goal of ARSD to educate all students effectively the schools and parents must work as well informed partners.

Although families are diverse in culture, language, and needs, they share ARSD's commitment to the educational success of their students. ARSD and its schools, in collaboration with parents, shall establish programs and practices that enhance parent involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.

To this end ARSD Board supports the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of a parent involvement program in each school that will involve parents at all grade levels in a variety of roles. Such parent involvement policies will include, but not be limited to, the following components:

- Communication and shared information between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.
- Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.
- Input from parents on significant school-related issues is sought.
- Parents are informed as to how they can assist in their children's learning.
- Community resources are available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.
- The two required parent-teacher conferences per year, beginning July 1, 2021 and each school year thereafter, can be fulfilled by ARSD offering parents the option of attending any parent-teacher conference by the use of telephonic, video, or other conferencing platforms.
- An additional parent-teacher conference, in addition to the two required conferences, shall be conducted during periods when ARSD provides remote learning for more than three consecutive weeks and one additional parent-teacher conference every six months thereafter for the duration of such period of remote learning.
 - ARSD will request from the parent/guardian of each student the name and contact information of an emergency contact person who may be contacted, if the student's parent/guardian cannot be reached to schedule a parent-teacher conference required when ARSD is providing remote learning for a period of three consecutive weeks or more.
 - In situations in which the teacher is unable to contact a student's parent/guardian after three attempts to schedule the required parent-teacher conference during a period of remote learning provided by ARSD for three consecutive weeks or more, such teacher is directed to report such inability to the principal, school counselor, or other school administrator designated by the Board. Such principal, counselor, or administrator is to contact the student's emergency contact to determine the student and family's health and safety.

Community Relations

Communication with the Public

By December 1, 2021 the Board shall utilize the document developed by the State Department of Education that provides information concerning educational, safety, mental health, and food insecurity resources and programs available to students and their families.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

~~Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified Minority Recruitment Plan~~

The Amity Regional School District No. 5 (ARSD) Board of Education (Board) recognizes that fundamental to a quality education is the need to provide students with an opportunity to interact with students and educators from different racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

The Board believes that a skillful and diverse staff contributes significantly to high quality, engaging learning environments, predicated on a climate of inclusion. To this end the Board directs the Superintendent to enact a planning process for the recruitment of a diverse staff.

The plan must provide students with opportunities to interact with teachers from diverse backgrounds. The plan must be submitted to the Commissioner of Education for review and approval. The approved plan must be posted on the district website.

(cf. 4111 – Recruitment and Selection)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-4a(3) Educational interests of state identified.

10-151 Employment of teachers. Notice and hearing on termination of contract.

10-153 Discrimination on account of marital status.

10-220(a) Duties of Boards of Education. (as amended by PA 18-34).

46a- 60 Discriminatory employment practices prohibited.

PA 16-41 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Minority Teacher Recruitment Task Force.

PA 18-34 An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention.

PA 19-74 An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention.

PA 23-167 An Act Concerning Transparency in Education

Bylaws of the Board

Construction of the Agenda

The Superintendent, in cooperation with the Chairperson of the Board of Education, shall prepare an agenda for each regular meeting. Any member of the Board of Education may call the Superintendent and request any item to be placed on the agenda no later than 72 hours prior to the legally required public posting of the agenda. Any business not included on the filed agenda for a regular meeting may be added to the agenda, considered, and acted upon if there is an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the members of the Board present and voting.

Posting of the Agenda

At least 24 hours prior to the time of the regular meeting, the agenda shall be posted in the Board room of the district and in each school in a place readily available to parents, teachers and the general public, in the Office of the Town/City Clerk, posted on the District's Internet website, and shall be filed in the Superintendent's office.

In addition to posting Board of Education meeting agendas on its website 24 hours prior to the meeting, any associated documents that may be reviewed by members of the Board at such meeting will be made available on the Board's website prior to the meeting.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public (as amended by P.A. 07-213)

Public Act 23-160 An Act Concerning Education Mandate Relief and Other Technical and Assorted Revisions and Additions to the Education and Early Childhood Education Statutes

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Policy Statement

This policy sets forth a framework for an effective and informed school climate improvement process, which includes a continuous cycle of (i) planning and preparation, (ii) evaluation, (iii) action planning, and (iv) implementation, and serves to actualize the Connecticut School Climate Standards, as detailed herein.

The Portrait of the Graduate outlines the desired skills, attributes, and knowledge that students should acquire by the time they complete their education. This comprehensive vision often includes aspects linked to social responsibility. A safe school climate plan focuses on creating an environment that promotes physical and emotional well-being, fosters inclusivity, and prevents bullying or discrimination. The safe school climate policy seeks to establish the supportive and nurturing conditions necessary for students to thrive and embody the qualities outlined in the Portrait of the Graduate.

The Amity Regional School District No. 5 (District) Board of Education (Board) adopts this policy.

Connecticut School Climate Standards

1. The school district community has a shared vision and plan for promoting and sustaining a positive school climate that focuses on prevention, identification, and response to all challenging behavior.
2. The school district community adopts policies that promote:
 - a. a sound school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills; and
 - b. a restorative school environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships, and intentionally re-engaging any disengaged students, educators, and families of students in the school community.
3. The school community's practices are identified, prioritized, and supported to:
 - a. promote learning and the positive academic, social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students;
 - b. enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities;
 - c. address barriers to teaching and learning; and
 - d. develop and sustain a restorative infrastructure that builds capacity, accountability, and sustainability.
4. The school community creates a school environment where *everyone* is safe, welcomed,

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

supported, and included in all school-based activities.

5. The school community creates a restorative system that cultivates a sense of belonging through norms and activities that promote social and civic responsibility, and a dedication to cultural responsiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

School Climate Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

The superintendent of schools for each school district, or an administrator appointed by the superintendent, shall serve as the school climate coordinator for the school district.

The school climate coordinator shall be responsible for:

1. providing district-level leadership and support for the implementation of the school climate improvement plan for each school;
2. collaborating with the school climate specialist, for each school to (A) develop a continuum of strategies to prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment, and (B) communicate such strategies to the school community, including, but not limited to, through publication in the district student handbook;
3. collecting and maintaining data regarding school climate improvement, including, but not limited to, school discipline records, school climate assessments, attendance rates, social and emotional learning assessments, academic growth data, types and numbers of alleged and verified bullying complaints submitted by members of the school community, types and numbers of challenging behaviors addressed using the restorative practices response policy, and data concerning the implementation and outcome of restorative practices; and
4. meeting with the school climate specialist for each school at least twice during the school year to (A) identify strategies to improve school climate, including, but not limited to, by responding to challenging behavior and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, such as restorative practices, (B) propose recommendations for revisions to the school climate improvement plan, and (C) assist with the completion of the school climate survey.

School Climate Specialist

The principal of each school, [or a school employee who holds professional certification pursuant to section 10-145 of the general statutes, is trained in school climate improvement or restorative practices, and is designated as the school climate specialist by the school principal] shall serve as the school climate specialist for the school.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

The school climate specialist shall be responsible for:

1. leading in the prevention, identification, and response to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, reports of alleged bullying and harassment;
2. implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices;
3. scheduling meetings for and leading the school climate committee; and
4. leading the implementation of the school climate improvement plan.

School Climate Committee

Each school climate specialist shall appoint members to the school climate committee who are diverse, including members who are racially, culturally, and linguistically representative of various roles in the school community.

The school climate committee shall consist of:

1. the school climate specialist;
2. a teacher selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees chosen pursuant to section 10-153b of the general statutes;
3. a demographically representative group of students enrolled at the school, as developmentally appropriate;
4. families of students enrolled at the school; and
5. at least two members of the school community, as determined by the school climate specialist.

Membership of the school climate committee shall be annually reviewed and approved by the school climate specialist, in coordination with the school climate coordinator.

The school climate committee shall be responsible for:

1. assisting in the development, annual scheduling, and administration of the school climate survey, and reviewing of the school climate survey data.
2. using the school climate survey data to identify strengths and challenges to improve school climate, and to create or propose revisions to the school climate improvement

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

plan.

3. assisting in the implementation of the school climate improvement plan and recommending any improvements or revisions to the plan.
4. advising on strategies to improve school climate and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices, in the school community.
5. annually providing notice of the uniform challenging behavior and/or bullying complaint form, or similar complaint form used by the school, to the school community.

School Climate Survey

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and biennially thereafter, the school climate committee, for each school, shall administer a school climate survey to students, school employees and families of students, provided the parent or guardian of each student shall receive prior written notice of the content and administration of such school climate survey and shall have a reasonable opportunity to opt such student out of such school climate survey.

School Climate Improvement Plan

The school climate specialist, for each school, in collaboration with the school climate coordinator, shall develop, and update as necessary, a school climate improvement plan. Such plan shall be based on the results of the school climate survey, any recommendations from the school climate committee, including the protocols, supports, and any other data the school climate specialist and school climate coordinator deem relevant. Such plan shall be submitted to the school climate coordinator for review and approval on or before December thirty-first of each school year. Upon approval of such plan, a written or electronic copy of such plan shall be made available to members of the school community and such plan shall be used in the prevention of, identification of and response to all challenging behavior.

Additionally, districts may place the school climate improvement plans into their district and school improvement plans.

Training

The Board shall provide resources and training to school employees regarding:

1. social and emotional learning;
2. school climate and culture and evidence and research-based interventions; and

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3. restorative practices.

Such resources and training may be made available at each school under the jurisdiction of such board and include technical assistance in the implementation of a school climate improvement plan. Any school employee may participate in any such training offered by the board under this section. The school climate coordinator shall select and approve the individuals or organizations that will provide such training.

Funding

The school district shall in its discretion allocate sufficient funding to satisfy the requirements of this policy for all schools in the district. Such funding shall be distributed accordingly, with Superintendent approval, for assessments and professional development, as well as for school community outreach, training, and technical assistance.

Accountability

The Board shall adopt and allocate adequate resources to support the Connecticut School Climate Policy and adhere to state regulations set forth in Public Act 23-167.

(cf. 0521 – Nondiscrimination)
(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
(cf. 5114.12 – Restorative Practice)
(cf. 5131 – Conduct and Discipline)
(cf. 5131.21 – Threats or Acts of Violence)
(cf. 5131.8 – Off-School Grounds Misconduct)
(cf. 5131.91 – Hazing)
(cf. 5145.45 – Nondiscrimination)
(cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)
(cf. 6121 – Nondiscrimination)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student's records. Inspection and subpoena of school or student records.

10-220a Inservice training

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

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

Policy Revised:

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
Woodbridge, Connecticut

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

10-222k District safe school climate coordinator. Safe school climate specialist. Safe school climate committee (as amended by PA 23-167, Sections 51, 52, 53)

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

10-233a through 10-233f

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

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

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

P.A. 23-167 An Act Concerning Transparency in Education

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Definitions

1. **“School climate”** means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.
2. **“Positive Sustained School Climate”** is the foundation for learning and positive youth development and includes:
 - a. Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, culturally, racially, intellectually, and physically safe.
 - b. People who treat one another with dignity and are engaged, respected and solve problems restoratively.
 - c. A school community that works collaboratively together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision.
 - d. Adults who model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning; and
 - e. A school community that contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.
3. **“Social and emotional learning”** means the process through which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.
4. **“Emotional intelligence”** means the ability to (A) perceive, recognize, and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to, reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C) understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in oneself and others.
5. **“Bullying”** means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
6. **“School environment”** means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs that occur outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program if bullying at or during such other activities, functions or programs negatively impacts the school environment.

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7. **“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 other electronic communication.
8. **“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.
9. **“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.
10. **“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.
11. **“School climate improvement plan”** means a building-specific plan developed by the school climate committee, in collaboration with the school climate specialist, using school climate survey data and any other relevant information, through a process that engages all members of the school community and involves such members in a series of overlapping systemic improvements, school-wide instructional practices and relational practices that prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment.
12. **“Restorative practices”** means evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.
13. **“School climate survey”** means a research-based, validated and developmentally appropriate survey administered to students, school employees and families of students, in the predominant languages of the members of the school community, that measures and identifies school climate needs and tracks progress through a school climate improvement plan.
14. **“Connecticut school climate policy”** means the school climate policy developed, updated and approved by an association in the state that represents boards of education and adopted by the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that provides a framework for an effective and democratically informed school climate

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improvement process that serves to implement Connecticut school climate standards, and includes a continuous cycle of (A) planning and preparation, (B) evaluation, (C) action planning, and (D) implementation.

15. **“School employee”** means (A) a teacher, substitute teacher, administrator, school superintendent, school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, school nurse, physician, paraeducator or coach employed by a local or regional board of education, 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 school, pursuant to a contract with a local or regional board of education.
16. **“School community”** means any individuals, groups, businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.
17. **“Challenging behavior”** means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.
18. **“Evidence Based Practices”** in education refers to instructional and school-wide improvement practices that systematic empirical research has provided evidence of statistically significant effectiveness.
19. **“Effective School Climate Improvement”** is a restorative process that engages all stakeholders in the following six essential practices:
 - a. Promoting decision-making that is collaborative and actively involves all stakeholders (e.g., school personnel, students, families, community members) with varied and meaningful roles and perspectives where all voices are heard;
 - b. Utilizing psychometrically sound quantitative (e.g., school climate survey, discipline data) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups) data to drive action planning, preventive and intervention practices and implementation strategies that continuously improve all dimensions of school climate, including regularly collecting data to evaluate progress and inform the improvement process;
 - c. Tailoring improvement goals to the unique needs of the students, educators, and broader school community. These goals shall be integrated into overall school improvement efforts thereby leveraging school strengths to address evidence-based areas of need, while sustaining the improvement process over time;

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- d. Fostering adult learning in teams and/or professional learning communities to build capacity building among school personnel and develop common staff skills to educate the whole child;
- e. Basing curriculum, instruction, student supports, and interventions on scientific research and grounding in cognitive, social-emotional, and psychological theories of youth development. Interventions include strength-based programs and practices that together represent a comprehensive continuum of approaches to promote healthy student development and positive learning environments as well as address individual student barriers to learning and adult barriers to teaching; and
- f. Strengthening policies and procedures related to:
 - i. climate and restorative informed teaching and learning environments;
 - ii. infrastructure to facilitate data collection, analysis, and effective planning;
 - iii. implementation of school climate improvement plans with the goal of becoming restorative;
 - iv. evaluation of the school climate improvement process; and
 - v. sustainability of school climate and restorative improvement efforts.

Connecticut School Climate Policy

This narrative to be included with the policy.

This Connecticut School Climate Policy was developed by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) with technical and substantive guidance from the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity (CWCSEO) and other members of the statewide Social Emotional Learning and School Climate Collaborative.²

The policy was developed to provide districts guidance on recent revisions to Connecticut's school climate law, Public Act 23-167. In accordance with [Public Act 23-167, An Act Concerning Transparency in Education](#), for the school years commencing July 1, 2023, and July 1, 2024, each local and regional board of education **may adopt** and implement the Connecticut School Climate Policy, in lieu of implementing the provisions of sections 10-222d, 10-222g to 10-222i, inclusive, 10-222k and 10-222p of the general statutes.

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, **each local and regional board of education shall adopt** and implement the Connecticut School Climate Policy.

This policy **does not modify or eliminate** any rights or obligations under state and federal laws, including any constitutional and civil rights protections or any other applicable policies and procedures or collective bargaining agreements.

December 2023

² Chapter 170 – Boards of Education (ct.gov)

A mandated policy.

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

Policy Statement

All schools must support and promote teaching and learning environments where all students thrive academically and socially, have a strong and meaningful voice, and are prepared for lifelong success.

Implementation of the following set of guiding principles and systemic strategies will promote a positive school climate, which is essential to achieving these goals.

This policy sets forth the framework for an effective and informed school climate improvement process, which includes a continuous cycle of (i) planning and preparation, (ii) evaluation, (iii) action planning, and (iv) implementation, and serves to actualize the Connecticut School Climate Standards, as detailed herein.

The Board recognizes that improving school climate is contextual. Each school needs to consider its history, strengths, needs, and goals. Furthermore, this policy will support and promote the development of restorative action plans that will create and sustain safe and equitable learning environments.

The _____ District Board of Education adopts this policy.

Definitions

1. **“School climate”** means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.
2. **“Positive Sustained School Climate”** is the foundation for learning and positive youth development and includes:
 - a. Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, culturally, racially, intellectually, and physically safe.
 - b. People who treat one another with dignity and are engaged, respected and solve problems restoratively.
 - c. A school community that works collaboratively together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision.
 - d. Adults who model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning; and
 - e. A school community that contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

3. **“Social and emotional learning”** means the process through which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.
4. **“Emotional intelligence”** means the ability to (A) perceive, recognize, and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to, reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C) understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in oneself and others.
5. **“Bullying”** means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
6. **“School environment”** means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs that occur outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program if bullying at or during such other activities, functions or programs negatively impacts the school environment.
7. **“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 other electronic communication.
8. **“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.
9. **“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.
10. **“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.

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

11. **“School climate improvement plan”** means a building-specific plan developed by the school climate committee, in collaboration with the school climate specialist, using school climate survey data and any other relevant information, through a process that engages all members of the school community and involves such members in a series of overlapping systemic improvements, school-wide instructional practices and relational practices that prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment.
12. **“Restorative practices”** means evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.
13. **“School climate survey”** means a research-based, validated and developmentally appropriate survey administered to students, school employees and families of students, in the predominant languages of the members of the school community, that measures and identifies school climate needs and tracks progress through a school climate improvement plan.
14. **“Connecticut school climate policy”** means the school climate policy developed, updated and approved by an association in the state that represents boards of education and adopted by the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that provides a framework for an effective and democratically informed school climate improvement process that serves to implement Connecticut school climate standards, and includes a continuous cycle of (A) planning and preparation, (B) evaluation, (C) action planning, and (D) implementation.
15. **“School employee”** means (A) a teacher, substitute teacher, administrator, school superintendent, school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, school nurse, physician, paraeducator or coach employed by a local or regional board of education, 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 school, pursuant to a contract with a local or regional board of education.
16. **“School community”** means any individuals, groups, businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

17. **“Challenging behavior”** means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.
18. **“Evidence Based Practices”** in education refers to instructional and school-wide improvement practices that systematic empirical research has provided evidence of statistically significant effectiveness.
19. **“Effective School Climate Improvement”** is a restorative process that engages all stakeholders in the following six essential practices:
 - A. Promoting decision-making that is collaborative and actively involves all stakeholders (e.g., school personnel, students, families, community members) with varied and meaningful roles and perspectives where all voices are heard;
 - B. Utilizing psychometrically sound quantitative (e.g., school climate survey, discipline data) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups) data to drive action planning, preventive and intervention practices and implementation strategies that continuously improve all dimensions of school climate, including regularly collecting data to evaluate progress and inform the improvement process;
 - C. Tailoring improvement goals to the unique needs of the students, educators, and broader school community. These goals shall be integrated into overall school improvement efforts thereby leveraging school strengths to address evidence-based areas of need, while sustaining the improvement process over time;
 - D. Fostering adult learning in teams and/or professional learning communities to build capacity building among school personnel and develop common staff skills to educate the whole child;
 - E. Basing curriculum, instruction, student supports, and interventions on scientific research and grounding in cognitive, social-emotional, and psychological theories of youth development. Interventions include strength-based programs and practices that together represent a comprehensive continuum of approaches to promote healthy student development and positive learning environments as well as address individual student barriers to learning and adult barriers to teaching; and
 - F. Strengthening policies and procedures related to:
 - a. climate and restorative informed teaching and learning environments;
 - b. infrastructure to facilitate data collection, analysis, and effective planning;
 - c. implementation of school climate improvement plans with the goal of becoming restorative;
 - d. evaluation of the school climate improvement process; and
 - e. sustainability of school climate and restorative improvement efforts.

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Connecticut School Climate Policy (continued)

School Climate Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the superintendent of schools for each school district, or an administrator appointed by the superintendent, shall serve as the school climate coordinator for the school district.

The school climate coordinator shall be responsible for:

1. providing district-level leadership and support for the implementation of the school climate improvement plan for each school;
2. collaborating with the school climate specialist, for each school to (A) develop a continuum of strategies to prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment, and (B) communicate such strategies to the school community, including, but not limited to, through publication in the district student handbook;
3. collecting and maintaining data regarding school climate improvement, including, but not limited to, school discipline records, school climate assessments, attendance rates, social and emotional learning assessments, academic growth data, types and numbers of alleged and verified bullying complaints submitted by members of the school community, types and numbers of challenging behaviors addressed using the restorative practices response policy, and data concerning the implementation and outcome of restorative practices; and
4. meeting with the school climate specialist for each school at least twice during the school year to (A) identify strategies to improve school climate, including, but not limited to, by responding to challenging behavior and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, such as restorative practices, (B) propose recommendations for revisions to the school climate improvement plan, and (C) assist with the completion of the school climate survey.

School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the principal of each school, or a school employee who holds professional certification pursuant to section 10-145 of the general statutes, is trained in school climate improvement or restorative practices and is designated as the school climate specialist by the school principal, shall serve as the school climate specialist for the school.

The school climate specialist shall be responsible for:

1. leading in the prevention, identification, and response to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, reports of alleged bullying and harassment;

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

School Climate Specialist (continued)

2. implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices;
3. scheduling meetings for and leading the school climate committee; and
4. leading the implementation of the school climate improvement plan.

School Climate Committee

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, each school climate specialist shall appoint members to the school climate committee who are diverse, including members who are racially, culturally, and linguistically representative of various roles in the school community.

The school climate committee shall consist of:

1. the school climate specialist;
2. a teacher selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees chosen pursuant to section 10-153b of the general statutes;
3. a demographically representative group of students enrolled at the school, as developmentally appropriate;
4. families of students enrolled at the school; and
5. at least two members of the school community, as determined by the school climate specialist.

Membership of the school climate committee shall be annually reviewed and approved by the school climate specialist, in coordination with the school climate coordinator.

The school climate committee shall be responsible for:

1. assisting in the development, annual scheduling, and administration of the school climate survey, and reviewing of the school climate survey data.
2. using the school climate survey data to identify strengths and challenges to improve school climate, and to create or propose revisions to the school climate improvement plan.

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

School Climate Committee (continued)

3. assisting in the implementation of the school climate improvement plan and recommending any improvements or revisions to the plan.
4. advising on strategies to improve school climate and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices, in the school community.
5. annually providing notice of the uniform challenging behavior and/or bullying complaint form, or similar complaint form used by the school, to the school community.

School Climate Survey

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and biennially thereafter, the school climate committee, for each school, shall administer a school climate survey to students, school employees and families of students, provided the parent or guardian of each student shall receive prior written notice of the content and administration of such school climate survey and shall have a reasonable opportunity to opt such student out of such school climate survey.

School Climate Improvement Plan

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the school climate specialist, for each school, in collaboration with the school climate coordinator, shall develop, and update as necessary, a school climate improvement plan. Such plan shall be based on the results of the school climate survey, any recommendations from the school climate committee, including the protocols, supports, and any other data the school climate specialist and school climate coordinator deem relevant. Such plan shall be submitted to the school climate coordinator for review and approval on or before December thirty-first of each school year. Upon approval of such plan, a written or electronic copy of such plan shall be made available to members of the school community and such plan shall be used in the prevention of, identification of and response to all challenging behavior.

Additionally, districts may place the school climate improvement plans into their district and school improvement plans.

Training

For the school year commencing July 1, 2024, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional Board of Education shall provide resources and training to school employees regarding:

1. social and emotional learning;
2. school climate and culture and evidence and research-based interventions; and
3. restorative practices.

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

Training (continued)

Such resources and training may be made available at each school under the jurisdiction of such board and include technical assistance in the implementation of a school climate improvement plan. Any school employee may participate in any such training offered by the board under this section. The school climate coordinator, shall select, and approve, the individuals or organizations that will provide such training.

Funding

The school district shall in its discretion allocate sufficient funding to satisfy the requirements of this policy for all schools in the district. Such funding shall be distributed accordingly, with Superintendent approval, for assessments and professional development, as well as for school community outreach, training, and technical assistance.

Accountability

The Board shall adopt and allocate adequate resources to support the Connecticut School Climate Policy and adhere to state regulations set forth in Public Act 23-167.

Connecticut School Climate Standards

1. The school district community³ has a shared vision and plan for promoting and sustaining a positive school climate⁴ that focuses on prevention, identification, and response to all challenging behavior⁵.
2. The school district community adopts policies that promote:
 - a. a sound school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills; and
 - b. a restorative school environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships, and intentionally re-engaging any disengaged students, educators, and families of students in the school community.

³ School Community means any individuals, groups or businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.

⁴ School climate means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life, and that reflects the norms, goals, values and interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.

⁵ Challenging behavior means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

Connecticut School Climate Standards (continued)

3. The school community's practices are identified, prioritized, and supported to:
 - a. promote learning and the positive academic, social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students;
 - b. enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities;
 - c. address barriers to teaching and learning; and
 - d. develop and sustain a restorative infrastructure that builds capacity, accountability, and sustainability.
4. The school community creates a school environment⁶ where *everyone* is safe, welcomed, supported, and included in all school-based activities.
5. The school community creates a restorative system that cultivates a sense of belonging through norms and activities that promote social and civic responsibility, and a dedication to cultural responsiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Policy adopted:

cps 11/23

⁶ School environment means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs if bullying at or during such other activities, functions, or programs negatively impacts the school environment.