

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY

The Rocky Hill Board of Education (the “Board”) is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment within the Rocky Hill Public Schools (the “District”) that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe and thus free from bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and discrimination. In accordance with state law and the Board’s Safe School Climate Plan, the Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by Board.

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. Discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying is likewise prohibited.

Students who engage in bullying behavior or teen dating violence 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.

For purposes of this policy, “**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 physical or emotional harm; or
- (3) infringes on the rights or opportunities of an individual at school.

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.

For purposes of this policy, “**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.

For purposes of this policy, “**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.

For purposes of this policy, “**Discrimination**” means unlawful discrimination that occurs when a student is denied participation in, or the benefits of, a program or activity of the Board because of such student’s actual or perceived race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status as a victim of domestic violence or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law (“Protected Class”).

For purposes of this policy, “**Harassment**” is a form of Protected Class discrimination that is prohibited by law and by this policy. Harassment constitutes unlawful discrimination when it creates a hostile environment, which occurs when the harassment is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment may be an act of bullying.

Consistent with the requirements under state law, the Board authorizes the Superintendent or designee(s), along with the Safe School Climate Coordinator, to be responsible for developing and implementing a Safe School Climate Plan in furtherance of this policy. As provided by state law, such Safe School Climate Plan shall include, but not be limited to provisions which:

- (1) enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees and require students and the parents or guardians of students to be notified at the beginning of each school year of the process by which students may make such reports;
- (2) enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying;
- (3) require school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying to orally notify the safe school climate specialist, or another school administrator if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report;
- (4) require the safe school climate specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports made under this section and that the parents or guardians of the 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 receive prompt notice that such investigation has commenced;
- (5) require the safe school climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
- (6) include a prevention and intervention strategy for school employees to deal with bullying and teen dating violence;

- (7) provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;
- (8) require each school and/or alternative school program operated by the Board (“alternative school program”) to notify the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation described in subdivision (4), above; (A) of the results of such investigation, and (B) 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. Section 10-4a and 10-4b published on the Internet website of the Board;
- (9) require each school and/or alternative school program to invite the parents or guardians of a student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school and/or alternative school program to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed and policies and procedures in place designed to prevent further acts of bullying;
- (10) require each school and/or alternative school program to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying to a meeting, separate and distinct from the meeting required in subdivision (9) above, to discuss specific interventions undertaken by the school and/or alternative school program to prevent further acts of bullying;
- (11) establish a procedure for each school and/or alternative school program to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and/or alternative school program and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and/or alternative school program and make such list available for public inspection, and annually report such number to the Department of Education and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
- (12) direct the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
- (13) prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
- (14) direct the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that address safety measures the school and/or alternative school program will take designed to protect such students against further acts of bullying;
- (15) require the responsible administrator of a school and/or alternative school program, or designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such responsible administrator, or designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;

- (16) prohibit bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board, and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, or (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;
- (17) require, at the beginning of each school year, each school and/or alternative school program to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the District's safe school climate plan; and
- (18) require that all school employees annually complete the training described in Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 10-220a or 10-222j related to the identification, prevention and response to bullying.

The notification required pursuant to subdivision (8) (above) and the invitation required pursuant to subdivisions (9) and (10) (above) shall include a description of the response of school employees to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying. Any information provided under this policy or accompanying Safe School Climate Plan shall be provided in accordance with the confidentiality restrictions imposed under the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act ("FERPA") and the District's Confidentiality and Access to Student Information policy and regulations.

The Board shall submit its Safe School Climate Plan to the Connecticut State Department of Education (the "Department") for review and approval. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days after approval by the Department, the Board shall make such plan available on the Board's and each individual school or alternative school program in the District's web site and ensure that the Safe School Climate Plan is included in the District's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and alternative programs operated by the Board and in all student handbooks.

As required by state law, the Board, after consultation with the Department and the Connecticut Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative (the "Collaborative"), shall provide on the Board's 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.

As required by state law, the Board shall post on its website the plan language explanation of rights and remedies under Connecticut General Statutes §§ 10-4a and 10-4b, as developed and provided to the Board by the Collaborative.

Legal References:

Public Act 21-95
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-145a
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-145o
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-220a
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222d
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222g
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222h
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222j
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222k
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222l
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222q
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222r
Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 10-233a through 10-233f

**SERIES 5000 – STUDENTS
REPORT OF SUSPECTED BULLYING BEHAVIORS
OR TEEN DATING VIOLENCE (Continued)**

5310 – APPENDIX 1

Indicate if there are witnesses who can provide more information regarding your report. If the witnesses are not school district staff or students, please provide contact information.

Name	Address	Telephone Number	Email Address
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Have there been previous incidents (circle one)? Yes No

If “yes”, please describe the behavior of concern, or the violence that occurred; include the approximate date(s) and the location(s):

Were these incidents reported to school employees (circle one) Yes No

If “Yes”, to whom was it reported and when?

Was the report verbal or written?

Proposed Solution:

Indicate your opinion on how this problem might be resolved in the school setting. Be as specific as possible.

I certify that the above information and events are accurately depicted to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Reporter Date Submitted Received By Date Received

INTERNAL INVESTIGATION NOTES FOR REPORTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIORS

For Staff Use Only:

Has student reporter requested anonymity? Y N

Does the school or program have parent/guardian consent to disclose that a complaint as to this student has been filed in connection with the investigation? Y N

Administrative Investigation Notes (use separate sheet if necessary):

Bullying Verified? Yes ___ No ___

Remedial Action(s) Taken:

(Attach bullying complaint and witness statements. If bullying is verified, attach notification to parents of students involved, invitation to parent meetings, and records of parent meetings).

ROCKY HILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REPORT OF BULLYING FORM/INVESTIGATION SUMMARY

For Staff Use Only:

School _____ Date _____

Location(s) _____

Reporter Information:

Anonymous student report _____

Employee report _____ Name _____

Parent/Guardian report _____ Name _____

Student report _____ Name _____

Student Reported as Committing Act: _____

Student Reported as Victim: _____

Description of Alleged Act(s): _____

Time and Place: _____

Names of Potential Witnesses: _____

Action of Reporter: _____

Administrative Investigation Notes (use separate sheet if necessary):

Bullying Verified? Yes ____ No ____

**SERIES 5000 – STUDENTS
REPORT OF BULLYING FORM/INVESTIGATION
SUMMARY (Continued)**

5310 – APPENDIX III

Remedial Action(s) Taken: _____

If Bullying Verified, Has Notification Been Made to Parents of Students Involved?

Parents' Names: _____	Date Sent: _____
Parents' Names: _____	Date Sent: _____
Parents' Names: _____	Date Sent: _____
Parents' Names: _____	Date Sent: _____

If Bullying Verified, Have Invitation to Meetings Been Sent to Parents of Students Involved?

Parents' Names: _____	Date Sent: _____
Parents' Names: _____	Date Sent: _____
Parents' Names: _____	Date Sent: _____
Parents' Names: _____	Date Sent: _____

Date of Meetings: _____

If Bullying Verified, Has School or Program Developed Student Safety Support/Intervention Plan?

Y N

(Attach bullying complaint and witness statements. If bullying is verified, attach: 1) notification to parents of students involved that includes a description of the school or program's response to the acts of bullying, the results of the investigation, and via email if email addresses are known, a statement that the parents may refer to the plain language explanation of rights and remedies available under Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 10-4a and 10-4b once such explanation has been provided to the Board by the Connecticut Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative and published on the District's website; 2) invitations to parent meetings; and 3) and records of parent meetings).

