



# **East Hampton Public Schools**

## **Safe School Climate Plan**

March 2018

**East Hampton Public Schools**  
**94 Main Street**  
**East Hampton, Connecticut 06424**



## **Mission of the East Hampton Public Schools**

The mission of East Hampton Public Schools in partnership with our community is to develop knowledgeable, responsible, productive citizens who effectively demonstrate problem-solving and communication skills, make informed decisions and respond appropriately and confidently to life's challenges.

## **Vision Statement of the East Hampton Public Schools**

Preparing and inspiring our students to be innovative, responsible, contributing members of an ever-changing global society.

## Providing a Safe Learning Environment For Every Child

### Our Beliefs:

- We believe all individuals can learn.
- We believe high expectations drive high achievement.
- We believe family and community, in partnership, play an essential role in the development and education of a child.
- We believe kindness, respect, and compassion enhance life and improve performance.
- We believe that growth occurs when independent thinking, creativity, and appropriate risk taking are encouraged.
- We believe valuing and nurturing diversity promotes learning.
- We believe everyone has the ability and responsibility to make a positive difference.
- We believe that positive self-image is built through high expectations, honesty and accomplishment.
- We believe that knowledge and skills acquired should be relevant and adaptable for lifelong learning.
- We believe all students should have equitable access to educational opportunities.
- We believe in promoting a healthy life.
- We believe that collaboration and commitment promote the common good.

The East Hampton Board of Education and the school community as a whole promote a secure and productive school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment, any type of bullying behavior, and teen dating violence.

Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying and/or teen dating violence committed against a student by another student is prohibited.

The Board believes that a school environment in which students feel safe, supported, engaged and helpfully challenged is optimal for learning and healthy development.

The Board seeks an environment in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe; an environment that is free of harassment, intimidation, teen dating violence and bullying.

The plan outlined below is meant to support the creation and sustainability of such an environment.

## Safe School Climate Plan

The East Hampton Public Schools adopts this plan that is guided by the fundamental belief that each and every school community member should be treated with dignity, should have the opportunity to learn, work, interact, and socialize in physically, emotionally and intellectually safe respectful and positive school environments as well as the opportunity to experience high quality relationships. Schools, therefore, have the responsibility to promote conditions designed to create maintain, and nurture positive school climate.

The Board is committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and discrimination. In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, the Board has developed the following Safe School Climate 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 creating a positive school climate and thus preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying and teen dating violence.

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 will not be tolerated by students or school staff.

## Prohibition Against Bullying, Teen Dating Violence, and Retaliation

- 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 East Hampton Board of Education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the East Hampton Board of Education.
- 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.
- The Board further prohibits any form of teen dating violence outside of the school setting if such violence substantially disrupts the educational process.
- In addition to prohibiting student acts that constitute bullying, the Board also prohibits discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying.
- 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.

## Definition of Bullying

- **“Bullying”** means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same district that:
  - causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property;
  - places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
  - creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
  - infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
  - substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating 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.

Examples of bullying behavior include, but are not limited to:

- physical violence and attacks;
- verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs;
- threats and intimidation;
- extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions;
- exclusion from peer groups within the school; or
- the misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school (“cyberbullying”).

Such conduct is disruptive of the educational process and, therefore, bullying is not acceptable behavior in this district and is prohibited.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

- creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school,

are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

A comprehensive program, to improve the school climate, involving everyone in the schools and the community, to address bullying at all school levels is essential to reducing incidences of bullying. Such a program must involve interventions at all levels, school wide, classroom and individual.

## Other Definitions

- **“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.
- **“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.
- **“Hostile environment”** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.
- **“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 cell phone, 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.
- **“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.
- **“Prevention and intervention strategy”** may include, but is not limited to, (1) implementation of a positive behavioral intervention and support process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying identified by the Department of Education, (2) school rules prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation and 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 anti-bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school, (5) individual interventions with the bully, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied child, parents and school employees, (6) school-wide training related to safe school climate, (7) student peer training, education and support, and (8) promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions.
- **“School climate”** means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults (and reflects norms, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures).
- **“School employee”** means (a) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (b) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students

enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education.

- **“School-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.
- **“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.

## Safe School Climate Coordinator

The Superintendent shall appoint, from existing school district staff, a District Safe School Climate Coordinator (“Coordinator”). The Coordinator shall:

- Implement the District’s safe school climate plan;
- Collaborate with safe school climate specialists, the Board, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying and teen dating violence in District schools;
- Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education;
- Respond to bullying and teen dating violence in District schools;
- Meet with the safe school climate specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying and teen dating violence issues in the District and make recommended changes to the District’s safe school climate plan; and
- Successfully complete, the mental health first aid training provided by the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services. (Such training only required once.)

## Safe School Climate Specialist

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

- Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school in accordance with the District’s Safe School Climate Plan;
- Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in the school; and
- Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying and teen dating violence reports in the school.



## Safe School Climate Committee

The Principal of each District school shall establish a committee or designate at least one existing committee that is responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying in the school. The committee must include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, appointed by the Principal. The Safe School Climate Committee shall:

- Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying;
- Identify and address patterns of bullying and teen dating violence among students in the school;
- Implement the provisions of the school security and safety plan, (developed pursuant to Section 87 of PA 13-3) 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 (defined in Connecticut General Statutes 10-222d) and report such information, as necessary, to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator and to the school's security and safety committee;
- Review and amend school policies relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
- Review and make recommendation to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator regarding the District's Safe Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
- Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
- Collaborate with the District Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and teen dating violence; and
- Perform any other duties as determined by the School Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence for the school.

Parent members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #3 or any other activity that may compromise the confidentiality of a student.

## Safe School Climate Plan 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. Such reports may be filed with any building administrator and/or the Safe School Climate Specialist (i.e. building principal), and all reports 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 on the basis of 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. In order 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.

## 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 hours after the investigation is completed. This notification shall include a description of the school's response to the acts of bullying. In providing such notification, however, care must be taken 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.
- 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 his/her 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.

- 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.

## 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 the district's schools. Discipline, up to and including expulsion, may be imposed against the perpetrator of teen dating violence, whether such conduct occurs on or off campus, in accordance with Board policy and consistent with federal and state law.

## Documentation and Maintenance of Log

- A. Each school shall maintain written reports of bullying, 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.

## 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 on the basis of 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 by the administration / School Climate Specialist 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:
  - i. 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 may be counseled 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.

## ii. 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.

## iii. Interventions for bullied students and victims of teen dating violence

The building principal (or other responsible program administrator) or his/her designee shall intervene in order 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:

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

## iv. 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:

- School rules prohibiting bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts;
- Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and intimidation are likely to occur;
- 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;
- Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student, parents and school employees;
- School-wide training related to safe school climate, which training may include Title IX/Sexual harassment training, Section 504/ADA Training, cultural diversity/multicultural education or other training in federal and state civil rights legislation or other topics relevant to safe school climate;
- Student peer training, education and support;
- Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
- 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;
- Respectful responses to bullying and teen dating violence concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
- Planned professional development programs addressing prevention and intervention strategies, including training in the following areas: school violence prevention, conflict resolution and prevention of bullying and teen dating violence, with a focus on evidence based practices concerning same;
- Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- Avoidance of gender stereotyping;
- Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of school employees and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;

- Modeling by teachers of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
  - Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;
  - Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere; and
  - 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.

## **Improving School Climate**

The East Hampton 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 promotes the development of healthy behaviors and relationships, and respecting others in person and through social media. District staff including school psychologists, counselors, social workers, teachers and administrators 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.

## **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. 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.

## **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.

### **Accountability:**

- A. The Board shall establish, foster, support and maintain a "no fault" framework and promote a culture of trust. Such a framework and culture is evident by a shared intent to:
  1. Take collective responsibility for what has been accomplished and/or not accomplished;
  2. Learn from what has and has not been successful;
  3. Work together to improve the quality and character of school life;
  4. Create a highly effective learning community whose responsibility it is to:
    - Establish norms, values and goals that encourage and support collaborative and courageous leadership;
    - Model and provide high quality academic, social, emotional and ethical learning; and
    - Engage in ongoing reflection and evaluation.
- B. The Board shall hold itself, its individual members, and the Superintendent to the standards of this Policy and promote its intent and goals.
- C. The Superintendent shall hold himself/herself, the staff, the students and other members of the school community to the standards of this Policy.



## East Hampton Public Schools REPORT OF SUSPECTED BULLYING BEHAVIORS

Name of person completing report: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person who is the target of behaviors: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of reporter to target (parent, teacher, peer, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to remain anonymous (circle one)?      **Yes**              **No**

Name of person against who this complaint is filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Location(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Specify your complaint by stating the problem as you see it. Describe the incident(s), participants, background to the incident, and any attempts you have made to resolve the problem. Please note relevant dates, times and places (attach additional pages if necessary). \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name	Address	Telephone Number
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Have there been previous incidents (circle one)?      **Yes**      **No**

If “yes”, please describe the behavior of concern, the approximate dates and the location:

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Were these incidents reported to school personnel (circle one)?      **Yes**      **No**

If “Yes”, to whom was it reported? \_\_\_\_\_

Was the report verbal or written? \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Solution:**

Indicate your opinion on how this problem might be resolved. Be as specific as possible.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Submitted

\_\_\_\_\_  
Received By

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Received



**East Hampton Public Schools  
REPORT OF SUSPECTED BULLYING BEHAVIORS**

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reporter Information:**

Anonymous student report \_\_\_\_\_

Staff member report \_\_\_\_\_

Parent report \_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student reported as committing act: \_\_\_\_\_

Student reported as victim: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of alleged acts: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time and place: \_\_\_\_\_

Potential Witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**For staff use only:**

Investigated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Investigation notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Bullying Verified?    **Yes**                      **No**

\_\_\_\_\_

**If bullying is not verified based on the results of the investigation:**

- Safe School Climate Specialist / Principal contacts parent/guardian of complainant and the complainant no later than 48 hours after investigation to invite parents to meeting.
- Measures shared to ensure safe school climate for complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Safe School Climate Specialist / Principal contacts parent/guardian of accused and the accused no later than 48 hours after investigation to invite parents to meeting.
- Description of infraction committed by accused student (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

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- Disciplinary action per code of conduct: \_\_\_\_\_

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**If bullying is verified based on the results of the investigation:**

- Safe School Climate Specialist / Principal contacts parent/guardian of complainant and the complainant no later than 48 hours after investigation to invite parents to meeting.
- Measures shared to ensure safe school climate for complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Safe School Climate Specialist / Principal contacts parent/guardian of accused and the accused no later than 48 hours after investigation to invite parents to meeting.
- Measures and/or actions taken to prevent further acts of bullying by the accused: \_\_\_\_\_

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- Disciplinary action per code of conduct: \_\_\_\_\_

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**East Hampton Public Schools  
CONSENT TO RELEASE STUDENT INFORMATION**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

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To Parent/Guardian:

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

(Please check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for the East Hampton Public Schools to disclose my child's name, along with any other information necessary to permit the district to adequately and appropriately investigate such complaint, to third parties contacted by the district as part of its investigation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do NOT give permission for the East Hampton Public Schools to disclose my child's name, along with any other information necessary to permit the district to adequately and appropriately investigate such complaint, to third parties contacted by the district as part of its investigation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please print)



**East Hampton Public Schools  
Parent Letter Confirming Bullying (Sample)**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dear:

As I indicated during our conversation, this letter is being sent to you in response to the recent bullying incident involving your child on **(date)**. After conducting a thorough investigation of the allegations, we have determined that the complaint does involve “bullying” as defined by the district’s bullying policy #5131.911 and its administrative regulations, and as it is defined by state law, Public Act 11--232.

Although we are constrained by laws ensuring student confidentiality from discussing the specifics of discipline administered to individual students, consequences for the student who engaged in the acts of bullying will be administered in accordance with the East Hampton Public Schools Code of Conduct and Board of Education Policy.

Thank you for your assistance during this inquiry. We are committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all of our students and to maintaining a positive, collaborative relationship with parents. I encourage you to contact the school should you have further concerns.

Sincerely,



**East Hampton Public Schools  
Parent Letter Refuting Bullying (Sample)**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dear:

As I indicated during our phone conversation, this letter is being sent to you in response to the recent bullying complaint involving your child. After conducting a thorough investigation of the allegations, we have determined that your child has not been subjected to “bullying” as defined by the district’s bullying policy #5131.911 and its administrative regulations, and as it is defined by state law.

While this particular incident was not confirmed as “bullying,” I want to assure you that our school does not condone the reported behavior, and we will follow the East Hampton Public Schools disciplinary policies and procedures regarding consequences in this matter. Should you have additional concerns regarding this incident, please contact me at school.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention and for your assistance during this inquiry. We are committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all of our students and to maintaining a positive, collaborative relationship with parents. I encourage you to contact the school should you have further concerns.

Sincerely,





East Hampton Public Schools  
Parent Letter for Student Who Bullied (Sample)

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dear:

As I indicated during our conversation, this letter is being sent to you in response to the recent bullying complaint involving your child on **(date)**. After conducting a thorough investigation of the allegations, we have determined that the complaint does involve “bullying” as defined by the district’s bullying policy #5131.911 and its administrative regulations, and as it is defined by state law Public Act 11- 232. Your child was the one engaged in the act of bullying.

Your child will receive behavioral consequence(s) in accordance with the East Hampton Public Schools disciplinary policies and procedures regarding bullying. You will receive a follow-up letter which will explain the details regarding the behavioral consequence(s). We will continue to work with your child to help **(name)** make appropriate choices from this point forward.

The East Hampton Public Schools are committed to providing safe and respectful environments for all our students, and to maintaining positive, collaborative relationships with parents or guardians. Please contact your child’s school if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



**East Hampton Public Schools  
SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE CONTACTS**

**Plan updated as of: March 2018**

<b>Safe School Climate Coordinator</b>	East Hampton Public Schools	Mary Clark Director of Curriculum
<b>Safe School Climate Specialist</b>	East Hampton High School	Michael Dalton Assistant Principal
<b>Safe School Climate Specialist</b>	East Hampton Middle School	Eric Kissinger Assistant Principal
<b>Safe School Climate Specialist</b>	East Hampton Center School	Christopher Sullivan Principal
<b>Safe School Climate Specialist</b>	East Hampton Memorial School	Brandy Gadoury Assistant Principal
<b>Title IX Coordinator</b>	East Hampton Public Schools	Mary Clark Director of Curriculum
<b>Superintendent of Schools</b>	East Hampton Public Schools	Paul K. Smith
<b>Address</b>	East Hampton Superintendent's Office	94 Main Street East Hampton, CT 06424
<b>Phone Number</b>	860-365-4000	860-365-4004 (fax)
<b>Plan available on school website and in School Offices</b>	<a href="http://www.easthamptonps.org">www.easthamptonps.org</a>	