

Students

Bullying

The Barkhamsted Board of Education promotes a secure school climate conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

Bullying is defined as (A) the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyber bullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or (B) a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, or;
2. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, or;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for such student, or;
4. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or;
5. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

For the purposes of this policy, "cyber bullying" means any act of bullying through the use of the internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile phone or other mobile electronic devices, or any electronic communications.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs
3. threats and intimidation
4. extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions

Students**Bullying** (continued)

5. exclusion from peer groups within the school

Students who engage in any act of bullying while at school, while outside of school, at any school function, or in connection to or with any district sponsored activity or event are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

A safe school climate plan, involving everyone in the school community, to address bullying at all school levels shall be implemented to reduce incidences of bullying. Such a plan shall involve interventions at all levels, school-wide, classroom and individual.

The District's plan shall include, but not be limited to, provisions which:

1. Permit anonymous reports of bullying by students to school employees and written reports of suspected bullying by parents or guardians;
2. Require teachers and other school staff to orally notify the School Climate Specialist of bullying acts they witness and students' reports they receive not later than one school day after such 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;
3. Require the School Climate Specialist to investigate promptly all reports of bullying except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
4. Require the school to maintain a publicly available list of the number of verified bullying acts that occurred there and report such number to the Department of Education annually and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
5. Require the school to have a prevention and intervention strategy, as defined by statute, for school staff to deal with bullying, including language about bullying in student codes of conduct and in all student handbooks;
6. Require the school to notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying not later than 48 hours after the completion of an investigation. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and to the other parent/guardian, if requested. The notice must describe the school's response and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying;

Students**Bullying** (continued)

7. Require the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing reported incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
8. Require students and the parents or guardians of students to be notified annually of the process by which students and parents or guardians may make reports of bullying;
9. Require the identification of appropriate school personnel, which may include, staff who are responsible for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint;
10. Prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
11. Direct the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that address safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying;
12. Require the Principal, or the Principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such Principal, or the Principal's designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;
13. Require, at the beginning of each school year, the school administration to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's Safe School Climate Plan; and
14. Require that all school employees annually complete the training described in Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-220a.

Not later than January 1, 2012, the Barkhamsted Board of Education shall approve the Safe School Climate Plan developed pursuant to this policy and submit such plan to the Department of Education. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days after approval by the Board, the Board shall make such plan available on the school district's website and ensure that the Safe School Climate Plan is included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for the school and in all student handbooks.

Students

Bullying (continued)

- (cf. 0521 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5114 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
- (cf. 5131 – Conduct)
- (cf. 5131.21 – Violent and Aggressive Behavior)
- (cf. 5131.8 – Out-of-School Misconduct)
- (cf. 5131.912 – Aggressive Behavior)
- (cf. 5131.91 – Hazing)
- (cf. 5144 – Discipline/Punishment)
- (cf. 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.51 – Peer Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 6121 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 6121.1 – Equal Educational Opportunity)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student’s records. Inspection and subpoena of school or student records.
10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160.
PA 06-115 An Act Concerning Bullying Policies in Schools and Notices Sent to Parents or Legal Guardians.

Policy revision adopted: 1/09
Policy revision proposed: 12/11
Policy revision adopted: 1/12