

Students

Bullying, Teen Dating Violence, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention and Intervention

The Newtown Board of Education (the “Board”) is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe and thus free from bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and discrimination.

Definitions

Diversity Characteristics: Diversity Characteristics as set forth in Policy 0523 include, but not limited to, race, culture, color, creed or religion, ancestry, national origin, mental and physical ability, age, marital status, physical appearance, family structure, citizenship status, sexual orientation, alienage, gender expression or identity, economic status, veteran’s status, and any other protected class in conformance with federal, state and local laws.

Bullying: 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, including but need not be limited to intimidation, humiliation, and/or verbal or physical abuse;
- (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.

Teen Dating Violence: 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.

Harassment: For the purposes of this policy, harassment is any unwelcome conduct on the basis of one or more Diversity Characteristics that creates a hostile environment, which occurs when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by the school. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Discrimination: With respect to students, unlawful discrimination occurs when a student is denied participation in, or the benefits of, a program or activity of the Board because of one of more Diversity Characteristics.

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Defintions (continued)

Cyberbullying: For purposes of this policy, “Cyberbullying” means any act of bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and discrimination through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

In accordance with state law and the Board’s Safe School Climate Plan, the Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior, teen dating violence, harassment or discrimination 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; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device.

The Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior, teen dating violence, harassment or discrimination outside of the school setting if such action (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such action was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such action 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, teen dating violence, harassment or discrimination is likewise prohibited.

Students who engage in bullying behavior, teen dating violence, harassment or discrimination 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.

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, implementing, and periodically reviewing a Safe School Climate Plan in furtherance of this policy, pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 10-222d(b) as amended.

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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, implementing, and periodically reviewing a Safe School Climate Plan in furtherance of this policy, pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 10-222d(b) as amended.

The Board shall make such plan available on the Board's and each individual school's web site 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 schools and in all student handbooks. In addition, the district shall post training materials to school administrators regarding the prevention of and intervention in discrimination against and targeted harassment of students, pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 10-222s as amended.

cf: 0523 – Equity and Diversity
 5145.42 – Racial Harassment of Students
 5145.53 – Transgender and gender Non-Conforming Youth
 5145.5 – Sexual Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Legal References:

Public Act 19-166
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