

Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools

Bullying Prevention Plan

The Regional School District 18 Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. In accordance with state law, the Board's Safe School Climate Plan, and Board of Education Policy #2305, Regional School District 18 has developed and implemented this Bullying Prevention Plan.

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 school district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school 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, 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

Dissemination of Information

Parents and staff are notified of the Regional School District Board of Education's policy and procedures related to safe school climate through the annual distribution of parent and/or student handbooks, and staff handbooks. District policies and the Safe School Climate Plan, including this Bullying Prevention Plan, are available on the district website, in each school and at the Superintendent's Office.

Prevention Strategies

Regional School District 18 has established this "Bullying Prevention Plan" to address bullying and harassment. School rules and policies prohibit bullying and harassment and provide for appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts. The K-12 health curriculum provides appropriate instruction in bullying prevention at each grade level. Appropriate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, lunchrooms and other designated areas is provided at all schools. Staff development is provided for all staff annually.

Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Bullying

Reporting

Students and parents/guardians 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 (building principal).

Students may also make anonymous reports of bullying to any school employee. Should a student request anonymity when making a report, 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. Anonymous complaints 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 complaint, 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 complaint.

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.

Investigating

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. (Investigation Report I will be completed by the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee. Investigation Report II will be completed by the Safe School Climate Specialist, in collaboration with another member of the building Safe School Climate Committee.) 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.

Notification to Parents

Upon confirmation of any Verified Act of Bullying, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will notify the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of the student(s) who committed the act, and parent(s)/guardian(s) of the victim(s) **not later than 48 hours** after completion of the investigation. These parent(s)/guardian(s) will be invited to separate meetings to communicate the measures being taken to ensure the student(s)' safety and prevent further acts of bullying.

Maintaining Records

The Safe School Climate Specialist will document the investigation and response of each written report of bullying and maintain an office record of all reported incidents along with the follow-up documentation (Investigation Report I and II). School administrators will also maintain a master list indicating the number of verified bullying acts which is available for public inspection upon request.

School District Actions/Interventions

Bullying behavior 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. While conduct that rises to the level of “bullying”, as defined above, will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying, 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.

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. This plan may include safety provisions for students against whom acts of bullying have been verified and may include other interventions such as counseling, discipline, and other appropriate remedial actions as determined by the responsible administrator.

See the attached APPENDIX for a list of Prevention and Intervention Strategies.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying shall not be used by the Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools to affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments. Any student or staff member who is found to have retaliated will be disciplined.



Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools Bullying Report

School: _____

Student(s) allegedly bullied: _____ Grade: _____

Alleged Perpetrator(s): _____ Grade: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Site of Incident: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Incident reported by: _____ Title: _____

Witnesses: _____

Description of the incident, including events leading up to the incident if known (cont. on reverse if additional space needed):

Administrator who was verbally informed of the incident (if informed prior to receipt of report):

Name: _____ Title: _____

Date Administrator was verbally informed: _____

This form completed by:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

This report should be submitted to your building's Safe School Climate Specialist (building principal) for investigation purposes



Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools Bullying Report Investigation Investigation Report (Part I)

(To be completed by Safe School Climate Specialist or designee)

School: _____

Student(s) allegedly bullied: _____ Grade: _____

Alleged Perpetrator(s): _____ Grade: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Site of Incident: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Incident reported by: _____ Title: _____

Persons interviewed:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Description of the incident, as established by investigation:

History of behaviors and/or incidents relevant to this incident:

Administrator who was verbally informed of the incident:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Date Administrator was verbally informed: _____

This form completed by:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

This report should be submitted to your building's Safe School Climate Specialist (building principal) for the outcome determination and completion of the Bullying Report Outcome form.



Lyme-Old Lyme Public Schools

Bullying Report Outcome

Investigation Report (Part II)

(To be completed by the Safe School Climate Specialist in collaboration with another Safe School Climate Committee member)

SSCS: _____ Collaborator: _____

School: _____

Student(s) allegedly bullied: _____ Grade: _____

Alleged Perpetrator(s): _____ Grade: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Date Report Received: _____

Date Investigation Completed: _____

Based on the definition of bullying and the subsequent investigation, this incident constitutes:

- An incident that does not meet bullying criteria
- A single act of bullying
- A Verified Act of Bullying

Is there any aspect of the incident that suggests sexual harassment? Yes No

If yes, consult with Title IX coordinator for next steps before proceeding.

If this has been determined to be a single act of bullying or a Verified Act of Bullying, complete the remainder of this form. If this is not a bullying act, sign and file with investigation report as non-bullying act.

If a **single act of bullying**, describe any disciplinary action taken against the perpetrator, as well as any interventions/supports provided for the bullied student(s) and the perpetrator:

If a **Verified Act of Bullying**, describe any disciplinary action taken against the perpetrator, as well as the intervention plan (required) for the perpetrator, and the safety support plan (required) for bullied student(s):

Parents of victim(s) were contacted on _____ and invited to meeting.

Parents of perpetrator (s) were contacted on _____ and invited to meeting.

Meeting Dates (if meeting(s) occurred): _____

Additional information gathered at parent meetings:

Safe School Climate Specialist Signature: _____ Date: _____

Collaborator Signature: _____ Date: _____

This form and the Bullying Report Investigation form (Investigation Report Part I) should remain on file in the Principal's Office. If this is a Verified Act of Bullying, it should be recorded on the Master List of Verified Acts of Bullying.

Administrative Bullying Tracking Sheet (For School Use)

(School)

#	Date	Victim Name & Grade	Others Involved Name & Grade	Bullying Type	Outcome
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

Bullying Type

- 1: Physical
- 2: Verbal
- 3: Emotional

Outcome

- 1: Did not meet bullying criteria
- 2: A single act of bullying
- 3: A Verified Act of Bullying

Lyme Old Lyme Public Schools
Master List of Verified Acts of Bullying

School: _____

Year: _____

Date	Administrator

As per BOE policy, this list of Verified Acts of Bullying will be made available to the public upon request.

APPENDIX

Prevention and Intervention Strategies

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.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered.

Disciplinary interventions:

When acts of bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints, 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 the 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 office 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/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior.

Interventions for bullied students:

- Counseling
- Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene in bullying situations
- Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization
- Peer mediation where appropriate
- Student Safety Support plan

General Prevention and Intervention Strategies:

- Implementation of positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying;
- School rules prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts;

- Adequate supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom, and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur;
- Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula, 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 the bullied student;
- 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;
- Planned professional development programs addressing prevention and intervention strategies, which training may include school violence prevention, conflict resolution and prevention of bullying, with a focus in evidence based practices concerning same;
- Student peer training, education and support;
- Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping;
- Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
- Respectful responses to bullying concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
- 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.

Administrators, teachers and other professional employees should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, harassing, humiliating or intimidating another student – even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of “bullying.”

Schools may choose to create intervention checklists, such as the one created at LOLHS to document interventions:

Discipline actions were taken _____

Grade level teachers were made aware of the incident _____

Lunch room teachers were made aware of the incident _____

Students were separated or put into different sections _____

A student's locker was moved _____

A contact person was named for this student: _____

Parents were informed of the plan of actions: _____