



Side by Side Charter School: Safe School Climate Plan

The purpose of this Safe School Climate Plan is to create and maintain a positive school climate for all children and adults that are part of our school community. The plan includes specific measures to prevent and alleviate the occurrence of challenging behavior in school, as well as a specifically outlined protocol for addressing reported acts of challenging behavior and bullying when they occur. At Side by Side, we developed the acronym "RISE" (Respect, Independence, Social Justice and Empathy) as our PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention & Support) framework to help frame our community's conversations around our school mission and our students' a) social emotional learning b) ways to develop and sustain positive relationships with each other, and c) teach and reinforce the character traits that lead to successful personal and academic growth.

In addition to our continued work around RISE, we are also implementing the Connecticut School Climate Plan to support this work. This climate plan provides clear definitions and protocols designed to enhance our school culture and climate practices, as well as to align with Connecticut's State Department of Education's requirements around providing tiered support for struggling students.



Connecticut School Climate Policy

This Connecticut School Climate Policy was developed by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) with technical and substantive guidance from the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity (CWCSEO) and other members of the statewide Social Emotional Learning and School Climate Collaborative.¹

The policy was developed to provide districts guidance on recent revisions to Connecticut's school climate law, Public Act 23-167. In accordance with [Public Act 23-167, An Act Concerning Transparency in Education](#), for the school years commencing July 1, 2023, and July 1, 2024, each local and regional board of education **may adopt** and implement the Connecticut School Climate Policy, in lieu of implementing the provisions of sections 10-222d, 10-222g to 10-222i, inclusive, 10-222k and 10-222p of the general statutes.

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, **each local and regional board of education shall adopt** and implement the Connecticut School Climate Policy.

This policy **does not modify or eliminate** any rights or obligations under state and federal laws, including any constitutional and civil rights protections or any other applicable policies and procedures or collective bargaining agreements.

December 2023

¹ Chapter 170 – Boards of Education (ct.gov)

A mandated policy.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Policy Statement

All schools must support and promote teaching and learning environments where all students thrive academically and socially, have a strong and meaningful voice, and are prepared for lifelong success.

Implementation of the following set of guiding principles and systemic strategies will promote a positive school climate, which is essential to achieving these goals.

This policy sets forth the framework for an effective and informed school climate improvement process, which includes a continuous cycle of (i) planning and preparation, (ii) evaluation, (iii) action planning, and (iv) implementation, and serves to actualize the Connecticut School Climate Standards, as detailed herein.

The Board recognizes that improving school climate is contextual. Each school needs to consider its history, strengths, needs, and goals. Furthermore, this policy will support and promote the development of restorative action plans that will create and sustain safe and equitable learning environments.

Definitions

1. **“School climate”** means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.
2. **“Positive Sustained School Climate”** is the foundation for learning and positive youth development and includes:
 - a. Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, culturally, racially, intellectually, and physically safe.
 - b. People who treat one another with dignity and are engaged, respected and solve problems restoratively.
 - c. A school community that works collaboratively together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision.
 - d. Adults who model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning; and
 - e. A school community that contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

3. **“Social and emotional learning”** means the process through which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.
4. **“Emotional intelligence”** means the ability to (A) perceive, recognize, and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to, reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C) understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in oneself and others.
5. **“Bullying”** means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
6. **“School environment”** means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs that occur outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program if bullying at or during such other activities, functions or programs negatively impacts the school environment.
7. **“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 other electronic communication.
8. **“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.
9. **“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 paging device, 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.
10. **“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.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

11. **“School climate improvement plan”** means a building-specific plan developed by the school climate committee, in collaboration with the school climate specialist, using school climate survey data and any other relevant information, through a process that engages all members of the school community and involves such members in a series of overlapping systemic improvements, school-wide instructional practices and relational practices that prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment.
12. **“Restorative practices”** means evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.
13. **“School climate survey”** means a research-based, validated and developmentally appropriate survey administered to students, school employees and families of students, in the predominant languages of the members of the school community, that measures and identifies school climate needs and tracks progress through a school climate improvement plan.
14. **“Connecticut school climate policy”** means the school climate policy developed, updated and approved by an association in the state that represents boards of education and adopted by the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that provides a framework for an effective and democratically informed school climate improvement process that serves to implement Connecticut school climate standards, and includes a continuous cycle of (A) planning and preparation, (B) evaluation, (C) action planning, and (D) implementation.
15. **“School employee”** means (A) a teacher, substitute teacher, administrator, school superintendent, school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, school nurse, physician, paraeducator or coach employed by a local or regional board of education, 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 school, pursuant to a contract with a local or regional board of education.
16. **“School community”** means any individuals, groups, businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

17. **“Challenging behavior”** means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.
18. **“Evidence Based Practices”** in education refers to instructional and school-wide improvement practices that systematic empirical research has provided evidence of statistically significant effectiveness.
19. **“Effective School Climate Improvement”** is a restorative process that engages all stakeholders in the following six essential practices:
 - A. Promoting decision-making that is collaborative and actively involves all stakeholders (e.g., school personnel, students, families, community members) with varied and meaningful roles and perspectives where all voices are heard;
 - B. Utilizing psychometrically sound quantitative (e.g., school climate survey, discipline data) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups) data to drive action planning, preventive and intervention practices and implementation strategies that continuously improve all dimensions of school climate, including regularly collecting data to evaluate progress and inform the improvement process;
 - C. Tailoring improvement goals to the unique needs of the students, educators, and broader school community. These goals shall be integrated into overall school improvement efforts thereby leveraging school strengths to address evidence-based areas of need, while sustaining the improvement process over time;
 - D. Fostering adult learning in teams and/or professional learning communities to build capacity among school personnel and develop common staff skills to educate the whole child;
 - E. Basing curriculum, instruction, student supports, and interventions on scientific research and grounding in cognitive, social-emotional, and psychological theories of youth development. Interventions include strength-based programs and practices that together represent a comprehensive continuum of approaches to promote healthy student development and positive learning environments as well as address individual student barriers to learning and adult barriers to teaching; and
 - F. Strengthening policies and procedures related to:
 - a. climate and restorative informed teaching and learning environments;
 - b. infrastructure to facilitate data collection, analysis, and effective planning;
 - c. implementation of school climate improvement plans with the goal of becoming restorative;
 - d. evaluation of the school climate improvement process; and
 - e. sustainability of school climate and restorative improvement efforts.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy (continued)

School Climate Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the superintendent of schools for each school district, or an administrator appointed by the superintendent, shall serve as the school climate coordinator for the school district.

The school climate coordinator shall be responsible for:

1. providing district-level leadership and support for the implementation of the school climate improvement plan for each school;
2. collaborating with the school climate specialist, for each school to (A) develop a continuum of strategies to prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment, and (B) communicate such strategies to the school community, including, but not limited to, through publication in the district student handbook;
3. collecting and maintaining data regarding school climate improvement, including, but not limited to, school discipline records, school climate assessments, attendance rates, social and emotional learning assessments, academic growth data, types and numbers of alleged and verified bullying complaints submitted by members of the school community, types and numbers of challenging behaviors addressed using the restorative practices response policy, and data concerning the implementation and outcome of restorative practices; and
4. meeting with the school climate specialist for each school at least twice during the school year to (A) identify strategies to improve school climate, including, but not limited to, by responding to challenging behavior and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, such as restorative practices, (B) propose recommendations for revisions to the school climate improvement plan, and (C) assist with the completion of the school climate survey.

School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the principal of each school, or a school employee who holds professional certification pursuant to section 10-145 of the general statutes, is trained in school climate improvement or restorative practices and is designated as the school climate specialist by the school principal, shall serve as the school climate specialist for the school.

The school climate specialist shall be responsible for:

1. leading in the prevention, identification, and response to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, reports of alleged bullying and harassment;

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Connecticut School Climate Policy

School Climate Specialist (continued)

2. implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices;
3. scheduling meetings for and leading the school climate committee; and
4. leading the implementation of the school climate improvement plan.

School Climate Committee

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, each school climate specialist shall appoint members to the school climate committee who are diverse, including members who are racially, culturally, and linguistically representative of various roles in the school community.

The school climate committee shall consist of:

1. the school climate specialist;
2. a teacher selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees chosen pursuant to section 10-153b of the general statutes;
3. a demographically representative group of students enrolled at the school, as developmentally appropriate;
4. families of students enrolled at the school; and
5. at least two members of the school community, as determined by the school climate specialist.

Membership of the school climate committee shall be annually reviewed and approved by the school climate specialist, in coordination with the school climate coordinator.

The school climate committee shall be responsible for:

1. assisting in the development, annual scheduling, and administration of the school climate survey, and reviewing of the school climate survey data.
2. using the school climate survey data to identify strengths and challenges to improve school climate, and to create or propose revisions to the school climate improvement plan.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

School Climate Committee (continued)

3. assisting in the implementation of the school climate improvement plan and recommending any improvements or revisions to the plan.
4. advising on strategies to improve school climate and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices, in the school community.
5. annually providing notice of the uniform challenging behavior and/or bullying complaint form, or similar complaint form used by the school, to the school community.

School Climate Survey

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and biennially thereafter, the school climate committee, for each school, shall administer a school climate survey to students, school employees and families of students, provided the parent or guardian of each student shall receive prior written notice of the content and administration of such school climate survey and shall have a reasonable opportunity to opt such student out of such school climate survey.

School Climate Improvement Plan

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the school climate specialist, for each school, in collaboration with the school climate coordinator, shall develop, and update as necessary, a school climate improvement plan. Such plan shall be based on the results of the school climate survey, any recommendations from the school climate committee, including the protocols, supports, and any other data the school climate specialist and school climate coordinator deem relevant. Such plan shall be submitted to the school climate coordinator for review and approval on or before December thirty-first of each school year. Upon approval of such plan, a written or electronic copy of such plan shall be made available to members of the school community and such plan shall be used in the prevention of, identification of and response to all challenging behavior.

Additionally, districts may place the school climate improvement plans into their district and school improvement plans.

Training

For the school year commencing July 1, 2024, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional Board of Education shall provide resources and training to school employees regarding:

1. social and emotional learning;
2. school climate and culture and evidence and research-based interventions; and
3. restorative practices.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Training (continued)

Such resources and training may be made available at each school under the jurisdiction of such board and include technical assistance in the implementation of a school climate improvement plan. Any school employee may participate in any such training offered by the board under this section. The school climate coordinator, shall select, and approve, the individuals or organizations that will provide such training.

Funding

The school district shall in its discretion allocate sufficient funding to satisfy the requirements of this policy for all schools in the district. Such funding shall be distributed accordingly, with Superintendent approval, for assessments and professional development, as well as for school community outreach, training, and technical assistance.

Accountability

The Board shall adopt and allocate adequate resources to support the Connecticut School Climate Policy and adhere to state regulations set forth in Public Act 23-167.

Connecticut School Climate Standards

1. The school district community² has a shared vision and plan for promoting and sustaining a positive school climate³ that focuses on prevention, identification, and response to all challenging behavior⁴.
2. The school district community adopts policies that promote:
 - a. a sound school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills; and
 - b. a restorative school environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships, and intentionally re-engaging any disengaged students, educators, and families of students in the school community.

² School Community means any individuals, groups or businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.

³ School climate means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life, and that reflects the norms, goals, values and interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.

⁴ Challenging behavior means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Connecticut School Climate Standards (continued)

3. The school community's practices are identified, prioritized, and supported to:
 - a. promote learning and the positive academic, social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students;
 - b. enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities;
 - c. address barriers to teaching and learning; and
 - d. develop and sustain a restorative infrastructure that builds capacity, accountability, and sustainability.
4. The school community creates a school environment⁵ where *everyone* is safe, welcomed, supported, and included in all school-based activities.
5. The school community creates a restorative system that cultivates a sense of belonging through norms and activities that promote social and civic responsibility, and a dedication to cultural responsiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160, P.A. 11-232, P.A. 14-172 and PA 18-15 and PA 19-166.
10-222g Prevention and intervention strategy re bullying and teen dating violence
10-222h Analysis of school districts' efforts re prevention of and response to bullying in schools. School climate assessment instruments
10-222i State-wide safe school climate resource network. *[Repealed, Effective 7/1/2025 State-wide safe school climate resource network]*
10-222k District safe school climate coordinator. Safe school climate specialist. Safe school climate committee (as amended by PA 21-95, Section 14)
10-222p Review of safe school climate plans by Department of Education. Approval or rejection.
PA 23-167 An Act Concerning Transparency in Education

Policy adopted:
cps 11/23

⁵ School environment means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs if bullying at or during such other activities, functions, or programs negatively impacts the school environment.

A regulation to consider. This is guidance from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Regulation

Tiered Response

Beyond the above protocols and supports, the new school climate policy defines a specific subset of challenging behavior that requires districts to respond with certain tiered interventions (referred to hereinafter as “tiered response incidents”). Pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 10-222hh(b)(6), a tiered response (as detailed in the table below) is required for an incident of challenging behavior that meets any of the following criteria:

- a. requires temporarily clearing a classroom or removing a majority of students to reduce the likelihood of injury;
- b. indicates a credible intention to cause bodily harm to self or others; or
- c. results in an injury requiring medical attention beyond first aid (or less severe injuries caused by the same person on more than one occasion, as verified by a school nurse or other medical professional). The law goes on to provide that, if a district determines that conduct meets the above criteria, school climate improvement plans must include the following responses:

Occasion Number – Tiered Response Incident	Tiered Intervention Required
First Offense	Principal must notify the parents/guardians of each student involved in a manner that complies with FERPA.
Second Offense	Principal must invite the parent/guardian of involved students to a meeting (virtual or in person) to discuss supports and interventions applicable to each student – including, but not limited to, restorative practices.
Multiple subsequent Offenses (or single incident that causes severe harm)	Principal must notify the parents/guardians of involved students of other resources for supports and interventions, including, but not limited to the following: the 2-1-1 Infoline Program; services/programs available through the Behavioral Health Partnership, established through C.G.S. Sec. 17a-22h; or other resources for professional services, support, or crisis intervention.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Regulation

Tiered Response (continued)

In addition, for tiered response incidents, there must be a meeting between an administrator and the school employee who witnessed the incident. The purpose of the meeting, which must occur within two days of the incident, is to determine the supports and interventions required to address the needs of students and school employees, although supports and interventions for special education students must be determined by the student's Planning and Placement Team (PPT).² In addition, protocols and supports must include a process by which a teacher may request a behavior intervention meeting.³

Regulation approved:

cps 4/25

² For special education students, notice of the incident must be submitted to the PPT no more than two days after the incident occurred.

³ C.G.S. Sec. 10-236c(b) permits any teacher of record in a classroom to request a behavior intervention meeting with the school's crisis intervention team "for any student whose behavior has caused a serious disruption to the instruction of other students, or caused self-harm or physical harm to such teacher or another student or staff member in such teacher's classroom."

Challenging Behavior Reporting Form

This form is not required by law or policy but serves as a model challenging behavior reporting form that local and regional boards of education may adapt and adopt.

Instructions

This form is for **students, parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school, and school employees** to report any alleged challenging behavioral incidents. Challenging behavior is behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk with interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee. This form should also be used to report alleged bullying incidents, meaning: unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

Complete this form electronically, or in writing, or go to your school climate specialist (principal, vice principal, or other certified administrator) who will assist you with completing this form. All completed reports require a response from the school climate specialist, and every student, parent or guardian, and school employee **who completed this form** will receive a copy of the "Response Process(es) Notification Form" describing the action steps taken, within three (3) school business days after an assessment has been completed.

The school climate specialist will assess the facts of a challenging behavior incident and complete the "Response Process(es) Notification Form" (located on page 5 of this document). A confirmation of receipt of the "challenging behavior reporting form" will be provided to the individual who completed this form within **three (3) school business days**, and the behavioral assessment will be finalized within a reasonable amount of time.

If this is an emergency, and you feel that you or someone else is in imminent danger, please call 911, or your municipal police department.

Name: First _____ Last _____ or check here ☐ for any **student** who would like to submit anonymously.

I am a: ☐ Student, ☐ Parent and/or Guardian or ☐ School

Employee Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Contact me by: ☐ Phone ☐ Email

Was this previously reported to any school employee prior to this report? If yes, identify to whom, when, and what was reported? _____

Where did the incident occur? _____

Check any boxes that apply.

- ☐ On school property
- ☐ At a school-sponsored activity or off school property
- ☐ Electronic communication, internet, and social media

- ☐ On a school bus
- ☐ On the way to/from school
- ☐ Outside of school
- ☐ Other _____

Approximate date of incident (if known): _____

Please describe what happened?

Of the following statement(s) check any that may describe or include what happened:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Teasing, name-calling, intimidating, or threatening, in person or through electronic communication | ☐ Making intimidating, and/or threatening gestures or remarks |
| ☐ Spreading rumors or gossip | ☐ Getting another person to do any of the behaviors listed above |
| ☐ Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling, or throwing something or other acts of physical aggression | ☐ Unwanted contact of a sexual nature (verbal, non-verbal, physical) |

Do you believe that the reported instance(s) of challenging behavior was in reference to a student's perceived or actual age, ancestry, color, learning disability, marital status, intellectual disability, national origin, physical disability, mental disability, race, religious creed, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, and status as a veteran? If so, why?

If known, provide the name(s) of any witness(es) of the alleged incident: _____

Date form submitted: _____

***For school climate specialist use only:**

Date received by school climate specialist: _____

Signature of receipt by school climate specialist: _____

**Saved separately as CPS5131.911 Incident-Intake Report Form #2
(generic fillable) 9-2025**

Investigation Form

The purpose of this form is to provide a streamlined process to assess reported instances of challenging behavior.

This form is to be completed by the school climate specialist within a reasonable amount of time. Pursuant to the Federal Education Confidentiality Law (FERPA), students, parents or guardians, and school employees that completed the challenging behavior reporting form **cannot** receive a copy of this "Investigation Form" but will be provided with a copy of the "Response Process(es) Notification Form" after an assessment is completed.

Date "Challenging Behavior Reporting Form" received: _____

Today's Date: _____

Name of school climate specialist who received the report: _____

Were these events already reported to any school employee? If yes, please identify to whom, when, and what was reported _____

Name of school community member who is reporting the incident: (student, parent or guardian, school or district employee, bystander, anonymous): _____

Name of student or students who were allegedly subjected to the challenging behavior: _____

Name of person or persons who allegedly engaged in the challenging behavior: _____

Where did the alleged incident occur? _____

Date and time alleged incident occurred: (if known): _____

Description of the alleged incident: _____

What investigative processes occurred? Answer all of the following questions below. A single incident may require an assessment into multiple areas. Please check all that apply.

Was this investigated as bullying? YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this a verified act of bullying? YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this investigated as cyberbullying? YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this a verified act of cyberbullying? YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this investigated as teen dating violence? YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this verified teen dating violence? YES ☐ or NO ☐

Was this investigated as an assault? YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this a verified assault? YES ☐ or NO ☐

Was this investigated as an act of physical violence?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this a verified act of physical violence?
YES ☐ or NO ☐

Was this investigated as a protected class violation/
harassment? YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this a verified protected class violation/harassment?
YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this investigated as a Title IX violation? YES ☐ NO ☐

Was this a verified Title IX violation? YES ☐ or NO ☐

Was this a verified act of challenging behavior not listed
above? YES ☐ NO ☐

What was the response by the school climate specialist? (E.g., utilization of restorative practices, school-based threat assessment, safety plan, student support services) Additionally, provide the date of each response.

If applicable, please provide any additional notes, observations, or actions taken as a result of this incident:

Signature or E-signature of responding school climate specialist: _____

Printed name: _____

Date of response: _____

Response Process(es) Notification Form

The purpose of this form is to provide a template for transparency and accountability to a person(s) that submit(s) a report of challenging behavior.

The school climate specialist will complete and submit this form within three (3) school business days **after an assessment has been finalized** and submit it to the student(s), parent(s), or guardian(s), and/or school employee(s) who completed the “Challenging Behavior Reporting Form”.

Describe the steps taken to address and prevent future instance(s) of challenging behavior(s). Responses may include:

- utilization of restorative practices;
- the completion of a school-based threat assessment;
- safety plan for student(s) involved in the instance of alleged challenging behavior;
- student support services;

Signature or E-signature of school climate specialist: _____

Printed name: _____

Date completed: _____

Definitions and Clarifying Terms

Restorative Practices: Evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.

School Based Threat Assessment: An evidence-based systematic evaluation process used to prevent violence, help troubled students, and avoid over-reactions to challenging behavior.

The following are available in K: as PDF FILES

5131.911 - Appendix I - School Climate Improvement Plan

5131.911 Connecticut School Climate Guidance (Connecticut State Department of Education)

Connecticut School Climate Surveys for Students, Parental Notification & Opt-Out Form and Connecticut School Climate Standards.

The following are sample School Climate Survey questions for Students, Parent Notification & Opt-Out Form, and Connecticut School Climate Standards were developed by the Statewide Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative (SEL Collaborative).

School Climate Committees are not obligated to use the survey questions provided by the Collaborative, however, any School Climate Survey that is administered is required to align with the Connecticut School Climate Survey Standards that are subsequently provided.

The quality of school climate is an integral component for student success. Therefore, measuring school climate is a critically important endeavor for all schools. Surveys along with other data sources allow school employees and School Climate Committees to take a data driven approach toward better understanding of the views and opinions of students, families of students, and school employees. Survey results provide School Climate Committees with anonymous data to help identify individual school needs, set goals, and track progress toward improving the conditions for learning and overall school climate.

Please note that the School Climate Surveys are not intended to evaluate individual performance for any school employee.

Parental Notification & Opt-Out Form

The School Climate ***Student*** Survey is an anonymous survey intended to identify school climate strengths and areas for improvement within each school. This survey is designed for students in grades 3 through 12. Anonymous results will be provided to the School Climate Committee to help inform and improve education and school climate practices. All identifiable information will be removed.

If you do not want your child to participate in this survey, please complete and return this form by _____. Opting your child out of this survey applies only to School Climate Surveys administered during the _____ school year.

In accordance with Connecticut State Law, all families of students enrolled in the school will receive a summary of the content of the school climate survey prior to administration of the survey. The survey will be administered during school hours only.

If you have any questions regarding the school climate survey, please contact _____.

DO NOT complete this form if your child is permitted to participate in this survey.

School Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

School Climate Survey Standards

[Public Act No. 24-45](#) requires the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative to develop standards for a School Climate Survey.

The following standards are guiding principles developed to assist School Climate Committees develop and implement School Climate Surveys consistent with Connecticut Law and the [Connecticut School Climate Policy](#).

1. The overall purpose for the School Climate Survey¹ is to gather data to inform opportunities for improving each school's climate², measure and identify school climate areas in need of improvement and assist schools in tracking progress and preventing recurrent challenging behavior³ and to help provide a safe school environment⁴.
2. The school community⁵ and School Climate Committee should have a shared plan for developing and promoting an evidence-based School Climate Survey.
3. The School Climate Committee should employ questions that consider the diversity of the school community and allow school employees to more easily recognize disparities in challenging behavior among marginalized students.
4. Each school is required to provide written notice of the content and administration of the survey to all parents/guardians of each student (grades three—twelve) and allow all parents/guardians to have a reasonable opportunity to opt their child out of the survey.
5. School Climate Survey results must be reported anonymously and then analyzed by the School Climate Committee. Anonymous data should inform the School Climate Improvement Plan and should be made available to members of the school community.

¹ "School climate survey" means a research-based, validated and developmentally appropriate survey administered to students, school employees, and families of students, in the predominant languages of the members of the school community, that (A) measures and identifies school climate needs and tracks progress through a school climate improvement plan, and (B) meets the school climate survey standards developed by the social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative.

² "School climate" means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.

³ "Challenging behavior" means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

⁴ A safe school environment refers to all aspects of school safety: physical, emotional, intellectual, cultural, ethnic, sexual, etc.

⁵ "School community" means any individuals, groups, businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.

Connecticut School Climate Survey: For Students

Below are the types of questions that may be included in a School Climate Survey and can be administered to *parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school*. In accordance with Connecticut Law, each school is required to administer a School Climate Survey biennially. ⁶

School Climate Committee's may reference the following research and evidence-based resources in the development of their School Climate Survey:

1. <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/edscls>
2. <https://schoolclimate.org/csci-report/>

Prior written notice, and a summary of the content of the survey must be provided to parents or guardians prior to administration of the survey. It is recommended that the content be provided at least five school days prior to administration. In accordance with Connecticut Law, each school is required to administer a school climate survey biennially. ⁷

Below you will find sample School Climate Survey question. Note that selecting individual questions without developing survey constructs that are research based and tested is not good practice. Work with your Connecticut State Department of Education liaison to explore options on personalizing your surveys.

DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONS (usually appear first allowing students to self-identify)

What grade are you in? 3 ☐, 4 ☐, 5 ☐, 6 ☐, 7 ☐, 8 ☐, 9 ☐, 10 ☐, 11 ☐, 12 ☐, Prefer not to answer ☐

What is your gender or gender identity? Female ☐, Male ☐, Other, ☐ I prefer not to answer ☐

What is your ethnicity? Hispanic or Latino/a/e ☐, Not Hispanic or Latino/a/e ☐, I prefer not to answer ☐

What is your race? American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐, Asian ☐, Black or African American ☐, Native American or Pacific Islander ☐, White ☐, I prefer not to answer ☐

For the remaining survey questions, the respondent would answer the question by indicating their degree of agreement. (very much, somewhat, very little, not at all)

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

I like school...

I feel like I belong at my school...

I feel included in activities at my school...

I get along with other students at school...

I worry about students in my school physically hurting me...

Students in my school get into physical fights

Students in my school use words to hurt others

⁶ [§ 53, Public Act No. 23-167](#)

⁷ [§ 53, Public Act No. 23-167](#)

I feel like my ideas are valued in my school...

I feel like I am treated fairly by other students in my school...

I feel safe on my trip to and from school...

I feel safe when I am at school...

I feel I am treated fairly for who I am with respect to my ancestry, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, and sexual orientation...

I feel recognized at school for positive behavior...

I feel my teachers teach in a way that helps me learn...

I feel there are adults in the school who take my complaints and concerns seriously...

I feel supported by adults in my school...

I have at least one adult in my school that I can talk with if I need help or for any other reason...

I am treated fairly by adults in my school...

I have at least one friend/peer in my school with whom I can talk to if I need help or for any other reason...

Students in my school are welcoming to new students...

Students show kindness to other students regardless of who they are ...

Students in my school are treated fairly by other students regardless of who they are with respect to their ancestry, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, and sexual orientation...

Students in my school are treated fairly no matter if their families are rich or poor...

I feel that I can manage the amount schoolwork I have...

I feel like my physical health is a priority for adults in my school...

I feel like my emotional health is a priority for adults in my school...

Parent/Guardian School Climate Survey

Below are the types of questions that may be included in a School Climate Survey and can be administered to *parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school*. In accordance with Connecticut Law, each school is required to administer a School Climate Survey biennially.¹

School Climate Committee's may reference the following research and evidence-based resources in the development of their School Climate Survey:

1. <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/edscls>
2. <https://schoolclimate.org/csci-report/>

School Climate Surveys are only one of the ways to measure the quality of a school's climate and should be used in concert with other qualitative and quantitative data.

Below you will find sample School Climate Survey question. Note that selecting individual questions without developing survey constructs that are research based and tested is not good practice. Work with your Connecticut State Department of Education liaison to explore options on personalizing your surveys.

DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONS (usually appear first allowing students to self-identify)

What is your gender or gender identity? Female ☐, Male ☐, Other ☐, I prefer not to answer ☐

What is your ethnicity? Hispanic or Latino/a/e ☐, Not Hispanic or Latino/a/e ☐, I prefer not to answer ☐

What is your race? American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐, Asian ☐, Black or African American ☐, Native American or Pacific Islander ☐, White ☐, I prefer not to answer ☐

For the remaining survey questions, the respondent would answer the question by indicating their degree of agreement. (very much, somewhat, very little, not at all)

EXAMPLES OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Educators at my student's school have high standards for achievement...
2. My student's school provides the resources necessary for my child to be successful...
3. My student's school sets clear rules/guidelines for appropriate behavior...
4. My child feels physically safe at school...
5. My student feels safe traveling to and from school¹

¹ § 53, Public Act No. 23-167

6. School rules/guidelines are consistently enforced at my student's school regardless of my student's ancestry, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, and sexual orientation...
7. Adults at my student's school address misbehavior fairly, regardless of their background or individuality...
8. Students are treated fairly/equitably regardless of their socioeconomic status...
9. My child feels safe at school (e.g., treated kindly verbally and nonverbally, etc.)...
10. It is easy to contact adult at my student's school with concerns when I have them...
11. I feel comfortable talking to adults at my student's school to discuss matters of importance (e.g., feelings, worries, frustrations, etc.) when necessary...
12. I feel welcomed at my student's school...
13. I feel accepted at my student's school...
14. All students are treated fairly at my student's school regardless of their ancestry, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, and sexual orientation...
15. I am offered the opportunity to be involved in activities at my student's school...
16. I feel I have the opportunity to help improve the school climate at my student's school...
17. Adults at my student's school consider my feedback when making school climate improvement decisions...
18. Challenging behavior (behavior that negatively impacts school climate) is a frequent problem at my student's school...
19. Inappropriate use of technology (e.g. cell phone, iPad, computer, etc.) is a problem involving students in my student's school...
20. My child is taught to value individual differences at school...
21. I feel well-informed about what is going on at my student's school...
22. I receive frequent communication and feedback about my student's academic progress...
23. I receive frequent communication and feedback about my student's social and emotional well-being ...
24. My student's school provides adequate counseling and/or other services to help my child with their social and emotional well-being...
25. Adults at my student's school recognize my child for good behavior...

School Employees School Climate Survey

Below are the types of questions that may be included in a School Climate Survey and administered to *school employees*. In accordance with Connecticut Law, each school is required to administer a school climate survey biennially.¹

School Climate Committee's may reference the following research and evidence-based resources in the development of their School Climate Survey:

1. <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/edscls>
2. <https://schoolclimate.org/csci-report/>

School Climate Surveys are only one of the ways to measure the quality of a school's climate and should be used in concert with other qualitative and quantitative data.

Below you will find sample School Climate Survey question. Note that selecting individual questions without developing survey constructs that are research based and tested is not good practice. Work with your Connecticut State Department of Education liaison to explore options on personalizing your surveys.

DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONS (usually appear first allowing students to self-identify)

What is your gender or gender identity? Female ☐, Male ☐, Other, ☐ I prefer not to answer ☐

What is your ethnicity? Hispanic or Latino/a/e ☐, Not Hispanic or Latino/a/e ☐, I prefer not to answer ☐

What is your race? American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐, Asian ☐, Black or African American ☐, Native American or Pacific Islander ☐, White ☐, I prefer not to answer ☐

For the remaining survey questions, the respondent would answer the question by indicating their degree of agreement. (very much, somewhat, very little, not at all)

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

All students are treated fairly with respect to their ancestry, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, and sexual orientation...

All students are treated fairly/equitably, regardless of whether their parents/guardians are rich or poor...

The school prioritizes that students value and support others regardless of their background or individuality (e.g., ancestry, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.)...

The school provides sufficient and effective resources, professional learning and technical assistance for teaching students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)...

¹ [§ 53, Public Act No. 23-167](#)

The school communicates effectively with parents/guardians and staff in a timely and ongoing basis...

When appropriate, I feel I am included in decision making at the school...

When appropriate, students are included in decision making at the school...

I like being an employee at my school...

I feel like I belong at my school...

I get along with students at my school...

I get along with other school employees at my school...

I feel comfortable sharing my thoughts, feelings, worries, frustrations, etc. with my supervisor...

People at my school care about me as a person...

I feel like a valued member of my school community...

I can manage instances of challenging behavior in my school... Students physically fight at my school...

I feel physically safe at my school...

I think that challenging behavior is a frequent problem at my school...

I think that inappropriate use of technology (e.g. cell phone, iPad, computer, etc.) is a frequent problem in my school...

I think that students at my school feel comfortable reporting challenging behavior to school employees...

School employees frequently focus on prevention of challenging behavior...

School employees always stop challenging behavior when they see it...

School employees are treated fairly with respect to their ancestry, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, and sexual orientation...

School employees at this school feel responsible to help each other do their best...

The school provides materials, resources, and training necessary to support students' social and emotional well-being...

The school provides counseling or other services to help students with their social and emotional well-being...

School employees talk with students about ways to understand and manage their emotions...

The school places a priority on teaching students strategies to manage their stress levels and self-regulation...

School rules and expectations are applied fairly/equitably to all students... Responses to all instances of challenging behavior are fairly and equitably applied... The school effectively addresses challenging behavior...

School employees in my school are welcoming to new students...

At my school, parents/guardians are involved in school climate improvement efforts...

I feel my workload is and manageable...

I look forward to coming to work each day...

The school facility is clean and well maintained...

The school provides sufficient and effective instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect various cultural backgrounds and ethnicities...

The school provides sufficient and effective resources (e.g., manuals, documents, professional learning, etc.) and technical assistance to help me prevent and respond to challenging behavior...

School employees frequently acknowledge students for their appropriate behavior...