



# Colorado Bullying Prevention and Education Best Practices and Model Policy

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## Purpose

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The Model Policy was created to provide districts, families, and students with resources, tools, and a common understanding of what constitutes best practice for bullying prevention. This document includes the updated Model Policy drafted to meet the requirements set forth in Senate Bill 18-151 and describes bullying prevention best practices. As school districts are considering this model when developing their own bullying prevention policy, they are encouraged to review these best practices as well. The extensive research of approaches, policies, and practices of other state model policies has been conveyed throughout this document to support greater reductions in bullying for the students of Colorado.

## History

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The state of Colorado first began addressing the need for bullying prevention and education policy in the year 2000. As part of the response to the tragedy at Columbine High School, the Colorado General Assembly passed the Safe Schools Act (C.R.S. 22-32-109.1). This Act and its subsequent amendments included the requirement that each school district board of education adopt a policy for bullying prevention and education. The following summer, in 2001, the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) developed a sample bullying prevention and education policy for its member school districts in accordance with the amended Safe Schools Act. By the 2002-2003 school year, CDE found and verified that 100% of school districts were in compliance with the bullying prevention policy amendment to the Safe Schools Act.

In 2011, the Colorado General Assembly passed House Bill 11-1254, Concerning Measures to Reduce the Frequency of Bullying in Schools Act (C.R.S. 22-93-101). This law, in part, encouraged districts to include specific components in their bullying prevention and education policies. These components included the biennial administration of student surveys to determine the severity of bullying in their schools, character building, and the designation of a team of people at each school who advise the administration on the severity and frequency of bullying. The School Bullying Prevention and Education Grant (BPEG) was also created through this law to, in part, support districts in meeting these components of a bullying prevention and education policy.

The Colorado General Assembly made changes to the state's anti-harassment laws (C.R.S. 18-9-111) in 2015 in response to the attempted suicide of 14-year-old Kiana Arellano. After experiencing months of cyberbullying, Kiana survived a suicide attempt in 2013 that resulted in a traumatic brain injury and paraplegia. Kiana Arellano's Law makes it a class 2 misdemeanor to cyberbully others in Colorado when the behavior rises to the level of criminal intent to harass, annoy, or alarm another person. Additionally, Kiana Arellano's Law states that cyberbullying occurs or is committed at the place where the electronic communication was either made or received.



Three years after passing Kiana Arellano’s Law, the Colorado General Assembly passed Senate Bill 18-151. The short name for the bill is Ashawnty’s Law, named for Ashawnty Davis. Ashawnty was a 10-year-old student in Colorado who died by suicide in 2017, in part, because of her experience being the target of bullying. Ashawnty’s Law tasked CDE with researching the approaches, policies, and practices related to bullying prevention and education used in other states for the purpose of developing the Model Policy to serve as guidance for Colorado school districts. The full text of Ashawnty’s Law can be found in [Appendix A](#). The Model Policy and the results of the research that informed it was first published on the CDE website on July 1, 2019 and is to be updated every three years.

In 2021, the Colorado General Assembly passed House Bill 21-1221, Bullying Prevention and Education in Schools, also known as Jack and Cait’s Law. This law is named after Jack Padilla and Caitlyn Haynes both of whom died by suicide, in part, because of their experiences being the target of bullying. Jack and Cait’s Law expands upon Ashawnty’s Law in several ways including, (1) tasking CDE with utilizing a stakeholder process, which must include participation by the parents of students who have been bullied, when updating the Model Policy, (2) requiring the model policy to differentiate between conflict, harassment, and bullying, (3) clarifying the role of cyberbullying during online instruction, and (4) requiring school districts to ensure that their bullying prevention and education policies, at a minimum, incorporate the approaches, policies, and practices outlined in the Model Policy. The full text of Jack and Cait’s Law can be found in [Appendix B](#).

In 2024, [HB24-1285](#), Concerning Preventing Bullying in Public Schools Based on Student Physical Appearance, was passed into law. This law updated the definition of bullying in Colorado to specifically prohibit “a pattern of bullying behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of the student’s weight, height, or body size.”

## Definition of Bullying

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In Colorado, bullying is defined in C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(1)(b):

“Bullying” means any written or verbal expression, or physical or electronic act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to coerce, intimidate, or cause any physical, mental, or emotional harm to any student. Bullying is prohibited against any student for any reason, including but not limited to, any bullying behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of the student’s academic performance; any bullying behavior that is directed toward a student against whom federal and state laws prohibit discrimination upon any of the bases described in section 22-32-109 (1)(II)(I)(A); or a pattern of bullying behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of the student’s weight, height, or body size. This definition is not intended to infringe upon any right guaranteed to any person by the first amendment to the United States Constitution or to prevent the expression of any religious, political, or philosophical views.

To provide clarity on Colorado’s legal definition of bullying, it is helpful to consider the academic definition of bullying. School bullying researchers typically define bullying by highlighting three components that differentiate it from other forms of aggression: the behavior is unwanted, repeated or likely to be repeated, and marked by an observed or perceived imbalance of power<sup>1</sup>. The imbalance of power can be realized in several ways including an imbalance of physical, social, or socio-economic power. It is important to note that just because a targeted student may have greater power in one aspect of life (e.g., physical power), this does not mean that they cannot be bullied. Rather, the targeted student may have less power in another aspect of life (e.g., socio-economic power). School bullying can occur in-person or online through the use of electronics.

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<sup>1</sup> Rivara & Le Menestrel, 2016



The definition of bullying in Colorado changed in 2024 as the result of the passing of HB24-1285. This law added language to the definition stating that “a pattern of bullying behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of the student’s weight, height, or body size” is also prohibited. Recent research has demonstrated that students who are overweight or obese are more likely to experience bullying<sup>2</sup> and now Colorado’s definition of bullying specifically addresses this issue.

## Types of Bullying

There are three types of bullying: physical, verbal, and relational. Physical bullying occurs when a student experiences bodily harm due to direct physical contact and includes behaviors such as hitting, kicking, spitting, or pushing. In contrast, verbal bullying can be harmful written or verbal communication such as name-calling or threatening another student. The third type of bullying is relational bullying. Sometimes referred to as social bullying, the purpose of relational bullying is to harm a student’s relationships or social status. This can include behaviors such as spreading rumors or posting embarrassing information online. Damaging a student’s property has been suggested by some researchers as a fourth type of bullying.<sup>3</sup> This would include acts such as theft or deleting the student’s personal electronic information.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cyberbullying, or electronic bullying, is a location where bullying occurs and not a type of bullying itself.<sup>4</sup> Cyberbullying occurs when students use technology to verbally or relationally bully others. This can occur during online instruction on or off school property. For example, students may create private electronic documents in which they verbally engage in bullying, then delete the file shortly after; all while appearing to be completing assignments. The lines between in-person bullying and cyberbullying can often blur. For example, physical bullying that results in a fight being recorded and posted online or the spreading of rumors using electronic means can be both in-person and cyberbullying. Other examples and resources can be found in [Appendix C](#). Often, cyberbullying occurs outside of school hours, off school property, and on personal devices. These behaviors are still within the scope of the school to respond to when it affects a student’s welfare, their ability to access their education, and/or the behavior has a nexus, or connection, to the school.

## Teacher Bullying of Students

A topic gaining more attention over the past several years is teacher bullying of students. Currently, there is limited research in this area; however, studies do suggest teacher bullying of students does occur<sup>5</sup> with varying regularity. Types of teacher bullying are most commonly verbal (e.g., commented on the student or their family in derogatory ways) and physical (e.g., being pushed or shaken). Male students and adolescent students have been found to be more likely to experience teacher bullying. Similarly to student-on-student bullying, there are negative physical and mental health outcomes for students who experience teacher bullying<sup>6</sup>.

## Roles in Bullying

As shown in Figure 1, researchers in the field of bullying prevention identify several roles that students may hold when bullying occurs:

- students who bully
- students who are targeted
- students who are both bullied and targeted
- students who witness bullying (also known as “bystanders”)

<sup>2</sup> Cheng, Kaminga, Liu, Wu, Wang, Wang, & Liu, 2022

<sup>3</sup> Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger, & Lumpkin, 2014

<sup>4</sup> Gladden et al., 2014

<sup>5</sup> [Gusfre, Stoen, & Fandrem, 2022](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Krugman & Krugman, 1984](#)

Although these roles are commonly used in research studies, when working with students in schools, the use of labels ought to be avoided. Referring to students as a “bully” or a “victim” may lead to the incorrect belief that these labels define the individual rather than their behavior and could reinforce that student behaviors cannot change. When possible, it is preferable to use language that highlights the behavior and avoids labeling the student. For example, instead of referring to a student as “the bully” one could say, “the student who bullied.”

Emerging research in the area of policy and the definition of bullying suggests that enumerating specific groups of students that are protected by state and federal law against discrimination may be beneficial. For students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and all other gender identities and sexual orientations (LGBTQ+), studies suggest that district bullying prevention policies that specifically prohibit bullying based on a student’s sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression can have a positive impact on feelings of safety<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, students identifying as LGBTQ+ report fewer incidents of harassment or assault because of their sexual orientation and gender expression when their district’s policy enumerates LGBTQ+ students as a protected group. The importance of enumeration is realized to an even greater extent given the fact that transgender youth face significantly higher rates of bullying and related mental health challenges<sup>8</sup>

### What Bullying is Not

In addition to knowing the three components that comprise bullying, it is just as important to know what bullying is *not*. Bullying is not teasing, mean behavior, fights between students of equal power, or conflict. When students tease one another, it is meant to be affectionate and not cause harm. Often, students who bully do not want to be caught and will claim that they are only teasing another student. Signs that indicate teasing is actually bullying include, (a) the teasing is hostile instead of affectionate, (b) the student teasing intends to hurt the student being teased, and (c) the student being teased is harmed by the behavior. Mean behavior is and of itself not bullying. Students can be mean to one another, but if there is not an imbalance of power or likelihood of repetition, it is not bullying. Furthermore, when students of equal power have an argument or fight, it is not considered bullying because there is not an imbalance of power inherent in their relationship. School staff should approach intervention measures in accordance with all appropriate policies based on the type of transgression that occurs.

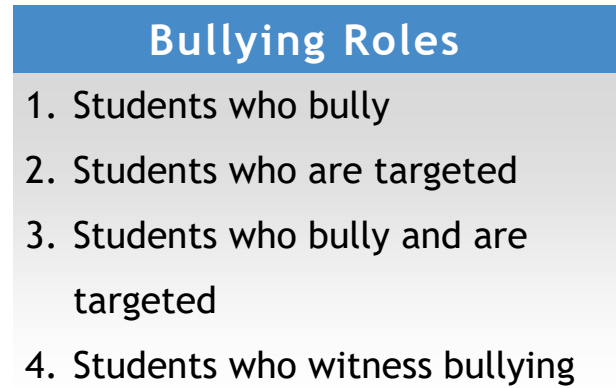


Figure 1. The four roles students can have in bullying.

<sup>7</sup> Kull, Greytak, Kosciw, & Villenas, 2016

<sup>8</sup> Sares-Jäske, Czimbalmos, Majlander, Siukola, Klemetti, Luopa, et al., 2023

## Bullying vs. Conflict What's the Difference?

Conflict	Bullying
Disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views	Goal is to hurt, harm, or humiliate
Equal power between those involved	Person bullying has more power
Generally stop and change behavior when they realize it is hurting someone	Continue behavior when they realize it is hurting someone

Figure 2. The difference between conflict and bullying. Adapted from Pacer’s National Bullying Prevention Center.

### Bullying vs. Harassment

Although bullying and harassment are often used interchangeably when talking about hurtful or harmful behavior—and the behavior may look the same—there are important distinctions in the definition, laws, and protections for students experiencing harassment.

Harassment based on a protected class—a person’s disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services, is a form of discrimination prohibited by state and federal law. Harassing conduct may take many forms that are similar to bullying, including verbal abuse, graphic or written statements, threats, physical assault, or other conduct that is threatening or humiliating, but harassment occurs when the negative behavior is based on a student’s status or membership in a protected class. Bullying behavior becomes harassment when the negative behavior is based on a target’s membership, or perceived membership, in a protected class. In the research literature, this is often referred to as “bias-based bullying.” Additionally, [Colorado’s SB23-296](#) updated the definition of harassment and discrimination such that the behavior need not be severe or pervasive if it interferes with the student’s access to their education, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

### Bullying vs. Conflict

Bullying is different than conflict. Conflict is a disagreement or argument between two or more people in which all sides express their views. Conflict is a natural part of human relationships as people grow and change. Conflict happens between people who hold equal power in a relationship but have different points of view. Moreover, when conflict occurs between students, both are able to express their perspectives and opinions. Those involved in a conflict usually want the issue to be resolved, to maintain a healthy relationship, and to avoid hurting the other party or parties. Figure 2 illustrates the difference between normal conflict and bullying. More detail on the differences between bullying and conflict can be found at [PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center](#)<sup>9</sup>.

## Bullying vs. Harassment

- Bullying and harassment are both about:**
- Actions that hurt or harm another person physically or emotionally
  - The target having difficulty stopping the behavior

### The difference?

When the bullying behavior directed at the target is also based on a protected class, that behavior may be defined as harassment and subject to process and procedures in the Board’s harassment policies. Protected classes include disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry, or the need for special education services, whether such characteristic(s) is actual or perceived.

Figure 3. The difference between bullying and harassment. Adapted from Pacer’s National Bullying Prevention Center.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/questions-answered/conflict-vs-bullying.asp>





Students experiencing harassment have additional protections at the federal level and federally-funded schools are required to follow specific procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving complaints of harassment—including a separate process for sexual harassment complaints under Title IX.

More detail on the differences between bullying and harassment can be found at [PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center](#).<sup>10</sup>

## Prevention and Intervention

The [stopbullying.gov website](#)<sup>11</sup> hosted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that bullying prevention policies include a description of the prevention and intervention efforts taking place in the school and district. Research on prevention and intervention approaches highlights several key components that give schools the best opportunity to effectively reduce bullying.<sup>12</sup> Schools should consider aligning these components under a multi-tiered framework such as a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) that provides a layered continuum of supports, including those for all students (universal supports), some students (targeted supports), and few students (intensive supports). More information on Colorado MTSS can be found on [CDE's MTSS website](#).<sup>13</sup>

It should be noted that every school has its own unique circumstances that may increase or decrease the likelihood of certain strategies being effective. In general, the following areas have been found to be related to reductions in bullying.

### Positive School Climate

Multiple studies indicate that the foundation of effective bullying prevention is a positive school climate.<sup>14</sup> According to the [National School Climate Center](#)<sup>15</sup>, school climate is defined as, “the quality and character of school life...it also reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.” One of the most common approaches to improving school climate is through the implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The PBIS framework includes several defining practices: (a) the majority school staff agree to engage in an approach to discipline that is positive and comprehensive; (b) all students and staff adhere to a set of 3-5 school wide expectations; (c) the school wide expectations are directly and continuously taught in much the same way academics are taught; (d) students are acknowledged for displaying the school wide expectations through the use of a continuum of procedures; (e) a continuum of consequences is developed for responding to problem behaviors; and (f) data are used for decision making. Moreover, research suggests that implementing PBIS with fidelity is connected

### Bullying Prevention Best Practices

1. Intervene immediately when bullying occurs
2. Train teachers
3. Include families
4. Include student voice
5. Use data to problem solve
6. Use evidence-based strategies
7. Have a team lead the work

Figure 4. Bullying prevention best practices. Adapted from stopbullying.gov

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.pacer.org/bullying/info/questions-answered/bullying-harassment.asp>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

<sup>12</sup> Ttofi & Farrington, 2011

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss>

<sup>14</sup> Espelage, Polanin, & Low, 2014

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.schoolclimate.org/about/our-approach/what-is-school-climate>





with teacher-reported reductions in bullying behavior.<sup>16</sup> For more information on PBIS and positive school climate in Colorado, please visit [CDE's PBIS website](#).<sup>17</sup>

An important component of creating and maintaining a positive school climate is training teachers on bullying. As recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,<sup>18</sup> teachers should be trained on what bullying is, the school's policies and rules on bullying, and how to enforce the bullying rules that are in place. This is particularly necessary because many teachers do not know the key features of bullying and some believe that bullying is just "part of growing up."<sup>19</sup> Integrating this training into existing professional development supports sustainability. Having engaged staff support the creation of the training materials and sharing student perspectives on bullying at the school can further support buy-in from staff.

### **Evidence-Based Bullying Prevention Curricula**

There are numerous programs and approaches that can supplement effective school climate strategies to specifically address bullying. To have the best chance to reduce bullying in schools, it is imperative that curricula and approaches be used that have evidence supporting their effectiveness. Evidence-based bullying prevention curricula are evaluated by several peer-reviewed studies demonstrating that they reduce bullying in schools. Research on bullying prevention curricula has been produced for decades, and there are several programs that have been identified as being effective when implemented with fidelity (i.e., implemented the way the program was designed to be implemented). Many of these programs are also the most commonly used by grantees in the state of Colorado's Bullying Prevention and Education Grant (BPEG) program. A review of evidence-based bullying prevention programs was completed by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for the BPEG program and can be found on the [BPEG website](#).<sup>20</sup> These evidence-based programs include:

- Bullying Prevention in PBIS
- Positive Action
- Second Step and the Bullying Prevention Unit
- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
- Facing History and Ourselves

### **Family, School, and Community Partnerships**

Although bullying prevention commonly includes teachers and students, research suggests that including families and the community in these efforts is an effective method for reducing bullying.<sup>21</sup> In their 2011 study, Ttofi and Farrington completed a comprehensive review of bullying prevention studies in an attempt to determine the effectiveness of school-based bullying prevention programs. Results from the study found that one of the most significant factors associated with reducing bullying in schools was the inclusion of parent-specific supports. For example, schools can train parents on the warning signs of bullying and how they can engage their child in a conversation about bullying so that parents are more confident in how to respond to concerns. When bullying prevention programs include parental supports as part of their approach, it significantly decreases the percentage of students reporting engaging in bullying behavior and being the target of bullying behavior.

When schools are able to forge partnerships with their surrounding community, additional resources for prevention and intervention can also be found. There are multiple non-profits around the state focused on bullying prevention or youth resiliency which can serve as a resource for schools. Additionally, schools can

<sup>16</sup> Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss/pbis>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/at-school>

<sup>19</sup> Dawes, Gariton, Starrett, Irdam, & Irvin, 2023

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss/bullying>

<sup>21</sup> Ttofi & Farrington, 2011



partner with licensed counselors or therapists to provide intensive supports for students who have experienced bullying. Recently, the state of Colorado implemented the [I Matter](#) program which provides six free counseling sessions for youth across the state. Counseling is also shown through research to be an effective intervention for both students who have been targeted for bullying<sup>22</sup> and students who have engaged in bullying.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, these community members can be included in the bullying prevention teams that Colorado law encourages schools to develop to lead the bullying prevention work. For more information on family, school, and community partnerships, please visit [CDE's Family School Community Partnerships website](#).<sup>24</sup>

## Student Voice

Often, bullying is a covert act that may escape the immediate notice of teachers or other adults in the school. Students themselves are the ones who experience bullying and thus may have the best understanding of its nuances within the unique context of each school. When students are able to become part of the solution by influencing peer norms, they can have a strong impact. Much research is devoted to the importance of students who witness bullying because they can either reinforce bullying behaviors or counter them. Importantly, staff can help students by providing training on the ways in which they can safely intervene in bullying situations they witness. For example, if students are comfortable, they can directly intervene individually or as part of a group. If they do not feel safe directly intervening, they can support the target of bullying after the incident by reaching out privately or reporting the bullying incident to staff.<sup>25</sup> Including students in decision making can also be a beneficial way to empower them to stop bullying. For example, districts can develop a district-wide youth advisory board with the mission of providing the student perspective to district leaders. A similar approach may be applied at the school level as well.

## Policy

Since 2001, all school districts in Colorado have been required to have a bullying prevention and education policy as part of their safe school plan. Research on bullying prevention policies suggest that certain inclusions have a greater impact on reducing bullying. One of these inclusions relates to enumerating federally protected groups of students (e.g., students with disabilities, LGBTQ+ students, students' race/ethnicity, students' religion) within the bullying prevention policy itself. At the state level, several components are suggested as important inclusions in bullying prevention laws and policies from the federal government. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Education published their [Analysis of State Bullying Laws and Policies](#),<sup>26</sup> which outlined 11 key components in bullying laws and policies that may encourage greater school district implementation fidelity to state laws and policies. The Colorado Bullying Prevention Best Practices document is designed to meet all 11 key components.

The federal website [stopbullying.gov](#)<sup>27</sup> highlights two additional areas related to policy: communication and review. In their review, the U.S. Department of Education found that 17 of the 20 school districts they reviewed included language on how their bullying prevention policy should be communicated. Some districts required all schools to post the policy on their website while others require schools to communicate the policy in writing each year to students and their families. Other ways to communicate the school and district's bullying prevention policy to families is to provide brief handouts for parent-teacher conferences or at other highly attended, school-sanctioned events (e.g., sporting events, school plays). To ensure staff know the policy and are provided the sample forms, school administration can include training on the policy at the beginning of each academic year. Researchers in the field of bullying agree that both students and their families should be given several opportunities to access resources for educating themselves on bullying.<sup>28</sup> The second additional key component identified in the 2011 U.S. Department of Education review on state bullying laws was a review of

<sup>22</sup> McElearney, Adamson, Shevlin, & Bunting, 2013

<sup>23</sup> Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Stoolmiller, 2008

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/familyengagement>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.stopbullying.gov/resources/research-resources/bystanders-are-essential>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/bullying/state-bullying-laws/state-bullying-laws.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

<sup>28</sup> Cornell & Limber, 2015



local policies. Specifically, 20 of the 50 states reviewed had accountability measures requiring school districts to submit bullying policies to the state for review. Currently, Colorado does not require school districts to submit and/or review their bullying prevention policies but does require school districts to ensure that their local district policies incorporate the approaches, policies, and practices outlined in the Model Policy.

### **Data-Based Decision Making**

Collecting and using data on bullying is one of the most effective ways a school can be precise in its prevention and intervention efforts. Additionally, surveying students on their experiences with bullying is encouraged in Colorado law. In 2011, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention developed a free [compendium of bullying surveys](#)<sup>29</sup> that can be utilized by any school and measures a myriad of different factors.<sup>30</sup> In addition to the standard questions regarding the frequency of bullying, other items allow schools to analyze their data to pinpoint problems and determine ideal solutions. By including questions about the location (e.g., hallways, classroom), type (e.g., physical, verbal, spreading rumors), and time (e.g., before school, second period) of incidents, schools are able to attain the information necessary to be both effective and efficient in their prevention of bullying. For example, a school could administer a student survey and find that eighth-grade students report the most bullying in the hallways during passing times after 2nd period. The school could use this specific information to respond by having teachers stand outside of their classrooms during this time, increasing staff presence, thereby reducing the likelihood of bullying. Collecting these data over the course of several years will also allow schools to show families, the community, and other stakeholders how their efforts have reduced bullying over time. For more information and resources on data-based problem solving and decision making, please visit the [CDE website](#).<sup>31</sup>

### **Implementation of Bullying Prevention Efforts**

Even if schools and districts implement evidence-based bullying prevention and intervention strategies, their strategies may not be effective if they are not implemented with fidelity or as intended. For a new bullying prevention initiative to reach full implementation, research suggests it may take four years or more.<sup>32</sup> While this is a significant amount of time to invest in an initiative, bullying prevention efforts that are marked by greater intensity and duration are significantly more likely to reduce bullying.<sup>33</sup> One of the keys to effective implementation of a new initiative is the use of teams. Research suggests that using an implementation team to lead the work of a new initiative can speed up the effectiveness of programs and increase the likelihood that programs are implemented well.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the use of teams to lead work in bullying prevention at the school level is encouraged in Colorado law.

To ensure that bullying prevention efforts become integrated into the school system, supports for bullying prevention can be aligned with a school's Response to Intervention (RtI) system. At the universal level (i.e., Tier I), schools can utilize an evidence-based program, a strong policy, and positive school climate to prevent bullying. Providing brief, universal, behavioral screening measures can also guide schools in understanding potential locations, types, and individual students who may need targeted (i.e., Tier II) or intensive (i.e., Tier III) supports. In these cases, schools can develop clear targeted (e.g., check-in check-out) and intensive (e.g., counseling) supports for students involved in bullying. The ultimate goal of incorporating bullying into a school's RtI system is to quickly address bullying through data-based decision making so that students no longer need targeted or intensive supports to be successful.

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/bullycompendium-a.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> Hamburger, Basile, & Vivolo, 2011

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss/data-basedproblemsolvinganddecision-making>

<sup>32</sup> Fixsen, Blase, Naoom, & Wallace, 2009

<sup>33</sup> Ttofi & Farrington, 2011

<sup>34</sup> Fixsen, Blase, Timbers, & Wolf, 2001

## Bullying Prevention Approaches to Avoid

1. Don't use zero tolerance policies
2. Don't use peer mediation
3. Don't provide group treatment for students who bully
4. Don't use simple, short-term solutions

Figure 5. Approaches to avoid when preventing bullying. Adapted from stopbullying.gov

for resolving incidents of bullying.<sup>36</sup> In fact, some research indicates that using peer mediation may even *increase* rates of bullying.<sup>37,38</sup> Potential reasons for these results may be related to the imbalance of power that is inherent with bullying compared to other forms of aggression. This imbalance of power can play out during peer mediation sessions as well, even when adults are present. To be clear, restorative practices have shown the ability to reduce bullying by proactively developing relationships, encouraging a positive school climate, and dealing with conflict<sup>39</sup>; however, mediation in bullying situations should be avoided.

A third problematic bullying prevention strategy commonly used in schools involves the placement of students exhibiting problem behavior into groups to receive counseling or social skills support. While providing small group support to students needing additional help in reading, writing, or mathematics can be both effective and efficient, this approach is not recommended for students who engage in bullying. When students who bully are brought together in a single group, it may in fact reinforce their aggressive behavior and result in increased rates of bullying.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, bullying prevention efforts should avoid uncomprehensive, short-term solutions. This is commonly seen in the form of one-time assemblies for students on bullying. Research suggests that these awareness raising events are not effective at reducing the rates of bullying when done in isolation.<sup>41</sup> However, assemblies can be used to create excitement and momentum for the more comprehensive bullying prevention efforts as described earlier in this document. In general, bullying prevention efforts that are comprehensive and include long-term systemic approaches are more successful.

## Common Bullying Prevention Missteps

There are several approaches to bullying prevention, as listed in Figure 5, that are either ineffective or even increase the prevalence of bullying. An approach that became common in the late 1990s and early 2000s when schools was attempting to respond to bullying were “zero tolerance” policies. These policies provided a range of severe consequences for students (e.g., suspension, expulsion) if they were found to have engaged in bullying. Although designed for the purpose of protecting students and creating a positive school climate, research suggests that zero tolerance policies are not effective.<sup>35</sup>

Another approach that has become more common in schools, in part due to the rise in popularity of restorative practices, is the use of peer mediation. While peer mediation may be appropriate for less severe behaviors, it is not recommended as a solution

<sup>35</sup> American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008

<sup>36</sup> Bradshaw, 2013

<sup>37</sup> Ttofi & Farrington, 2011

<sup>38</sup> [Burger, Strohmeier, & Kollerová, 2022](#)

<sup>39</sup> [Lodi, Perrella, Lepri, Scarpa, & Patrizi, 2022](#)

<sup>40</sup> Dodge, Dishion, & Lansford, 2006

<sup>41</sup> Farrington & Ttofi, 2009



## Reporting and Investigating Incidents

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Consistent with the Colorado Bullying Prevention and Education Model Policy, the superintendent's comprehensive program to address bullying should include procedures for investigating reports of students engaged in bullying and/or other behaviors prohibited by the policy. This section provides guidance on the procedures for investigating reports of bullying and other prohibited behaviors. A flowchart of this process can be found in [Appendix D](#).

### Reporting Incidents

Bullying may be reported orally or in writing to an administrator, teacher, or other staff member. An example of a bullying report form can be found in [Appendix E](#). Reports also may be received from Safe2Tell.<sup>42</sup> A report may be anonymous. A staff member who receives a report of bullying should immediately notify the designated administrator.

Depending on the size and organizational structure of the school district, the designated administrator may be the superintendent, assistant superintendent, building principal, compliance officer, or other administrator as designated in the local school board's bullying prevention policy or accompanying regulation. On a case-by-case basis, the role of the designated administrator also may be delegated to another staff member. The designated administrator, in consultation with other administrators, staff, and, if appropriate, the school district's legal counsel, investigates the bullying report, makes findings, and determines the school district's responsive actions.

### Determination of Scope

Upon receipt of a bullying report, the investigator (i.e., the designated administrator or designee) first should determine whether the report of bullying falls within the scope of the school district's authority to investigate. It is within the scope of a school to address bullying behavior that occurs on or off school property when it affects a student's ability to fully participate in the educational process and is detrimental to the welfare or safety of students. The investigator may wish to consult with the school district's legal counsel when determining whether a report falls within the scope of the school district's authority to investigate. If the school district does not have authority to investigate the report, the investigator should promptly notify the individual who made the report of this determination. The school should maintain a record of the report in the case that an incident of bullying within the scope of the school district occurs. Moreover, schools can provide families and students with resources on how to prevent and respond to future incidents of bullying. This may include administering lessons for the student related to social-emotional wellness and developing a safety plan.

If the report of bullying is within the school district's authority to investigate, the investigator should determine if the reported conduct falls within the scope of the bullying prevention policy. That is, is the alleged conduct potentially bullying (as defined in the policy), or is the alleged conduct potentially discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, on the basis of a protected category (as defined by federal and state law and the respective school board policies), or is the allegation concerning another type of conduct?

It is important for the investigator to determine the nature of the alleged conduct because it informs which policy and procedures to follow for conducting the investigation. However, at times, it may be difficult to determine what type of conduct is being alleged based on the report. In such circumstances, the investigator may need to start investigating in order to identify the applicable policy and procedures under which to carry out the investigation and make findings as to the alleged conduct. The investigator also may wish to consult with the school district's legal counsel when determining the appropriate policy and procedures for investigating the report.

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<sup>42</sup> <https://safe2tell.org/>



If the reported conduct is within the scope of the bullying prevention policy, the investigator should promptly investigate the matter pursuant to the policy and any accompanying regulation. If it is not, the report should be promptly investigated pursuant to the applicable school board policy (e.g., nondiscrimination/harassment policy, sexual harassment policy, student complaint and grievance policy, student conduct and discipline policy). If possible criminal conduct is indicated in the bullying report, law enforcement should be notified.

## Investigation

A school district may establish timelines within which to conduct a bullying investigation. At a minimum, all reasonable efforts should be made to timely complete the investigation. When investigating a report of bullying, the investigator should take into consideration information received in the initial bullying report as well as additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident(s). The information to be collected and evaluated as part of the investigation may include, but is not limited to:

- A description of the alleged incident(s), including the nature of the conduct, context in which the conduct occurred, the date(s), time(s), and location(s), etc.;
- Identity of all individuals involved, including any witnesses;
- Relationships among the individuals involved and whether an imbalance of power was apparent;
- How often the conduct occurred and the likelihood that the conduct may occur again;
- Whether there were previous incidents or continuing patterns of behavior involving some or all of the involved individuals; and
- Whether the conduct adversely affected any of the involved student's education or educational environment.

The investigator should involve, if necessary, appropriate school support personnel and other staff with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention and intervention. The investigator also should consider whether interim measures should be implemented during the investigation to protect against further bullying or other prohibited behavior.

See the Sample Bullying Investigation Checklist in [Appendix F](#). A school district may wish to consult with its legal counsel regarding developing additional procedures and forms for conducting an investigation.

## Notification

The investigator (if not the designated administrator) should keep the designated administrator apprised of the status of the investigation. To the extent appropriate as determined by the investigator and designated administrator, and in accordance with applicable law and local school board policy and procedures, the investigator should inform the student(s) and the parents/guardians of the student(s) involved in the alleged incident of the status of the investigation. This notification should include information for parents/guardians as to their right to appeal investigatory findings to the district.

## Confidentiality

The bullying report, individuals involved in the alleged incident of bullying, and the findings and outcomes of the investigation should be kept confidential except as necessary to fully investigate the report, as authorized by the complainant, or as otherwise permitted or required to be disclosed by law or local school board policy and procedures (e.g., concerning the confidentiality of student education records or personnel records).

## Reporting Findings

In accordance with applicable law and local school board policy and procedures, the investigator or designated administrator should notify the student(s) and the parents/guardians of the student(s) involved in the alleged incident of bullying of the findings and outcomes of the investigation and any other information deemed



appropriate by the investigator and designated administrator. The way this information is communicated will depend on local school board policy, procedures, and practice, as well as taking into consideration the circumstances of the matter. For example, the information may be provided in the form of a written report or meetings with each student and the student's parents/guardians, and may include an overview of the investigation process, the findings of the investigation, and any responsive actions by the school district. Regardless of the outcome of the investigation, schools must ensure that students feel safe and have the ability to access their education. If students and their families do not feel that the school has ensured a safe environment for their children to learn, they may contact the district to discuss potential next steps.

## Recordkeeping

Bullying reports, investigation documentation and evidence, written findings reports (if any), and records of any responsive actions should be maintained in accordance with applicable law, local school board policy and procedures, and the school district's record retention manual. A school district should consult with its legal counsel regarding recordkeeping requirements and practices.

## Consequences

According to Colorado law, all school district bullying prevention and education policies must include appropriate disciplinary actions for students found to have engaged in bullying behavior. Experts in the field of bullying prevention recommend that consequences for bullying follow a graduated range of sanctions and supports.<sup>43</sup> By taking this approach, school administrators are able to select discipline and supports that align with several considerations. This is in contrast to the use of zero-tolerance policies in responding to bullying as this approach has been widely dismissed as ineffective.<sup>44</sup> Although the term "zero-tolerance" is sometimes considered to mean that a school forbids bullying on their campus, in this context, zero-tolerance refers to specific disciplinary actions (e.g., long-term suspension, expulsion) for bullying that are administered regardless of the seriousness of the incident. Moreover, this discipline is automatic and often severe.<sup>45</sup>

The idea of graduated sanctions recommended by researchers aligns well with a multi-tiered approach to bullying prevention.<sup>46</sup> Many state model policies include a range of sanctions, both supportive and punitive. Decisions regarding these sanctions should take into consideration several factors as outlined in Figure 6 including the severity of incidents, the students' history of problematic behavior, the developmental age of the students involved, the motivation of the problem behavior, and the availability of supports. A range of graduated consequences for bullying behavior can include, but is not limited to:

- School personnel and parent communication
- Social skills instruction
- Increased check-in and feedback opportunities with adults
- Supports focused on increasing empathy, communication skills, and the impact of bullying

### Discipline Considerations

1. The severity of the incident
2. Previously reported and founded incidents
3. Developmental level of the students
4. Motivation of the behavior
5. The availability of family, school, and community supports

Figure 6. Considerations that may be used when determining appropriate consequences for students involved in bullying

<sup>43</sup> Cornell & Limber, 2015

<sup>44</sup> American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008

<sup>45</sup> Cornell, 2006

<sup>46</sup> Leff & Waasdorp, 2013





- Additional adult supervision
- Implementation of a safety plan that does not increase the likelihood of the targeted student receiving discipline and is jointly developed and agreed upon by the school, the student who was targeted, and their family
- Behavioral contracts: a written statement listing the expected behavior of the student and how school staff and/or families will provide support
- Seat reassignment in class, lunch, or on the bus
- Daily behavior report cards: adherence to expected behaviors is scored for each school period
- Referral to a school counselor, social worker, school psychologist, or other support staff
- School/community service
- Removal of desired activities
- Detention: detainment of a student for disciplinary reasons before, during, or after school
- Saturday/evening school: detention programs on Saturday or other non-school hours
- In-school suspension for one-half day or more with a family member contacted
- Prohibition from entering certain areas of school
- Reassignment of classes
- Out-of-school suspension including a conference with the family and re-entry plan
- Referral to law enforcement
- Reassignment to another school or mode of transportation
- Other alternatives to suspension and expulsion where the school, student, and family agree to a set of requirements that, while in good standing, prevent removal.

When bullying behavior crosses into unlawful behavior, other district policies are often referenced. Some of the more common policies associated with bullying include those related to discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment. Researchers recommended differentiating bullying from these other forms of aggression in policy.<sup>47</sup> Harassment is a legal term that has a history of being used to describe abusive behavior towards federally protected classes.<sup>48</sup> The concern with conflating the behaviors of bullying with harassment is that it may lead to confusion at the school level for administrators. When separate policies dictate what constitutes bullying compared to harassment or other forms of aggression, these concerns can be mitigated.

To determine a graduated range of consequences, please refer to the state of Indiana's [model bullying prevention policy website](#)<sup>49</sup> which provides six different levels of consequences and supports. Other states simply provide a single list of consequences that increase in severity.

## District Policy Requirements

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In 2001, Colorado first passed legislation requiring all school districts in the state to create and adopt a bullying prevention and education policy as part of their safe school plan. This law was amended in 2011 with the passing of House Bill 11-1254 to include several additional provisions and in 2021 House Bill 21-1221 required school districts to incorporate the approaches, policies, and practices outlined in the Colorado Bullying Prevention and Education Model Policy.

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<sup>47</sup> [Cascardi, Brown, Iannarone, & Cardona, 2014](#)

<sup>48</sup> Cornell & Limber, 2015

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.in.gov/doe/students/school-safety-and-wellness/student-safetybullying-reporting/>



## Policy Requirements

Each school district is required to “ensure that the school district’s [bullying prevention and education] policy, at a minimum, incorporates the approaches, policies, and practices outlined in the [Colorado Bullying Prevention and Education Model Policy].” C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(2)(K).

## Reporting Bullying to the Colorado Department of Education

Each school year, every school district is required to submit a report to CDE that includes the number of conduct and discipline code violations at each school. C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(2)(b). Included in this report is the number of incidents and the actions taken in response to those incidents for several types of violations. As of the 2022-2023 school year, bullying is a specific behavior that is required to be reported to CDE. The most recent school year for which data are available (2023-2024) found 3,181 bullying incidents reported to CDE which accounted for 3% of all incidents. The most common discipline actions reported for bullying behaviors included out-of-school suspension (1,914), in-school suspension (1,547), and “other action taken” (353). Full data can be found at the district level by visiting the [CDE website](#).

## Charter School Requirements

C.R.S. 22-30.5-116 (1) requires each charter school to adopt and implement a bullying prevention and education policy. The language used to describe the mandated policy is aligned with the policy requirements and encouragements for all other public school districts as described above. The Charter School Institute and each Institute charter school are also listed in the law as being required to adopt and implement a bullying prevention and education policy in the same manner.

## Development of the Model Policy

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### 2019 Model Policy

The development of the Model Policy began shortly after Ashawnty’s Law was signed. As described in the law, CDE was required to “research approaches, policies, and practices related to bullying prevention and education used by education providers in other states.” C.R.S. 22-2-144. To accomplish this, the Office of Learning Supports (OLS) at CDE first created a list of the states with model bullying prevention policies as identified on the federal Department of Health and Human Services’ bullying prevention website.<sup>50</sup> OLS staff then reviewed other state model bullying prevention policies as well as their approaches and practices. A list of the results of the most recent review of other state approaches and practices can be found in [Appendix G](#).

Through the review of approaches, policies, and practices used by other states several themes emerged. First, many of the state model policies used a framework identified on [stopbullying.gov](#) as being key components of bullying prevention policies. This framework included the following sections recommended for model bullying prevention policies: (a) statement of purpose; (b) prohibited behaviors; (c) definitions; (d) responding to bullying; (e) reporting bullying; (f) investigating bullying; (g) written records and documentation; (h) referrals; and (i) sanctions. The second theme that was found through this review was that many states included example forms in accompaniment with their model policy. This included example forms for taking a report of bullying, investigating reports of bullying, and responding to reports of bullying. A third theme that emerged from the review of other state model policies was that the policies were informed by the empirical literature on bullying prevention. Based on this common approach, CDE also included a review of bullying prevention research to inform the Model Policy.

The review of empirical literature included a search on the American Psychological Association’s electronic database of peer-reviewed articles, PsychArticles. Additionally, book chapters from bullying prevention researchers were included in the review. A reference list of all empirical literature that was reviewed for the

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<sup>50</sup> [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)



development of the Model Policy can be found in [Appendix H](#). Finally, in an effort to create a policy that meets the specific needs of Colorado districts, the CASB sample bullying prevention and education policy was reviewed.

Upon completing the review of approaches, policies, and practices used by other states, a preliminary draft of the Model Policy was developed. This initial draft included a revision process with senior leaders at CDE. During the development of the draft policy, staff consulted with the Colorado School Safety Resource Center (CSSRC) on multiple occasions. This included attending CSSRC board meetings to introduce Ashawnty's Law, propose the initial plan for reviewing other state model policies, and providing the initial findings from the review of other state model policies. Additionally, the Director of the CSSRC and the CSSRC Board were given multiple opportunities to provide input and feedback on versions of the policy.

The draft Model Policy was available on CDE's website for public comment between March 4, 2019 and April 12, 2019. The opportunity to provide feedback on the draft policy was shared through CDE's social media platforms and weekly email newsletters to school districts. To provide feedback, the public was able to complete a brief online survey and/or send an email to CDE. All online survey questions were approved by the Educational Data Advisory Committee at CDE.

An analysis of the quantitative data from the online survey was conducted to determine the clarity, helpfulness, and desire for example forms to be included in addition to the model policy. Response options for all three survey questions ranged from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." For the item, "The Model Policy is clear and easy to understand," over 89% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed. In response to the item, "The model policy would be helpful in supporting students, staff, and families in bullying prevention and intervention," nearly 65% indicated agreement or strong agreement. Finally, for the item, "Some states offer additional resources with their Model Policies, such as forms for reporting and investigating. These supplemental documents would help schools and districts implement effective bullying prevention procedures," almost 89% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

To analyze the open-ended feedback results (both survey and email feedback), a modified Critical Incident Technique was used.<sup>51</sup> This process involved multiple staff members individually reading the open-ended responses and categorizing them into themes. These themes were calibrated between the reviewers and defined. Once all of the open-ended questions were reviewed, a frequency count of the themes was calculated. The three most common feedback themes from the public were: (1) the definitions section needed to be improved; (2) specific examples of evidence-based or effective practices or strategies should be provided; and (3) more details were needed in the policy.

Based on the initial feedback provided by all of its stakeholders, a secondary draft of the model policy was created. The draft and results from the public comment period were then presented in a meeting to various stakeholder groups in education and school safety including the CSSRC, Colorado Association of School Boards, the Colorado Rural Schools Alliance, the Colorado School Districts Self Insurance Pool, the Colorado Association of School Executives, and One Colorado. Each of the stakeholder groups provided additional feedback and suggestions on the model policy such that it would be a document that they felt confident in providing to their constituents. Through that discussion it was determined that a more comprehensive document that included both bullying prevention best practices as well as a model district policy would be ideal for supporting districts and schools. Therefore, on July 1, 2019, the Model Policy was published on the CDE website. Every three years, CDE will revisit research on best practices across the country, collect additional feedback, and conduct additional revisions to the document and policy.

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<sup>51</sup> Flanagan, 1954



## 2022 and 2025 Model Policy

In 2021, CDE requested applications from the public to participate as a member of the stakeholder committee tasked with supporting the revision process of the Model Policy. Four groups of stakeholders were requested: family members of students who have experienced bullying; public education students; members of community organizations involved in bullying prevention; and members of educational organizations. CDE received a total of 35 applications which were then independently reviewed and rank-ordered by a group of CDE employees with diverse subject-matter expertise. Each reviewer was informed that a goal for the stakeholder committee was to have a diverse range of stakeholders based on region of the state, ethnicity, experience with bullying, and stakeholder group. After the independent ranking of applications, reviewers met to come to consensus on the final rank order for each application.

In total, 18 of the 35 applications received were selected to participate on the stakeholder committee. The stakeholder committee consisted of four parents of students who had experienced bullying, three public education students, four community organization members, and five educational organization members. Members represented five of the seven educational regions across Colorado and four different races/ethnicities.

Members of the Model Policy stakeholder committee were able to provide feedback on the 2019 Model Policy in several ways. First, CDE asked each member to provide broad feedback through a SurveyMonkey survey describing: (1) strengths of the 2019 Model Policy that should be kept in the updated version; (2) clarifying questions about the content of the 2019 Model Policy; and (3) suggestions for improving the 2019 Model Policy. Members also had the opportunity to provide edits to the 2019 Model Policy.

CDE collected all feedback submitted by members of the stakeholder committee and organized the feedback into four broad themes based on the most frequently suggested improvements. These four themes were: (1) improving the definitions section; (2) providing more concrete guidance for schools; (3) providing more concrete guidance for students and families; and (4) improving the sample forms. In October 2021, the first stakeholder committee meeting was held virtually to gather more detailed feedback on these four themes. CDE described the four themes of feedback that arose from the members' suggestions. Next, members were divided into small groups where they discussed how to incorporate the feedback themes more concretely into the 2022 Model Policy.

Reviewing feedback submitted independently from stakeholder committee members and feedback discussed during the first stakeholder committee meeting, CDE created the first draft of the 2022 Model Policy. This draft was sent to stakeholder committee members for their review. Members were once again able to provide broad feedback via a SurveyMonkey survey and more detailed feedback using track changes. CDE then used this feedback to complete a third draft of the 2022 Model Policy.

A similar approach to garnering feedback from diverse perspectives was used for the 2025 Model Policy revision. CDE published a call for reviewer applications in the fall of 2024. A total of 12 participants were selected to be part of the 2025 Model Policy Revision Committee. Each member of the committee was given several weeks to provide feedback on the 2022 Model Policy prior to a virtual convening of participants to discuss the revisions on November 7, 2024. CDE reviewed all feedback submitted and made changes to the Model Policy based on this feedback. The curated list of empirical research articles on bullying prevention since 2022 used to inform revisions to the Model Policy can be found in [Appendix H](#). The 2025 Model Policy was published on CDE's website in February 2025.



# Colorado Bullying Prevention and Education Model Policy

*NOTE: Colorado school districts are required by law to adopt a specific policy concerning bullying prevention and education (C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(2)(a)(I)(K)). Each school district must ensure that its policy, at a minimum, incorporates approaches, policies, and practices outlined in the Colorado Bullying Prevention and Education Model Policy. Districts should consult with their own legal counsel to determine appropriate language that meets local circumstances and needs. Districts have discretion to determine the specifics of their bullying prevention policies and supports.*

## Statement of Purpose

The Board of Education supports a secure and positive school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behavior. The purpose of this policy is to promote consistency of approach and to help create a climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable.

Bullying and other behaviors as defined below are prohibited on district property, at district or school-sanctioned activities and events, when students are being transported in any vehicle dispatched by the district or one of its schools, or off school property when such conduct has a nexus to school or any district curricular or non-curricular activity or event.

## Prohibited Behavior

- Bullying
- Retaliation against those reporting bullying and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy
- Making knowingly false accusations of bullying behavior

## Definitions

**Bullying** is the use of coercion or intimidation to obtain control over another person or to cause physical, mental, or emotional harm to another person. Bullying can occur through written, verbal, or electronically transmitted expressions (i.e., cyberbullying) or by means of a physical act or gesture. Bullying is prohibited against any student for any reason, including but not limited to any such behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of his or her academic performance or any basis protected by federal and state law, including, but not limited to disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry or the need for special education services, whether such characteristic(s) is actual or perceived.

**Retaliation** is an act or communication intended as retribution against an individual who reports an act of bullying. Retaliation can also include knowingly making false accusations of bullying or acting to influence the investigation of, or the response to, a report of bullying.

**False accusations** of bullying are those made knowingly by an individual or group of individuals with the purpose of causing harm to another individual and which are false.

## Prevention and Intervention

The Superintendent will develop a comprehensive program to address bullying at all school levels and that the program is consistently applied across all students and staff. This program will be designed to accomplish the following goals:

1. To send a clear message to students, staff families, and community members that bullying and retaliation against a student who reports bullying will not be tolerated.



2. To train school staff on an annual basis in taking proactive steps to prevent bullying from occurring, which includes but is not limited to, training on the bullying prevention and education policy, knowing what bullying and bias-based bullying is, how to recognize and intervene in bullying situations, and positive school climate practices.
3. To implement procedures for immediate intervention, investigation, and confrontation of students engaged in bullying behavior.
4. To initiate efforts to change the behavior of students engaged in bullying behaviors through reteaching on acceptable behavior, discussions, counseling, and appropriate negative consequences.
5. To foster a productive partnership with parents and community members in order to help maintain a bullying-free environment across settings.
6. To support targets of bullying through a layered continuum of supports that includes, but is not limited to, individual and peer counseling.
7. To help develop peer support networks, social skills, and confidence for all students.
8. To support positive school climate efforts that clearly define, teach, and reinforce prosocial behavior. This includes intentional efforts to promote positive relationships between staff and students as well as students with other students.
9. To designate a team of persons at each school who advise the school administration on the severity and frequency of bullying. The team of persons at the school may include, but need not be limited to, school resource officers, social workers, school psychologists, health professionals, mental health professionals, members of bullying prevention or youth resiliency community organizations, counselors, teachers, administrators, parents, and students.
10. To survey students' impressions of the severity and frequency of bullying behaviors in their school.
11. To include students in the development, creation, and delivery of bullying prevention efforts as developmentally appropriate.
12. To provide character building for students that includes, but is not limited to, age-appropriate, evidence-based social and emotional learning as well as information on the recognition and prevention of bullying behaviors.
13. To regularly review bullying policies to ensure their effectiveness.

## **Reporting**

Any student who believes they have been a victim of bullying and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy, or who has witnessed such bullying and/or other prohibited behaviors, is strongly encouraged to immediately report it to a school administrator, counselor or teacher.

## **Investigating and Responding**

As part of the Superintendent's comprehensive program to address bullying, procedures will be developed with the goal of immediate intervention and investigation in response to reports of students engaged in bullying and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy. Procedures will include, to the extent appropriate as determined by the investigator and designated administrator, and in accordance with applicable law and local school board policy and procedures, notification to parents/guardians of the results of bullying investigations and their right to appeal investigatory findings to the district.

## **Supports and Referrals**

As part of the Superintendent's comprehensive program to address bullying, procedures should be developed with the aim toward accomplishing the following goals:

- Initiate efforts to change the behavior of students engaged in bullying behaviors.
- Support targets of bullying in ways that avoid increasing their likelihood of discipline.
- Support witnesses of bullying.



Any person who engages in any act of bullying, retaliation and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with applicable law and local school board policy and procedures, including but not limited to suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities. The severity and pattern, if any, of the bullying behavior will be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made. Bullying behavior that constitutes unlawful discrimination or harassment will be subject to investigation and discipline under related Board policies and procedures. Students targeted by bullying when such bullying behavior may constitute unlawful discrimination or harassment also have additional rights and protections under Board policies and procedures regarding unlawful discrimination and harassment.



## Appendix A. Ashawnty's Law

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SENATE BILL 18-151

BY SENATOR(S) Fields and Priola, Aguilar, Court, Donovan, Fenberg, Garcia, Kagan, Kefalas, Kerr, Martinez Humenik, Merrifield, Moreno, Todd, Williams A., Zenzinger;

also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Buckner and Wilson, Becker K., Bridges, Coleman, Danielson, Esgar, Exum, Garnett, Ginal, Gray, Hamner, Hansen, Herod, Jackson, Kennedy, Kraft-Tharp, Lee, Lontine, McLachlan, Melton, Pettersen, Roberts, Rosenthal, Salazar, Singer, Valdez, Weissman, Winter, Young, Duran, Arndt, Hooton, Michaelson Jenet.

CONCERNING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESEARCH TO DEVELOP BULLYING PREVENTION POLICIES.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

**SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 22-2-144** as follows:

**22-2-144. Bullying prevention and education policies - short title - study.** (1) THE SHORT TITLE OF THIS SECTION IS "ASHAWNTY'S LAW".

(2) (a) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL RESEARCH APPROACHES, POLICIES,

*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing statutes; dashes through words indicate deletions from existing statutes and such material not part of act.*



AND PRACTICES RELATED TO BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION USED BY EDUCATION PROVIDERS IN OTHER STATES. ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2019, AFTER CONSIDERATION OF THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (2)(a), THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE SCHOOL SAFETY RESOURCE CENTER CREATED IN SECTION 24-33.5-1803, SHALL DEVELOP A MODEL BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION POLICY. THE RESEARCH AND MODEL POLICY DESCRIBED IN THIS SUBSECTION (2)(a) MUST BE UPDATED EVERY THREE YEARS.

(b) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2019, AND EVERY THREE YEARS THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PUBLISH THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH AND MODEL POLICY REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION (2)(a) OF THIS SECTION ON ITS WEBSITE AS GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS, CHARTER SCHOOLS, AND THE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION POLICIES.

**SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 8, 2018, if adjournment sine die is on May 9, 2018); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2018 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

## Appendix B. Jack and Cait's Law

**NOTE:** This bill has been prepared for the signatures of the appropriate legislative officers and the Governor. To determine whether the Governor has signed the bill or taken other action on it, please consult the legislative status sheet, the legislative history, or the Session Laws.



HOUSE BILL 21-1221

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Cutter and Young, Amabile, Bernett, Bird, Caraveo, Duran, Esgar, Exum, Froelich, Gray, Hooton, Jackson, Kipp, Lontine, McCluskie, McCormick, McLachlan, Michaelson Jenet, Mullica, Ortiz, Ricks, Roberts, Snyder, Titone, Valdez A., Valdez D., Garnett; also SENATOR(S) Coram, Bridges, Buckner, Cooke, Danielson, Fenberg, Fields, Gardner, Ginal, Gonzales, Hansen, Jaquez Lewis, Kirkmeyer, Kolker, Lee, Liston, Lundeen, Moreno, Pettersen, Priola, Scott, Smallwood, Story, Winter, Woodward, Zenzinger, Garcia.

CONCERNING MEASURES TO PREVENT BULLYING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

**SECTION 1. Short title.** The short title of this act is "Jack and Cait's Law".

**SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-2-144, **amend** (2)(a); and **add** (3) as follows:

**22-2-144. Bullying prevention and education policies - short title - study.** (2) (a) The department shall research approaches, policies, and practices related to bullying prevention and education used by education





providers in other states. On or before July 1, 2019, after consideration of the research conducted pursuant to this subsection (2)(a), the department, in consultation with the school safety resource center created in section 24-33.5-1803, shall develop a model bullying prevention and education policy. The research and model policy described in this subsection (2)(a) must be updated every three years. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL UTILIZE A STAKEHOLDER PROCESS WHEN UPDATING THE MODEL BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION POLICY, WHICH PROCESS MUST INCLUDE PARTICIPATION BY THE PARENTS OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN BULLIED.

(3) AT A MINIMUM, THE MODEL POLICY DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2)(a) OF THIS SECTION MUST:

(a) CLEARLY DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN A CONFLICT AND BULLYING AND BETWEEN HARASSMENT AND BULLYING; AND

(b) CLARIFY THE ROLE OF CYBERBULLYING DURING ONLINE INSTRUCTION, WHICH MAY OCCUR ON OR OFF SCHOOL PROPERTY.

**SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-32-109.1, amend (2)(a)(I)(K) and (2)(b)(IV)(G); and add (2)(b)(IV)(G.5) as follows:

**22-32-109.1. Board of education - specific powers and duties - safe school plan - conduct and discipline code - safe school reporting requirements - school response framework - school resource officers - definitions.** (2) **Safe school plan.** In order to provide a learning environment that is safe, conducive to the learning process, and free from unnecessary disruption, each school district board of education or institute charter school board for a charter school authorized by the charter school institute shall, following consultation with the school district accountability committee and school accountability committees, parents, teachers, administrators, students, student councils where available, and, where appropriate, the community at large, adopt and implement a safe school plan, or review and revise, as necessary in response to any relevant data collected by the school district, any existing plans or policies already in effect. In addition to the aforementioned parties, each school district board of education, in adopting and implementing its safe school plan, may consult with victims' advocacy organizations, school psychologists, local law enforcement, and community partners. The plan, at a minimum, must include the following:





(a) **Conduct and discipline code.** (I) A concisely written conduct and discipline code that shall be enforced uniformly, fairly, and consistently for all students. Copies of the code shall be provided to each student upon enrollment at the preschool, elementary, middle, and high school levels and shall be posted or kept on file at each public school in the school district. The school district shall take reasonable measures to ensure that each student of each public school in the school district is familiar with the code. The code shall include, but need not be limited to:

(K) On and after August 8, 2001, a specific policy concerning bullying prevention and education. Each school district ~~is encouraged to~~ SHALL ensure that its THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S policy, at a minimum, incorporates the ~~biennial administration of surveys of students' impressions of the severity of bullying in their schools, as described in section 22-93-104 (1)(c); character building; and the designation of a team of persons at each school of the school district who advise the school administration concerning the severity and frequency of bullying incidents that occur in the school, which team may include, but need not be limited to, law enforcement officials, social workers, prosecutors, health professionals, mental health professionals, school psychologists, counselors, teachers, administrators, parents, and students.~~ Each school district's policy shall set forth appropriate disciplinary consequences for students who bully other students and for any person who takes any retaliatory action against a student who reports in good faith an incident of bullying, which consequences shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws. APPROACHES, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES OUTLINED IN THE MODEL BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-2-144.

(b) **Safe school reporting requirements.** A policy whereby the principal of each public school in a school district is required to submit annually, in a manner and by a date specified by rule of the state board, a written report to the board of education of the school district concerning the learning environment in the school during that school year. The board of education of the school district shall annually compile the reports from every school in the district and submit the compiled report to the department of education in a format specified by rule of the state board. The compiled report must be easily accessible by the general public through a link on the department of education's website home page. The report must include, but need not be limited to, the following specific information for the preceding



school year:

(IV) The number of conduct and discipline code violations. Each violation must be reported only in the most serious category that is applicable to that violation, including but not limited to specific information identifying the number of, and the action taken with respect to, each of the following types of violations:

(G) Behavior on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or at a school activity or sanctioned event that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students or of school personnel, including but not limited to ~~incidents of bullying and other~~ behavior that creates a threat of physical OR EMOTIONAL harm to the student or to other students;

(G.5) BULLYING;

**SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,



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## Appendix C. Other Tools and Resources

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### **CDE Bullying Prevention Resources**

- [Bullying prevention resources for schools.](#)
- [Bullying prevention resources for students.](#)
- [Bullying prevention resources for families.](#)
- [Research on bullying.](#)
- [Bullying prevention training videos.](#)
- [Model Bullying Prevention and Education Policy.](#)

### **Other Bullying Prevention Resources**

- [Colorado School Safety Resource Center's bullying prevention website.](#)
- [National School Climate Center Bullying Prevention website.](#)
- [PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center.](#)
- [PACER Center's Kids Against Bullying website.](#)
- [PACER Center's Teens Against Bullying website.](#)
- [PACER Center's What Parents Should Know About Bullying website.](#)
- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Bullying Prevention website.](#)

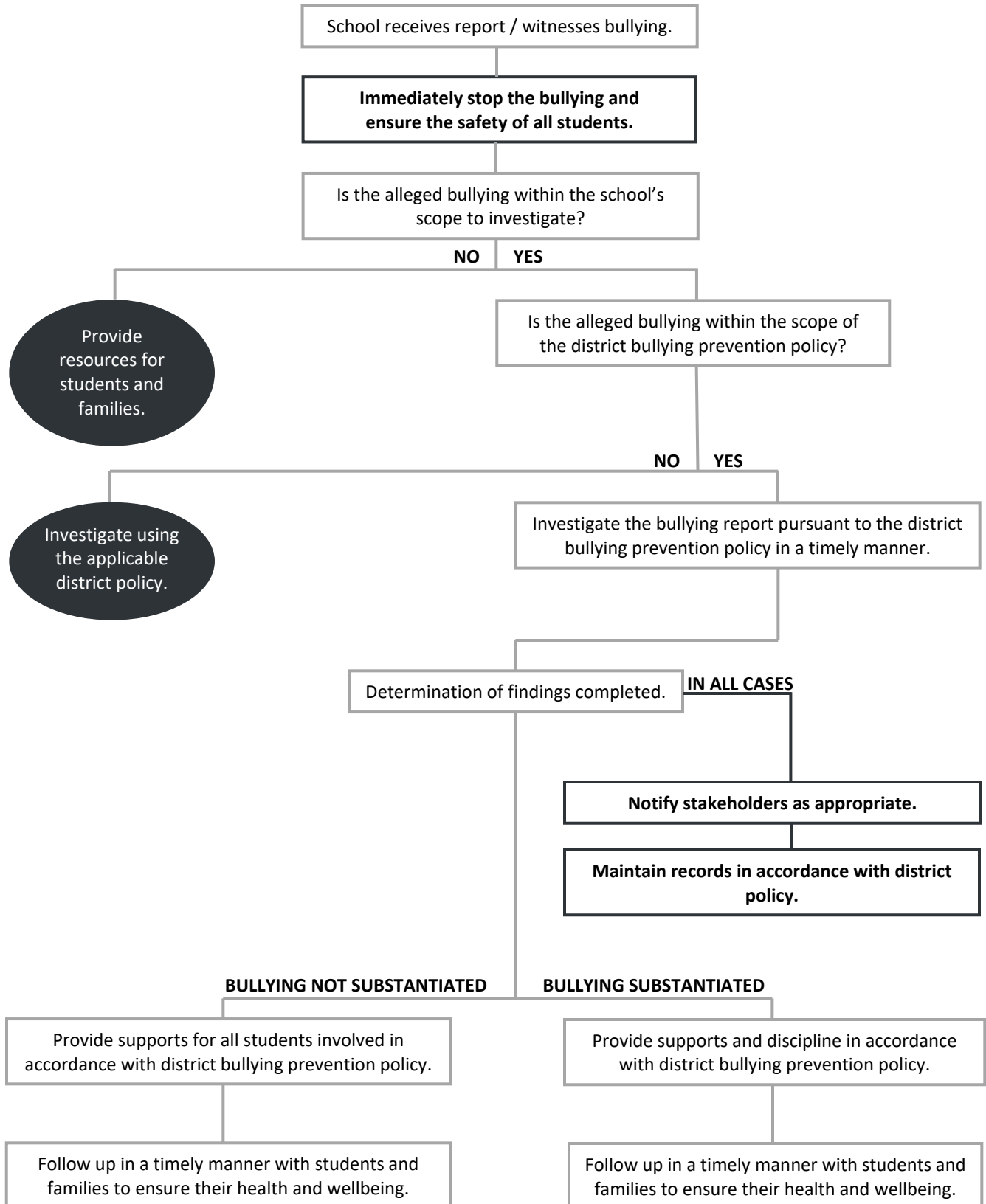
### **Resources Related to Bullying Prevention**

- [CDE's Multi-Tiered System of Supports \(MTSS\) website.](#)
- [CDE's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports \(PBIS\) website.](#)
- [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Positive School Climate Toolkit for Public Health Practitioners \(PDF\).](#)
- [Colorado Office of Suicide Prevention's youth and young adult suicide prevention website.](#)
- [Office of Special Education Programs \(OSEP\) Technical Assistance Center for PBIS.](#)





## Appendix D. Flowchart of Bullying Investigation Process





## Appendix E. Sample Bullying Report Form

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***Bullying is reportable in person or in writing to school staff.  
All reports may be made anonymously.***

Date of report: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person making the report (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Person making the report is (optional):

**Student      Parent      Grandparent      Guardian      School Staff      Other:**

If a student, specify school and grade (optional):

Contact information of person reporting (optional):

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check whether you prefer to remain anonymous:  Yes     No

Are you the target of the alleged bullying?  Yes     No

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### **Details**

Student(s) believed to be target(s) of alleged bullying:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) believe to be engaged in alleged bullying conduct:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Student     Staff     Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of the incident(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Time(s)/time(s) of day: \_\_\_\_\_

Location(s) of incident(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Was there a real or perceive imbalance of power?  Yes     No

Details: \_\_\_\_\_



Were there any witnesses?  Yes  No

May the school staff investigating this report contact these witnesses?  Yes  No

If so, please provide the names and contact information. If students, specify grade:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a description of the incident(s) and any supporting documentation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Use additional pages, if needed)

By completing and signing this form, I attest that the information provided, including any attached incident-related evidence, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

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

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Designated Administrator for Investigation: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Adapted from the Maine Department of Education*



# Appendix F. Sample Bullying Investigation Checklist

**Attach any reports, documents, evidence, and written accounts of the alleged bullying incident(s) to this checklist.**

Date of Bullying Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Designated Administrator Received Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Investigation Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Investigation Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Initial Review

Is the alleged bullying incident(s) within the school district’s authority to investigate?  Yes  No  
*If No, notify the Complainant and provide resources for support. If Yes, move to next question.*

Is the alleged bullying incident within the scope of the bullying prevention policy?  
*If No, the report should be promptly investigated pursuant to the applicable school board policy.*

*If Yes, promptly investigate the complaint pursuant to the bullying prevention policy.*

If possible criminal conduct is indicated in the report, was law enforcement notified?  Yes  No  N/A

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Status, if known: \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Bullying Report

Does the Complainant wish to remain anonymous?  Yes  No

Name of Complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Student  Parent/Guardian  Staff  Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

If a student, specify school and grade: \_\_\_\_\_

If a parent/guardian or other, provide contact information: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the Complainant the target of the alleged bullying being reported?  Yes  No



### III. Investigation Information

Information to be collected and evaluated as part of the investigation may include, but is not limited to:

- Description of the alleged bullying incident(s), including date(s), times(s), locations(s), methods(s) (e.g., physical, verbal, written, electronic/social media, psychological, social, images or items displayed or worn, etc.), how often the incident(s) occurred, whether an imbalance of power exists between the target and perpetrator, and whether the alleged bullying was based on any protected category under federal and state law and school board policy;
- Identify all individuals involved in the alleged bullying incident(s), including the student(s) reported as targets, the individuals reported as aggressors, and the individuals who witnessed or have knowledge about the alleged bullying; include relevant information regarding the individuals (e.g., student grade and school; contact information if not a student or school district staff member) and, if applicable, the relationships among the involved individuals;
- Identify whether the Complainant alleged that alleged bullying incident(s) was based on any of the following characteristics or traits: disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services; if yes, refer to the appropriate policy and procedure addressing nondiscrimination/equal opportunity or sexual harassment under Title IX;
- Identify whether any of the students involved in the alleged bullying incident(s) receive special education services under an IEP or a Section 504 Plan, or whether any of the students are in the process of being referred or evaluated for special education services; if yes, refer to the student's IEP or 504 Plan and contact the special education director or Section 504 coordinator;
- Review evidence of alleged bullying provided to the school and in the school's possession (e.g., school or bus surveillance video, cell phone video, photographs, digital images, emails, letters, written statements, notes, police reports, etc.);
- Identify whether there were any previous incidents of bullying or other behavior (alleged or substantiated) involving any or all of the involved individuals;
- Identify additional school staff, if any, involved in the investigation and their role;
- Determine whether any interim measures should be implemented for any of the involved students and, if so, describe and attach documentation as appropriate;
- Determine whether the alleged bullying adversely affected any of the involved students' education or educational environment. Provide examples as necessary so students are able to accurately respond;
- Any additional information relevant to the complaint and investigation.

### IV. Findings

- Evaluate the information and evidence collected through the investigation and determine findings (i.e., did or did not find the alleged conduct constitutes bullying or other prohibited behavior under



the bullying prevention model policy; did the alleged conduct affect any of the involved students' education or educational environment; and why).

## V. Interventions & Discipline

- Determine whether interventions, discipline, and/or any responsive action needs to be taken based on the findings of the investigation. Interventions to address bullying may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, development of a safety plan, community-based services, and discipline. ***The school district should refer to its code of conduct and discipline policies and procedures for next steps regarding any disciplinary actions that may result from a bullying incident.***

## VI. Notification

- Document notification to the students involved in the alleged incident(s) of bullying and their parents/guardians of the outcome of the investigation and any other information deemed appropriate by the investigator and designated administrator. The information may be provided, based on local school board policy, procedures, and practice, as well as taking into consideration the circumstances of the matter, in the form of a written report or meetings with each student and the student's parents/guardians, and may include an overview of the investigation process, the findings of the investigation, and the responsive actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying. ***Information shared with students and parents/guardians must be in accordance with applicable law and local school board policy and procedures.***

## VII. Recordkeeping

- Maintain bullying reports, investigation documentation and evidence, written findings reports (if any), and records of any responsive actions in accordance with applicable law, local school board policy and procedures, and the school district's record retention manual. A school district should consult with its legal counsel regarding recordkeeping requirements and practices.



## Appendix G. Review of Other State Model Policies and Approaches

State	Law/Policy Overview	Model Policy Link	Other Relevant Documents	Updates Since 2022
Alabama	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Alaska	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Arizona	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None
Arkansas	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	<a href="#">Guidance on Bullying Prevention</a>	Developed "Guidance on Bullying Prevention" resource.
California	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">Training Module</a>	Developed training modules.
Connecticut	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Delaware	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">Bullying Prevention Website</a>	None
Florida	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Georgia	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">Bullying Prevention Toolkit website</a> <a href="#">Bullying Flow Chart</a>	None
Hawaii	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None
Idaho	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None
Illinois	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Indiana	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	<a href="#">State Website</a> <a href="#">Bullying Prevention Resources</a>	None
Iowa	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Kansas	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">Bullying Prevention Toolkit</a>	Developed Bullying Prevention Toolkit
Kentucky	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	<a href="#">Bullying Prevention Spotlight Webpage</a>	None
Louisiana	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">District checklist for implementing BP Policy</a> <a href="#">Louisiana BP Website</a>	None
Maine	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">Student Safety Plan</a>	None
Maryland	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
Massachusetts	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy (DOC)</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
Michigan	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Minnesota	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link (PDF)</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
Mississippi	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Missouri	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None
Montana	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link (PDF)</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
Nebraska	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link (PDF)</a>	<a href="#">Bullying Flow Chart</a>	None
Nevada	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None
New Hampshire	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None





State	Law/Policy Overview	Model Policy Link	Other Relevant Documents	Updates Since 2022
New Jersey	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None
New Mexico	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link (PDF)</a>	N/A	Model policy requirements
New York	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Guidance Link</a>	<a href="#">Dignity for All Students Act</a>	None
North Carolina	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None
North Dakota	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	Cyberbullying required to be part of all district policies
Ohio	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link (PDF)</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
Oklahoma	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">ODE Bullying Prevention Link</a>	Updated resources
Oregon	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">State Policy Guidance Link</a>	N/A	None
Pennsylvania	<a href="#">N/A</a>	N/A	N/A	None
Rhode Island	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
South Carolina	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
South Dakota	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Tennessee	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Educator's Guide Link</a>	N/A	
Texas	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
Utah	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	N/A	N/A	None
Vermont	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
		<a href="#">Model Procedures Link</a>	N/A	
Virginia	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	None
Washington	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link (PDF)</a>	<a href="#">Student Safety Plan (DOC)</a>	None
			<a href="#">(HIB) Intervention Tip Sheet (PDF)</a>	
West Virginia	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None
Wisconsin	<a href="#">Law/Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link (DOC)</a>	<a href="#">State Website</a>	Training webinars added to website
Wyoming	<a href="#">Law/ Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	<a href="#">Second Model Policy Example</a>	None
District of Columbia	<a href="#">Law/ Policy Overview</a>	<a href="#">Model Policy Link</a>	N/A	None



## Appendix H. Key Points of Research Review

Key Points	Citation
Bullying prevalence is higher among children with neurodevelopmental and psychiatric conditions, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions.	<a href="#">Abregú-Crespo, R., et al. (2024). School bullying in children and adolescents with neurodevelopmental and psychiatric conditions: A systematic review and meta-analysis. <i>The Lancet Child &amp; Adolescent Health</i>, 8(2), 122–134.</a>
There are mixed findings on ethnic diversity and bullying perpetration (i.e., some studies found no association while others found a positive link). Recommended that schools should foster inclusive environments to reduce bias-based bullying.	<a href="#">Basilici, M. C., Palladino, B. E., &amp; Menesini, E. (2022). Ethnic diversity and bullying in school: A systematic review. <i>Aggression and Violent Behavior</i>, 65, 101762.</a>
Bully-Victim students were less likely to graduate on time and faced higher risks of mental health issues and criminal justice involvement.	<a href="#">Bettencourt, A. F., Clary, L. K., Ialongo, N., &amp; Musci, R. J. (2023). Long-term consequences of bullying involvement in first grade. <i>Journal of School Psychology</i>, 97, 63–76.</a>
When teachers used disciplinary sanctions, it reduced bullying and victimization. When teachers used mediation, it inadvertently raised the likelihood of bullying.	<a href="#">Burger, C., Strohmeier, D., &amp; Kollerová, L. (2022). Teachers can make a difference in bullying: Effects of teacher interventions on students' adoption of bully, victim, bully-victim, or defender roles across time. <i>Journal of Youth and Adolescence</i>, 51, 2312–2327.</a>
Digital health interventions moderately reduced bullying and cyberbullying. It was recommended that schools should integrate digital health interventions as part of broader bullying prevention strategies.	<a href="#">Chen, Q., Chan, K. L., Guo, S., Chen, M., Lo, C. K., &amp; Ip, P. (2023). Effectiveness of digital health interventions in reducing bullying and cyberbullying: A meta-analysis. <i>Trauma, Violence, &amp; Abuse</i>, 24(3), 1986-2002.</a>
Obese and overweight children were more likely to experience bullying compared to peers with healthy weight. It was recommended that bullying prevention policies should explicitly address weight-based bullying.	<a href="#">Cheng, S., Kaminga, A. C., Liu, Q., Wu, F., Wang, Z., Wang, X., &amp; Liu, X. (2022). Association between weight status and bullying experiences among children and adolescents in schools: An updated meta-analysis. <i>Child Abuse &amp; Neglect</i>, 134, 105833.</a>
Most preservice teachers are concerned about bullying, but many still view it as "part of growing up." It is recommended that teacher training programs prioritize equipping preservice teachers with skills to identify and intervene in bullying.	<a href="#">Dawes, M., Gariton, C., Starrett, A., Irdam, G., &amp; Irvin, M. J. (2023). Preservice teachers' knowledge and attitudes toward bullying: A systematic review. <i>Review of Educational Research</i>, 93(2), 195–235.</a>
Positive teacher-student relationships mitigated bullying involvement among students with emotional and behavioral difficulties.	<a href="#">Dietrich, L., Jurkowski, S., Schwarzer, N.-H., &amp; Zimmermann, D. (2023). The role of teachers in the bullying involvement of students with emotional and behavioral difficulties. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i>, 135, 104311.</a>



Key Points	Citation
Bullying negatively impacted adolescents' physical, psychological, social, and environmental quality of life domains.	<a href="#">Dubey, V. P., Kievišienė, J., Rauckiene-Michealsson, A., Norkiene, S., Razbadauskas, A., &amp; Agostinis-Sobrinho, C. (2022). Bullying and health-related quality of life among adolescents—A systematic review. <i>Children</i>, 9(6), 766.</a>
Student victims of bullying and cyberbullying led to increases in depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and academic challenges.	<a href="#">Esquivel, F. A., López, I. L. de L. G., &amp; Benavides, A. D. (2023). Emotional impact of bullying and cyber bullying: Perceptions and effects on students. <i>Revista Caribeña de Ciencias Sociales</i>, 12(1), 367–383.</a>
Cognitively disengaging from one's morals supports the transition from being a victim of bullying to being the perpetrator of bullying.	<a href="#">Falla, D., Ortega-Ruiz, R., Runions, K., &amp; Romera, E. M. (2022). Why do victims become perpetrators of peer bullying? Moral disengagement in the cycle of violence. <i>Youth &amp; Society</i>, 54(3), 397-418.</a>
Teacher bullying of students occurs globally with a prevalence ranging from 0.6% to 90% across studies.	<a href="#">Gusfre, K. S., Støen, J., &amp; Fandrem, H. (2023). Bullying by teachers towards students—a scoping review. <i>International Journal of Bullying Prevention</i>, 5, 331–347.</a>
Adolescents who focus more on getting ahead socially are more likely to bully others than adolescents who focus more on getting along with others. This also increased the popularity of bullying adolescents, but reduced their likeability.	<a href="#">Hensums, M., Brummelman, E., Larsen, H., van den Bos, W., &amp; Overbeek, G. (2023). Social goals and gains of adolescent bullying and aggression: A meta-analysis. <i>Developmental Review</i>, 68, 101073.</a>
Empathy training reduced bullying behaviors significantly for adolescents in a detention setting.	<a href="#">Hikmat, R., Suryani, S., Yosep, I., Jeharsae, R., Pramukti, I., Sriati, A., ... Purnama, H. (2024). The effect of empathy training on bullying behavior in juvenile prisoners: A quasi experiment. <i>Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare</i>, 17, 4177–4188.</a>
Being the victim of bullying and cyberbullying was associated with higher levels of suicidal behavior and depression and lower self-esteem. However, students who were more connected to their school had a buffer effect against the negative outcomes of cyberbullying.	<a href="#">Lucas-Molina, B., Pérez-Albéniz, A., Solbes-Canales, I., Ortuño-Sierra, J., &amp; Fonseca-Pedrero, E. (2022). Bullying, cyberbullying and mental health: The role of student connectedness as a school protective factor. <i>Psychosocial Intervention</i>, 31(1), 33-41.</a>
Bullying victimization significantly harmed mental health.	<a href="#">Montes, Á., Sanmarco, J., Novo, M., Cea, B., &amp; Arce, R. (2022). Estimating the psychological harm consequence of bullying victimization: A meta-analytic review for forensic evaluation. <i>International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health</i>, 19(21), 13852.</a>



Key Points	Citation
Teachers rarely know that repetition is a core component of bullying and training is likely required for teachers to know how to effectively intervene in bullying situations.	<a href="#">Paljakka, A. (2024). Teachers' awareness and sensitivity to a bullying incident: A qualitative study. International Journal of Bullying Prevention, 6(3), 322–340.</a>
Bullying significantly decreased during the COVID-19 lockdowns and there did not appear to be a significant increase in cyberbullying.	<a href="#">Repo, J., Herkama, S., &amp; Salmivalli, C. (2023). Bullying interrupted: Victimized students in remote schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic. International Journal of Bullying Prevention, 5, 181–193.</a>
Transgender youth experienced more bullying and reported poorer mental health than cisgender youth. While transfeminine youth faced the most bullying, transmasculine youth had the most mental health symptoms. In each group, bullying was associated with poorer mental health.	<a href="#">Sares-Jäske, L., Czibalmos, M., Majlander, S., Siukola, R., Klemetti, R., Luopa, P., et al. (2023). Gendered differences in experiences of bullying and mental health among transgender and cisgender youth. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 52, 1531–1548.</a>
Both being a victim of bullying and perpetrating bullying may increase the risk of adverse psychological outcomes in terms of non-suicidal self-injury and suicidality in the short and the long term.	<a href="#">Serafini, G., Aguglia, A., Amerio, A., et al. (2023). The relationship between bullying victimization and perpetration and non-suicidal self-injury: A systematic review. Child Psychiatry and Human Development, 54, 154–175.</a>
On average, bullying victimization declined over time with a significant drop noted between grade 8 and grade 9 (the transition into high school), with few differences between girls and boys. For some adolescents, however, there was an increase in bullying during the transition to high school.	<a href="#">Vaillancourt, T., Brittain, H., Farrell, A. H., Krygsman, A., &amp; Vitoroulis, I. (2023). Bullying involvement and the transition to high school: A brief report. Aggressive Behavior, 49, 409–417.</a>
Teachers who receive training on bullying prevention or are part of school-wide programs perceive themselves as being more able to effectively intervene in bullying situations. Moreover, when teachers have higher self-efficacy, they are more likely to intervene in bullying situations.	<a href="#">van Aalst, D. A., Huitsing, G., &amp; Veenstra, R. (2024). A systematic review on primary school teachers' characteristics and behaviors in identifying, preventing, and reducing bullying. International Journal of Bullying Prevention, 6, 124–137.</a>
Overall, bullying students were more popular, but also more rejected and scored lower on social preference compared with non-bullying students.	<a href="#">Wiertsema, M., Vrijen, C., Ploeg, R., Sentse, M., &amp; Kretschmer, T. (2023). Bullying perpetration and social status in the peer group: A meta-analysis. Journal of Adolescence, 95, 34–55.</a>



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