

Regional School District 17  
Haddam-Killingworth

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# Safe School Climate Plan



**Regional School District 17**  
**Safe School Climate Plan**

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## Regional School District 17

### Safe School Climate Plan

The Region 17 schools promote a secure and safe school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior or teen dating violence. Therefore bullying or harassment of a student by another student is prohibited.

Consistent with legislative requirements, the Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan that contains the essential elements outlined in Public Act 11-232 An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws. This plan also includes policies and procedures related to Sexual Harassment and Sex Discrimination.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, sex discrimination or teen dating violence, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device, or an electronic mobile device, owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such act(s):

1. Creates a hostile environment at school for the target.
2. Infringes on the rights of the target at school, or
3. Substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.

Such acts are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement.

**Bullying** is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, teen dating violence, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student attending school in the same district that:

- I. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
- II. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
- III. creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
- IV. infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
- V. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

**Cyberbullying** Any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

The following sections outline and further delineate key components and information related to the RSD 17 Safe School Climate Plan. For further information, or specific language and procedures in the plan, please refer to the RSD 17 Board of Education policies regarding Bullying (P-5131.911 a), and Harassment (P-5131.911 b), and Sexual Harassment (P-5145.5) included in the Appendix.

**School Climate** The quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults.

**Hostile Environment** A situation in which bullying or harassment among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.

**Harassment** Any physical or verbal hostility toward someone with legally protected status. Such status pertains to race, color, religious creed, gender, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, disability (Including past or present history of mental disability), physical disability, learning disability, mental retardation, genetic information, prior criminal conviction, or other lawfully protected status. Such hostility can be severe, persistent, or pervasive.

**Sex Discrimination** occurs when a person, because of his or her sex, is denied participation in or the benefits of any education program receiving federal financial assistance.

**Sexual Harassment:** In a school setting, sexual harassment is conduct that 1) is sexual in nature; 2) is unwelcome; and 3) denies or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from a school's educational program. Sexual harassment can be verbal, nonverbal or physical. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment creates a hostile environment if the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive such that it interferes with or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's program. Although not an exhaustive list, the following are examples of sexual conduct prohibited by this policy:

1. Statements or other conduct indicating that a student's submission to, or rejection of, sexual overtures or advances will affect the student's grades and/or other academic progress.
2. Unwelcome attention and/or advances of a sexual nature, including verbal comments, sexual invitations, leering and physical touching.
3. Display of sexually suggestive objects, or use of sexually suggestive or obscene remarks, invitations, letters, emails, text messages, notes, slurs, jokes, pictures, cartoons, epithets or gestures.
4. Touching of a sexual nature.
5. Telling sexual or dirty jokes.
6. Transmitting or displaying emails or websites of a sexual nature.
7. Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.

**Sexual Violence:** Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. For the purposes of this policy, sexual violence refers to physical acts that are sexual in nature, perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol.

**Electronic communication** Any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system.

**Mobile electronic device** Any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted.

### **Key Roles and Responsibilities**

**Safe School Climate Coordinator:** Dr. Holly Hageman, Assistant Superintendent

The Safe School Climate Coordinator will meet with the Safe School Climate Specialists twice during the school year to review and discuss issues relating to school climate, bullying and harassment, and to consider adjustments to the Safe School Climate Plan as needed.

#### **Safe School Climate Specialists**

Haddam Killingworth High School: Sheila Ward; Assistant Principal

Haddam Killingworth Middle School: Ryan Mackenzie; Assistant Principal

Haddam Elementary School: Brienne Whidden; Principal

Burr Elementary School: Eric Larson; Principal

Killingworth Elementary School: Dennis Reed; Principal

### **Safe School Climate School Committees**

All Safe School Climate Committees will meet twice each year to review efforts to foster a safe school climate and to develop plans to address any issues related to bullying or harassment in the school. In particular, the committee shall review data regarding bullying and harassment, review policies related to bullying and harassment, review the Safe School Climate plan as it relates to that school, discuss opportunities to educate students, employees and parents/guardians on issues related to bullying and harassment, and address any other duties as determined by the Principal (or his or her designee) as it relates to building and maintaining a positive school climate and preventing bullying and harassment.

### **Prevention and Intervention**

RSD 17 has various programs in place for building positive school climate, as well as educating students and staff in a variety of topics related to bullying and teen dating violence prevention and intervention. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- School-wide Expectations for Positive Behavior
- School-wide Assemblies Clarifying and Celebrating Positive Behavior
- HKHS Advisory Program
- HKMS CORE Values – Respect, Responsibility, Caring
- Developmental Guidance Curriculum and Classroom Lessons
- Small Group and Individual Counseling Sessions including Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) tiered supports
- Clubs & Programs- Student Council, Student Advisory Group, Spirit Club, etc.
- Professional development for teachers and staff on bullying, harassment, suicide prevention, and other appropriate and necessary training.

### **Bullying/Harassment/Sexual Harassment Reporting, Investigating, and Communicating Protocol**

Reports of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or teen dating violence may be received from students, school personnel, parents/guardians or may be anonymous. Students and parents/guardians may file written reports of bullying, sexual harassment, harassment, or teen dating violence with a school administrator or Safe School Climate Specialist.

Students may request anonymity when making a report to a school employee or to the Safe School Climate Specialist. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, while maintaining the confidentiality of the source of the

complaint. *Note that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.* Such reports made to a school employee should be promptly forwarded to a school administrator or Safe School Specialist.

School employees who witness acts of bullying, sexual harassment, harassment, or teen dating violence, or receive reports of bullying, sexual harassment, harassment, or teen dating violence must orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or school administrator not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report. The same school employee must file a written report not later than two school days after making the oral report.

Informal reports that are considered to be bullying, sexual harassment, harassment, or teen dating violence will be promptly transcribed into writing and will follow the same procedure outlined above.

**All reports of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or teen dating violence will be reviewed and investigated.**

Upon receipt of a **sexual harassment** or **sex discrimination** complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall either promptly commence an investigation of the complaint, or shall designate a school administrator to promptly investigate the complaint. The Title IX Coordinator or designee shall:

- a) offer to meet with the complainant within ten (10) school days to discuss the nature of the complaint, identify individuals the complainant believes has relevant information, and obtain any relevant documents the complainant may have;
- b) provide the complainant with a copy of the Board's sexual harassment policy and accompanying regulations;
- c) consider whether any interim measures may be appropriate to protect the alleged victim, pending the outcome of the investigation;
- d) investigate the factual basis of the complaint, including, as applicable, conducting interviews with individuals deemed relevant to the complaint; and re-interview individuals, if deemed necessary;
- e) consider whether alleged sex discrimination or sexual harassment has occurred or whether a hostile school environment has been created, including consideration of the effects of off-campus conduct on the school;
- f) communicate the outcome of the investigation in writing to the complainant, and to any individual properly identified as a party to the complaint (to the extent permitted by state and federal confidentiality requirements), within sixty (60) school days from the date the complaint was received by the Superintendent's office. The investigator may extend this deadline for no more than fifteen (15) additional school days if needed to complete the investigation. The complainant shall be notified of such extension. The written notice shall include a finding whether the complaint was substantiated and if so, shall identify, to the

extent possible, how the district will remedy the discrimination or harassment, adhering to the requirements of state and federal law;

g) when sex discrimination or sexual harassment has been found, take steps that are reasonably calculated to end the discrimination, take corrective and/or disciplinary action aimed at preventing the recurrence of the harassment or discrimination, as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or his/her designee, and take steps to remedy the effects of the sex discrimination or sexual harassment;

If the student complainant or alleged perpetrator is dissatisfied with the findings of the investigation, he or she may file a written appeal within thirty (30) calendar days to the Title IX Coordinator, or, if he/she conducted the investigation, to the Superintendent of Schools, who shall review the Title IX Coordinator or designee's written report, the information collected by the Title IX Coordinator or designee together with the recommended disposition of the complaint to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or sex discrimination. The Title IX Coordinator or Superintendent of Schools may determine if further action and/or investigation is warranted. After completing this review, the Title IX Coordinator or Superintendent of Schools shall respond to the complainant, in writing, within fifteen (15) school days following the receipt of the written request for review.

If a sex discrimination complaint raises a concern about bullying behavior, the Title IX Coordinator shall notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee who shall coordinate any bullying investigation with the Title IX Coordinator, so as to ensure that any such bullying investigation complies with the requirements of applicable Board policies.

Retaliation against any individual who complains pursuant to the Board's policy and regulations is strictly prohibited. The district will take actions necessary to prevent retaliation as a result of filing a complaint.

At any time, a complainant alleging sex discrimination or sexual harassment may file a formal complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office, U.S. Department of Education, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921 (TELEPHONE NUMBER (617) 289-0111).

Copies of this regulation will be distributed to all students.

#### **Record-Keeping System: Safe School Climate Binder/Incident Log**

Each school shall maintain complaints of bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment, along with supporting documentation received and/or created as a result of bullying/sexual harassment/harassment investigations in a binder maintained by the school's Safe School Climate Specialist.

The Safe School Climate Specialist of each school shall maintain a log in the binder detailing the date of receipt of any/all bullying/harassment/sexual harassment complaints; date the



investigation commenced; any interim safety/intervention measures afforded during the investigation; date investigation was completed and the resolution (allegation verified or not); a completed investigation report (including findings), and; any safety/intervention measures afforded upon completion of the investigation.

The Safe School Climate Specialist of each school shall maintain a log of the number of verified acts of bullying in the school and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request (page 13). Given that any determination of bullying involves repeated acts, each investigation that results in a verified act of bullying for that school year shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying unless the specific actions that are the subject of each report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying. The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of bullying in each school and shall not set out the particulars of each verified act, including, but not limited to any personally identifiable student information, which is confidential information by law.

The Safe School Climate Specialist of each school shall maintain a log in the binder of each sexual harassment complaint.



Are there witnesses who can provide more information regarding your report?

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

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

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

If the witnesses are not school district staff or students, please provide contact information.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Have there been previous incidents that you are aware of? (check one)  **Yes**  **No**

If "yes", please describe the behavior of concern, the approximate dates and the location:

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

Were these incidents reported to school employees? (check one)  **Yes**  **No**

If "Yes", to whom was it reported and when?

Who: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

How was it reported? (circle one)      **Verbal**      **Written**

I verify that the above information and events are accurately depicted to the best of my knowledge.

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Signature of Reporter

Date Submitted

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Received By

Date

**Administrator’s Summary of Investigation:**

(Attach investigative report if space provided below is not sufficient, and note below “See Attached.”)

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**Resolutions/Conclusions from the Investigation**

**Finding of Policy Violation**    **Yes**    **No**

- Bullying       Sexual Harassment       Sex Discrimination       Teen Dating Violence
- Harassment (Identify Protected Class: \_\_\_\_\_)  
(i.e. color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability)

Investigator Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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

District Title IX Coordinator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(if verified Sexual Harassment case)

District Safe School Climate Coordinator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(if verified Bullying case)



# Regional School District 17

## Verified Bullying/Harassment Communications (Form C)

**Safe School Climate Specialist or Title IX Coordinator completes the following actions for verified bullying/harassment/sexual harassment cases:**

**1. Notification has been made to parents of student perpetrator(s):**

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Notification has been made to parents of student target:**

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Safe School Climate Specialist has developed and implemented Student Safety Support/Intervention Plan. Start date: \_\_\_\_\_**

**4. Report Submission Checklist:**

\_\_\_\_ Alleged Bullying/Harassment/Sexual Harassment Report and Investigation (Form A)

\_\_\_\_ Intervention Plan (Form B) (AND File in each involved students' C file; exclude other students names)

\_\_\_\_ Verified Bullying/Harassment/Sexual Harassment Communications (Form C)

\_\_\_\_ File the above documents in the Safe School Climate Binder

\_\_\_\_ Complete Safe School Climate Record-Keeping Log Entry

**Safe School Climate Coordinator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_**

# Regional School District 17

## SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE RECORD-KEEPING LOG

Date of Receipt of Alleged Complaint	Nature of Complaint	Date Investigation Commenced	Interim Measures Needed and Afforded	Resolution	Intervention/Safety Plan Created and Period of Plan for Verified Incidents
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Sex Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Dating Violence		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date Investigation Completed: _____</li> <li>Allegation Verified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</li> <li>• Investigation Report Completed (including findings) Date: _____</li> <li>• Verified Findings Report/Letter Sent to District Safe School Climate Coordinator Date Sent: _____</li> </ul>	Dates: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Sex Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Dating Violence		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date Investigation Completed: _____</li> <li>Allegation Verified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</li> <li>• Investigation Report Completed (including findings) Date: _____</li> <li>• Verified Findings Report/Letter Sent to District Safe School Climate Coordinator Date Sent: _____</li> </ul>	Dates: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Sex Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Dating Violence		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date Investigation Completed: _____</li> <li>Allegation Verified: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</li> <li>• Investigation Report Completed (including findings) Date: _____</li> <li>• Verified Findings Report/Letter Sent to District Safe School Climate Coordinator Date Sent: _____</li> </ul>	Dates: _____

School to copy blank log pages for a supply in a binder

# Regional School District 17

## SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN

### VERIFIED ACTS OF BULLYING REPORTING LOG

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Verified Acts of Bullying

Month	Number of Acts Verified
September	
October	
November	
December	
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
<b>Total Verified Acts</b>	



# Regional School District 17

## SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN

### COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT REPORTING LOG

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Allegation Report	Verified or Not

## Appendix A

### Students: Bullying

The Region 17 Board of Education promotes a secure and safe school climate, conducive to teaching and learning, that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore it is the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

Consistent with legislative requirements the Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan that contains the essential elements outlined in Public Act 11-232 *An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws*.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device, or an electronic mobile device, owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

1. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim
2. infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school

are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement.

### Definitions:

**“Bullying”**- is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student in the same school district that: (A) causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student’s property, (B) places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (C) creates a hostile environment at school for such student (a hostile environment is a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to alter the conditions of the school climate), (D) infringes on the rights of the student at school, or (E) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. This definition of “bullying” includes, but is not limited to, written, verbal, or electronic communications, or physical acts or gestures that are based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

**“Cyberbullying”** - Any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices, or any electronic communications. In order for it to be identified as “cyberbullying” requiring school/program intervention, the students involved must attend school in the same district.

**“School Climate”** - The quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults.

“School Employee” - A teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional, or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle, or high school; or any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to, or on behalf of students, enrolled in a public elementary, middle, or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education.

“**Off Campus Bullying**” - The new law explicitly requires school districts to prohibit bullying which occurs outside of the school setting if such bullying 1) creates a hostile school environment for the victim; 2) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or 3) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

“**Harassment**” – Any physical or verbal hostility toward someone with legally protected status. Such status pertains to race, color, religious creed, gender, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, disability (Including past or present history of mental disability), physical disability, learning disability, mental retardation, genetic information, prior criminal conviction, or other lawfully protected status. Such hostility can be severe, persistent, or pervasive.

As part of this policy, the Board of Education shall develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan to address the existence of bullying in its schools. Such plans shall establish deadlines for reporting, investigating and notifying parents and guardians about bullying incidents; prohibit retaliation against those who report bullying; and require school officials to notify law enforcement officials when it is believed that bullying conduct constitutes a crime.

### **Safe School Climate Assessment**

The Board requires each school in the District, on or after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, to complete an assessment using school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the Department of Education pursuant to C.G.S. 10-222h, as amended by PA 11-232. The Board will collect the school climate assessments and submit them to the Department of Education.

This policy shall not be interpreted to prohibit a reasonable and civil exchange of opinions, or debate that is protected by state or federal law.

- (c.f. 0521-Nondiscrimination)
- (c.f. 5114-Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
- (c.f. 5131-Conduct)
- (c.f. 5131.21-Violent and Aggressive Behavior)
- (c.f. 5131.8-Out of School Misconduct)
- (c.f. 5131913- Cyberbullying)
- (c.f. 5144- Discipline/Punishment)
- (c.f. 5145.5- Sexual Harrassment)
- (c.f. 6121-Nondiscrimination)

(c.f. 6121.1-Equal Educational Opportunity)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes  
10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student records. Inspection and subpoena of school or student records.  
10-222d Policy on Bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160 and PA 11-232  
PA 06-115 An Act Concerning Bullying Policies in Schools and Notices Sent to Parents or Legal Guardians.  
PA 11-232 An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws.

Policy adopted: February 7, 2012 REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17  
Higganum, Connecticut

**Appendix B****POLICY REGARDING SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (STUDENTS)**

It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of sex discrimination or sexual harassment is prohibited, whether by students, Board employees or third parties subject to the control of the Board. Students, Board employees and third parties are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of students. Any student or employee who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

The Superintendent of Schools shall develop Administrative Regulations implementing this Policy.

**Definitions**

**Sex discrimination** occurs when a person, because of his or her sex, is denied participation in or the benefits of any education program receiving federal financial assistance.

**Sexual harassment:** In a school setting, sexual harassment is conduct that 1) is sexual in nature; 2) is unwelcome; and 3) denies or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from a school's educational program. Sexual harassment can be verbal, nonverbal or physical. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment creates a hostile environment if the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive such that it interferes with or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's program. Although not an exhaustive list, the following are examples of sexual conduct prohibited by this policy:

1. Statements or other conduct indicating that a student's submission to, or rejection of, sexual overtures or advances will affect the student's grades and/or other academic progress.
2. Unwelcome attention and/or advances of a sexual nature, including verbal comments, sexual invitations, leering and physical touching.
3. Display of sexually suggestive objects, or use of sexually suggestive or obscene remarks, invitations, letters, emails, text messages, notes, slurs, jokes, pictures, cartoons, epithets or gestures.
4. Touching of a sexual nature.
5. Telling sexual or dirty jokes.
6. Transmitting or displaying emails or websites of a sexual nature.
7. Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.

**Sexual Violence:** Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. For the purposes of this policy, sexual violence refers to physical acts that are sexual in nature, perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol.

### Procedure

It is the express policy of the Board of Education to encourage victims of sex discrimination or sexual harassment to report such claims. A student or a parent or guardian acting on behalf of the student may file a report setting out the reasons he or she believes the student has been subjected to sex discrimination or sexual harassment committed by another student, an employee or other individual under the control of the Board. The Board's complaint procedures, along with a sexual discrimination and sexual harassment reporting form, are set out in the Board's Administrative Regulations Regarding Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Students) R 5145.5. The policy and regulation is available online at [www.rsd17.org](http://www.rsd17.org) for the Board policies or a copy of the regulation and form can be obtained upon request from the main office of any district school or at the Board offices.

Students are encouraged to promptly report complaints of sex discrimination or sexual harassment to the appropriate personnel and in the manner, as set forth in the Administrative Regulations implementing this Policy. The district will investigate such complaints promptly, take interim measures, and take corrective action where appropriate. The district will maintain confidentiality to the extent appropriate. The district will not tolerate any reprisals or retaliation that occurs as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment or sex discrimination. Any such reprisals or retaliation will result in disciplinary action against the retaliator.

The school district will periodically provide staff development for district administrators, and periodically distribute this Policy and the implementing Administrative Regulations to staff and students in an effort to maintain an environment free of sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

Sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment may also constitute bullying behavior under the Board's Bullying Behavior in the Schools Policy.

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Legal References:

United States Constitution, Amendment XIV

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 34 C.F.R § 106.1, et seq.

Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District, 524 U.S. 274 (1998)

Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, 526 U.S. 629 (1999)

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, 66 Fed. Reg. 5512 (Jan. 19, 2001).

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence (April 4, 2011).

Constitution of the State of Connecticut, Article I, Section 20.

ADOPTED: \_\_ \_

REVISED: \_\_ \_