

Safe School Climate Plan

Clinton Public Schools

Clinton, CT
2014



Clinton Public Schools Safe School Climate Plan

Section 1: Introduction

The Safe School Climate Plan was developed by the Board of Education Policy Subcommittee in response to Public Act 11-232, and was approved on December 5, 2011. The Clinton Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination. In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, the Board has developed this plan, consistent with state law and Board Policy. This Plan represents a comprehensive approach to establishing positive school climate and building 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. It also focuses a specific plan to address bullying and cyberbullying and sets forth the Board's expectations for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying.

“Bullying” means 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 attending school in the same district that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
2. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
4. infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
5. 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.

The following sections of this guide are intended to outline and further delineate key components and information related to the Clinton Public Schools Safe School Climate Plan. For further information, or specific language in the plan, please refer to the full policy and regulation located in the Appendix.

Section 2: Key Roles and Responsibilities

Safe School Climate Coordinator

Safe School Climate Specialists*

Safe School Climate Committees**

*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 to consider adjustments to the Safe School Climate Plan as necessary.

**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 in the school. In particular, the committee shall review data regarding bullying, review policies related to bullying, 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 address any other duties as determined by the Principal as it relates to building and maintaining positive school climate and preventing bullying. Committees will consist of the membership listed above as well as a parent representative.

Section 3: Programs for Prevention and Intervention

The Clinton Public Schools 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 prevention and intervention. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- K-12 Guidance Curriculum
- K-12 Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum
- Schoolwide Expectations for positive behavior
- Good Character Messages/Words of Wisdom
- Positive reinforcement Programs-Caught Doing Good, Paw Proud
- Classroom Lessons-Second Step Program, Developmental Guidance
- Responsive Classroom Elementary Model
- Schoolwide Assemblies
- Morgan Advisory Program
- Mentoring (Adult-Student)
- Clubs & Programs- Student Council, Peer Puppeteers, Adopt-a-Freshman, Peer Advocates, REACT, STEP
- Small Group and Individual Counseling Sessions
- Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI programs)

Section 4: Process and Procedures

Reports of bullying may be received from students, school personnel, parents/guardians or may be anonymous. Students and parents/guardians may file written reports of bullying with the building administrator or Safe School Climate Specialist.

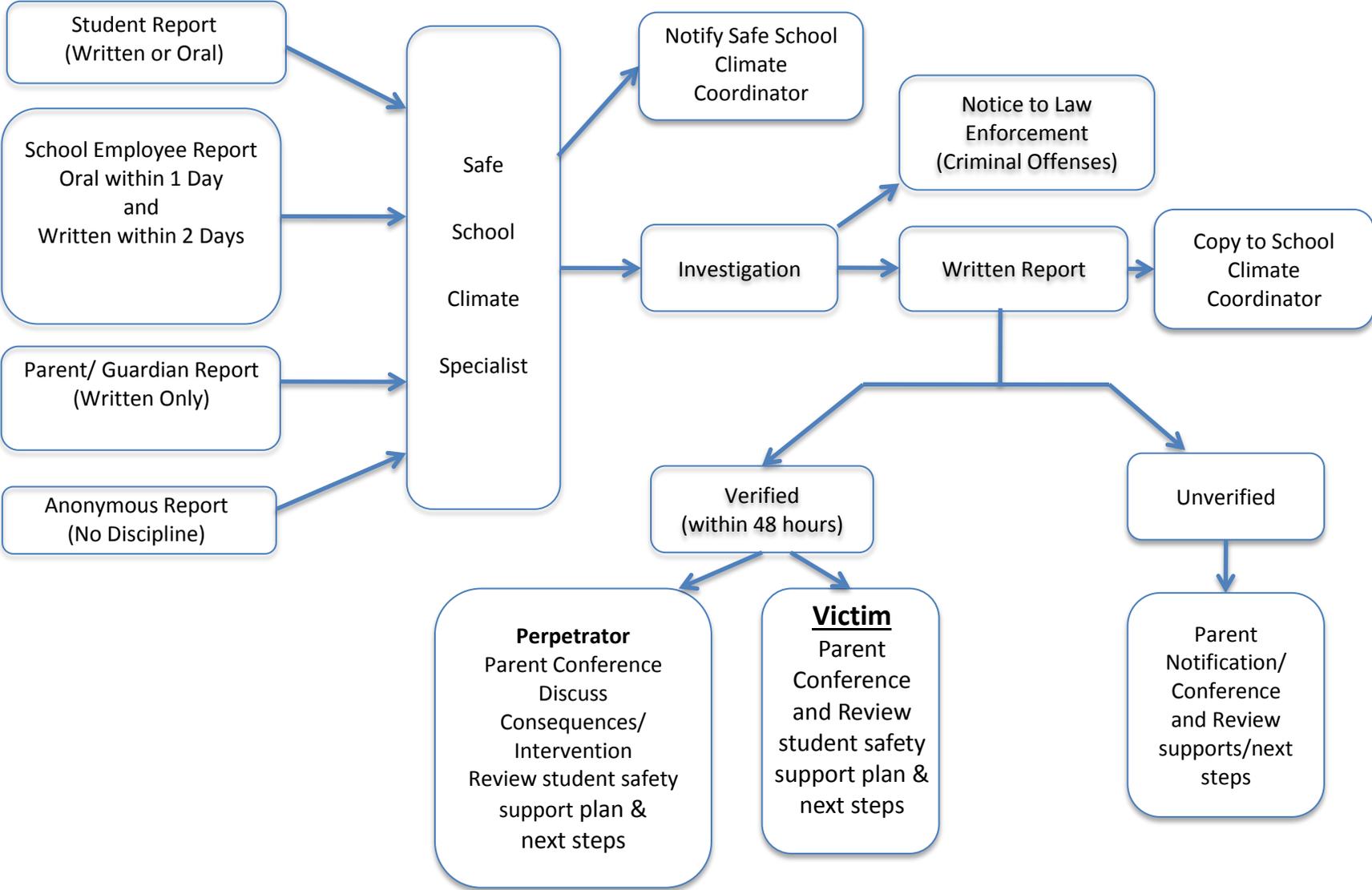
Students may request anonymity when making a report to a school employee or to the Safe School Climate Specialist. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, while maintaining the confidentiality of the source of the complaint. Note that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.

School employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying **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 of bullying. The same school employee **must** file a written report **not later than two school days** after making the oral report.

All reports of bullying will be reviewed and investigated.

The process for reporting, investigating, and responding to complaints of bullying is outlined in the diagram on the next page.

Process for Reporting of Suspected Bullying Behaviors



Section 5: Documentation and Maintenance of Log

Each school shall maintain written complaints of bullying, along with supporting documentation received and/or created as a result of bullying investigations, consistent with the Board's obligations under state and federal law. All forms to be utilized for reporting and documentation purposes are found in the Appendix.

A copy of the written reports and accompanying documentation that result from all investigations of bullying by the Safe School Climate Specialist will be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Coordinator.

The Principal of each school shall maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in the school and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. 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.

Section 6: Safe School Climate Plan Surveys

The State Department of Education (SDE) in collaboration with the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) developed Student, Parent and Staff School Climate surveys to be administered by districts biennially, beginning in the 2012-2013 school year. There are three student survey forms that have been provided to be utilized at particular grade level ranges; the Early Elementary (K-3), Upper Elementary/Middle (4-8) and Middle/High School (9-12). Please refer to the appendix for copies of the Student, Parent and Staff School Climate surveys.

Districts may administer the surveys at any time during the school year, and may use an electronic survey format to facilitate the collection and analysis of data. All districts must survey one grade level within each category and administer the parent survey to the parents of the selected grade levels. All school staff members will be asked to participate in the Staff School Climate survey.

The data collected will be reported to the State Department of Education and will be reviewed by the Safe School Climate Committees and Safe School Climate Coordinator. The results of the surveys will be used to determine effective strategies and supports and to identify next steps or areas for focus in order to maintain and improve a positive school climate.

