NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN

NEW HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

Reginald Mayo, Ph.D
Superintendent of Schools

New Haven Public Schools
54 Meadow Street
New Haven, CT 06519
The New Haven Public Schools Safe School Climate Plan was developed by the district’s Bullying Prevention Committee Safe School Climate Committee:

Teddi Barra, Coordinator – Transportation Coordinator
Jene Flores, Family Educator - Elementary School
Vallerie Hudson-Brown, Title IX District Coordinator
Typhanie Jackson, Director - Student Services
Laurian Kehoe, Administrative Intern
Marcia Raymond, Parent
Cedric Robinson, Dean of Students – Elementary School
Carolyn Ross-Lee, School Climate Survey Coordinator
Dee Speese-Linehan, Supervisor - Social Development/Truancy
Leslie Stancarone, Asst. Principal – Elementary School
John Vigliotti, Principal on Special Assignment
Eugene Vitelli, Consultant

This document has been developed in compliance with relevant Federal and State laws and guidelines.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision Statement</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities/Committees</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Timelines</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying Procedural Response</td>
<td>7-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment Procedural Response</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nondiscrimination Procedural Response</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment Procedural Response</td>
<td>12-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Procedural Response</td>
<td>17-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Intervention Strategies</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention and Resolution Measures</td>
<td>21-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Definitions</td>
<td>23-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>25-28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Board Approved: 9/12
NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Safe School Climate Plan

The vision of New Haven Public Schools is to ensure that all students will learn, succeed, think independently and value all people. We also strive to provide nurturing, healthy, and safe environments in school, at school events and to and from school.

New Haven Public Schools aim to teach respect, trust, understanding acceptance and appreciation of individual differences among all students through quality teaching and effective leadership. We also work to make sure that family and community engagement as well as an equitable system of supports and resources is provided to everyone.

In accordance with Public Act 11-232, Connecticut school districts are required to adhere to specific state guidelines. The Safe School Climate Plan was developed to reduce incidents of student bullying and to create and actively promote safe school environments for all students. The plan will address five major socially challenging behaviors. These challenges include bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination and teen suicide.

Responsibilities of the District

- Board of Education approves Safe School Climate Plan
- Superintendent appoints Safe School Climate Coordinator to assist schools in implement the district’s Safe School Climate Plan
- All school employees who interact with students, must receive annual training on prevention and reporting acts of bullying. Teacher candidates and beginning teachers must also receive training.

Responsibilities of Safe School Climate Coordinator

- Assist schools in implementing district’s Safe School Climate Plan
- Receive and analyze data regarding reports of bullying and harassment
- Meet with school climate specialists a minimum of twice during the school year to review and discuss issues relating to the overall school climate, and make recommendations to the school climate plan
- Coordinate annual staff training on bullying prevention and harassment
- Report annually the number of verified acts of bullying reported by each school to the SDE
Responsibilities of Safe School Climate Committee

- Identify and address patterns, review bullying reports and school policies
- Educate the school community on issues related to bullying and harassment
- Make recommendations to the climate coordinator regarding school(s) plan
- Annual assessment of school climate surveys. Share survey results with principal(s)

Responsibilities of Safe School Climate Specialists

- Promptly investigate or supervise the investigation of any written reports of bullying or harassment
- Notify and meet with the parents of students involved in verified acts of bullying or harassment
- Notify parents of the outcome of an investigation within 48 hours after completing the investigation
- Submit a copy of the district’s bullying report/harassment forms to climate coordinator.
- Maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in the school
- Complete the district’s Monthly Tracking Document for Verified Bullying Incidents and submit to Safe School Climate Coordinator
- Identify and address bullying patterns in the school with principal/climate committee
- Advise the school district on its safe school climate plan
- Educate the school community on issues related to bullying

Responsibilities of School Principals

- Designate a Safe School Climate Committee
- Principals will annually present the district’s bullying policy at school orientation sessions and at first staff meetings
- Principals or a designee will present the bullying policy at large school assemblies (parent group meetings, report card night and/or community forums)
- Principals must ensure that the bullying and harassment policy is reviewed with students, parents and staff, a minimum of twice each school year
- Complete biennial assessments of their school’s climate within the assistance of the SDE, and report the results to SDE
- Continue to establish and implement written prevention and intervention strategies. School climate assessment will monitor the progress in this area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Board Approved: 9/12
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Mid-year best practices to address bullying behaviors curriculum distributed to principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>School staff receive youth suicidal behavior detection and prevention training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biannually</td>
<td>Climate Specialists meet with Climate Coord. to recommend plan changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biannually</td>
<td>Review of Safe School Climate Plan for students, parents, and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biannually</td>
<td>School Board approves Safe School Climate Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2012</td>
<td>District-wide bullying/harassment training for employees, parents, and students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>Each school establishes a Safe School Climate Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>Superintendent appoints Safe School Climate Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>District establishes Safe School Climate Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2012 &amp; Annually</td>
<td>Each school employee receives copy of the Safe School Climate Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>Develop the opportunity for ongoing district-wide parent training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>Develop safe school climate link on district website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 2012</td>
<td>Develop pilot procedure for anonymous student reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting July 2012</td>
<td>Biennial – Schools conduct climate assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>New teachers and teacher candidates receive bullying prevention training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 days post</td>
<td>District plan is posted on district website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board approval</td>
<td>Monitoring of all bullying and student harassment reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**

Mid-year entry teachers must attend the succeeding year new teacher orientation to receive bullying prevention training.

Mid-year entry teachers receive information packet containing bullying and harassment policies and school climate plan from NHPS Human Resources Office.

Mid-year distribution to principals of best practices to address bullying behaviors (distributed at administrators’ meeting).
Bullying

**Bullying** is defined as repeated acts by any student(s) in the New Haven Public School district against another student(s) in the district that causes physical or emotional harm to a student or such student’s property, places a student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property, creates a hostile environment at school for such student, infringes on the rights of such student at school, or substantially disrupts the educational process.

Bullying may include but is not limited to, acts based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics: gender, gender identity and expression, ethnicity, national origin, race, sexual orientation, physical, mental, developmental or sensory capacity, academic status, physical appearance, or religion. Bullying extends to hostile written, verbal or electronic communication or physical acts or gestures against any student(s) associated with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of the above perceived differentiating characteristics, including physical appearance, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, developmental or sensory disability.

**Cyberbullying** is the use of technology, including but not limited to email, cellular mobile telephone, instant messaging, web pages, and digital photo, to harass or bully someone.

**The New Haven Board of Education will not tolerate any form of bullying** of members of the New Haven Public School community by students, parents, visitors or employees of the New Haven Public Schools, while on school grounds, school busses, at a school bus stop or school related activities. Bullying occurring outside of the school setting is also prohibited and will not be tolerated if such bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the targeted student, infringes on the targeted student’s rights at school, or substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of school.

The New Haven Public Schools requires students, staff and/or parents to report all cases of bullying immediately, to the school’s administrator, administrator’s designee, or director. Discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying are prohibited. Teachers and other school staff who witness or receive reports of bullying are required to notify the appropriate administrator immediately. The notification must be made in writing.

Language concerning this policy shall be included in the Student/Parent Handbook and Student Code of Conduct.

*You may also contact: The Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), 21 Grand Street, Hartford, CT 06106 (Tel: 860-541-3400 or 800-477-5737) Connecticut law requires that a formal complaint be filed with the Commission within 180 days of the date under which the alleged harassment occurred.*
Bullying Prevention Strategies

New Haven Public Schools is committed to working proactively to address the areas of bullying and sexual harassment. As a district we have developed preventative measures in order to increase our level of awareness.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

1. Establish district Title IX/Safe School Climate Committee

2. Each school establishes a Safe School Climate Committee to identify and address bullying patterns, review bullying reports and school policies, advise the District SSCC on its plan, and educate the school community on issues related to bullying

3. Regular school-wide and classroom discussions with students about preventing and reporting bullying

4. Placement of district posters prohibiting bullying and encouraging reporting, in highly visible areas throughout each school and on school busses

5. District, school and classroom rules against bullying

6. Implementation of bullying prevention curriculum (Social Development anti-bullying curriculum, school surveys) and training on bullying/harassment prevention

7. Principals will present the district’s bullying policy at school orientation sessions and first staff meetings. In addition, principals or a designee will present the bullying policy at large school gatherings (parent group meetings, report card night and/or community forums). Principals must ensure that the district policy is reviewed with students, parents, and staff, a minimum of twice each school year

8. Bi-annual meeting with Title IX Coordinators/Safe School Climate Specialists to recommend plan improvements or changes

9. Annual Title IX/Safe School Climate Committee assessment of school surveys. Share survey results with principals

10. Quarterly monitoring by Committee of all bullying and harassment reports
Bullying Reporting and Investigation Procedures

The following procedures must be followed to implement the New Haven Board of Education’s bullying policy:

1. Students may anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers, and school administrators. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

2. Parents/guardians and all school personnel may file written reports of suspected bullying. Parents should be encouraged to provide as much substantial information as possible i.e., names, dates, possible witnesses, location, etc. No anonymous parent reports will be accepted.

3. School employees who witness acts or receive reports of bullying are required to verbally notify the Title IX Building Coordinator/Safe School Climate Specialist (SSCS) or principal within one (1) school day of witnessing or receiving a report, and to file a written report within three (3) school days after making such verbal report. See “Internal School Bullying Report” form. Title IX Coordinators/Safe School Climate Specialists are required to promptly investigate any written reports.

4. School employees who receive reports of bullying from individuals outside of the school (parents or visitors) should complete the bottom half of the district’s “External School Bullying Report” form. This form will serve as a receipt for the reporting party. WHEN COMPLETING THIS FORM, ONLY INFORMATION PERTAINING TO THE REPORTED TARGET SHOULD BE NOTED. SCHOOL STAFF SHOULD NOT INCLUDE IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE ALLEGED AGGRESSOR.

5. The Internal School Bullying Report form must be completed for reports from within the school building (students or staff). School employees must complete and submit the form to the Title IX Building Coordinator/Safe School Climate Specialist (SSCS) or principal within three (3) school days of witnessing or receiving reports of bullying.

6. If upon investigation the report of bullying is confirmed and the aggressor is a student, parents/guardians of both aggressor and target must be notified and are required to attend at least one meeting. Notification shall include a description of the school’s/district’s investigation, conclusion-based on the investigation, and/or action taken.

7. If upon investigation, the report of bullying is confirmed and the aggressor is an adult (parent or visitor), the parents/guardians of both target and student associated with the aggressor must be notified and are required to meet with the school principal and/or district level staff. Notification shall include a description of the school’s/district’s investigation, conclusion-based on the investigation, and/or action taken.

8. The District’s Title IX Coordinator/Safe School Climate Coordinator will report, annually, to the State Department of Education, the number of verified acts of bullying reported by each school.
Verified Bullying Intervention Strategies

The following list of intervention strategies must be progressively implemented when bullying behavior is verified after a complaint and investigation:

**CONSEQUENCE STRATEGIES FOLLOWING VERIFICATION**

1. Conference with aggressor, administrator and teacher
2. Conferences with target, administrator and teacher
3. Separately scheduled parent conferences with aggressor and target, regarding the bullying incident
4. Referral of the confirmed aggressor for anger management, counseling or to other appropriate community agencies
5. Suspension – determined based on the severity of the bullying
6. Modify school environment
7. Referral to Department of Police, Juvenile Division
8. Arrest
9. Recommendation for expulsion

**CONSEQUENCE STRATEGIES FOR ADULT VISITORS**

1. Banned from school building
2. Notification to Police Department

Bullying Grievance Procedures

Parents and students may appeal the investigative findings by submitting a letter of appeal to the District Title IX Coordinator/Safe School Climate Coordinator or Superintendent of Schools, within five (5) school days of mailing date noted on the External School Bullying Report – Outcome of Investigation form. The District Title IX Coordinator/Safe School Climate Coordinator shall conduct a thorough and objective investigation. The investigator shall make a written report of the results of the investigation and recommendations for the disposition of the matter to the Superintendent of Schools. Copies shall be provided to the complainant and the individual accused in the complaint.

REFER TO THE NHPS BULLYING POLICY FOR COMPLETE POLICY CONTENT AND REGULATIONS
**HARASSMENT**

No form of harassment will be tolerated in the New Haven Public Schools. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling; graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones or the Internet; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school. When such harassment is based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability, it violates civil rights laws. (U.S. Dept. of Educ., OCR).

A student, parent or guardian who wishes to register a complaint alleging harassment in the New Haven Public Schools system may file such a complaint with the relevant principal or School Climate Specialist. If the student and/or parent believe it is inappropriate to discuss the matter with the principal or school coordinator, he or she may report the matter directly to the District Title IX Coordinator, who will undertake an investigation.

**NONDISCRIMINATION**

It is the policy of the New Haven Public School District that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of or otherwise discriminated against under any program, including employment. The New Haven Public Schools system is committed to the principles and laws governing nondiscrimination and shall promote nondiscrimination and an environment free of harassment based on an individual’s race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, (including gender identity/expression) national origin, disability, marital status or age or because of association with individuals based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, disability, marital status or age. Every student has the right to participate fully in classroom instruction and extracurricular activities and such right shall not be abridged or be impaired for any reason not related to his/her individual capabilities.

If an employee or student experiences any discrimination which arises out of our schools or the workplace based on race, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, age, or disability, he or she should promptly report the discriminating act to the Principal or School Climate Specialist. If the employee believes it is inappropriate to discuss the matter with the principal or school coordinator, he or she may report the matter directly to the Director of Human Resources, who will undertake an investigation. If the student and/or parent believe it is inappropriate to discuss the matter with the principal or school coordinator, he or she may report the matter directly to the District Title IX Coordinator, who will undertake an investigation.
SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination. Sexual harassment and sexual violence are prohibited under both Federal and State Title IX laws.

Should sexual harassment be alleged, it is the policy of the New Haven Board of Education that the allegations(s) shall be thoroughly investigated, that there shall be no retaliation against the victim of the alleged harassment, and that the issue shall be expeditiously and appropriately addressed. Teachers and other school staff who witness or receive reports of sexual harassment are required to notify the appropriate administrator within one (1) school day. No form of sexual harassment will be tolerated in the New Haven Public Schools.

DEFINITION

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances or request for sexual favors or any verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment; when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual; or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, or her/his academic status or progress. Sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited behavior by a male toward a female, or by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee, or a teacher to a student. Harassment may be student to student, teacher to student, student to teacher or teacher to teacher. The victim does not have to be the opposite sex of the harasser. The gender of the complainant and/or the alleged harasser is irrelevant, even if they are of the same gender. Sexual harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identify is also prohibited under State law.

Sexual harassment can involve staff members, students, vendors, independent contractors, volunteers, or parents.

EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment can be verbal, non-verbal, physical or via the use of technology, including but not limited to email, instant messaging, web pages, and digital photos. Behaviors that have been found to comprise sexual harassment are:

- telling sexual jokes or stories;
- making sexual comments about a person’s clothing, anatomy, or appearance; repeatedly asking out a person who is not interested
- telling lies, spreading rumors, or gossiping about a person’s personal sex life
- whistling, cat calls, making kissing sounds, smacking lips, howling;
- following a person or blocking a person’s path
- displaying sexually explicit or suggestive posters, cartoons, pictures, calendars or other similar materials
- making sexual gestures with hands or through body movements
- giving gifts of a personal or suggestive nature
- unwanted touching of a person or their hair or clothing
- unwanted hugging, kissing, patting or stroking
• touching or rubbing oneself sexually around another person
• standing close to or brushing up against a person
• requesting sexual favors in exchange for employment or academic benefits or to avoid negative employment or academic consequences
• assault
• attempted rape
• rape

Title IX protects students from sexual harassment in a school’s education programs and activities. This protection extends to students in connection with all academic, educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs, whether those programs take place in a school’s facilities, school bus, or training program sponsored by the school at another location.

If a student files a complaint with the school regardless of where the conduct occurred, the school must process the complaint in accordance with New Haven Public Schools established procedures. Schools should consider the effects of the off-campus conduct when evaluating whether there is a hostile environment on campus. The school should take steps to protect a student who was assaulted off campus from further sexual harassment or retaliation from the perpetrator and his or her associates.

Regardless of whether a harassed student, his or her parent, or a third party files a complaint under the district’s grievance procedures or otherwise requests action on the student’s behalf, a school that knows, or reasonably should know, about possible harassment must promptly investigate to determine what occurred and then take appropriate steps to resolve the situation.

In cases involving the police and a criminal investigation, schools should not wait for the conclusion of a criminal investigation or criminal proceeding to begin their own Title IX investigation and, if needed, must take immediate steps to protect the student in the educational setting.

**ADULT ALLEGED HARASSE**

**COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

The purpose of the following procedure is to ensure that the New Haven School district remains in compliance with State and Federal laws regarding discrimination and sexual harassment. All proceedings shall be kept confidential to the extent consistent with the Board’s obligations under law and its obligations to investigate.

**Informal Process**

Prior to the filing of a formal sexual harassment complaint, an individual may seek resolution though an informal process. This avenue may be appropriate in situations where possible miscommunication has occurred, or where thoughtless, unintentional behavior has caused distress. Under the informal process, the individual should immediately inform the other party that the behavior is unwelcome, offensive or inappropriate. Such communication may be oral or in writing, should include a description of the offensive behavior and a request that such behavior cease. It is strongly recommended that, regardless of the manner employed to address the issue of harassment the victim should keep detailed written notes on all incidents which the individual believes comprise sexual harassment. This informal process is discretionary on the part of the individual who believes she/he has been
harassed and is not a required part of the Board of Education’s Compliant Procedure which may be commenced as described below. The complainant has the right to end the informal process at any time and begin the formal stage of the complaint process.

**Formal Process**

Any employee or applicant for employment who wishes to register a complaint alleging discrimination or sexual harassment in the New Haven Public Schools system may file such a complaint with her/his relevant principal, Title IX Building Coordinator/Safe School Climate Specialist or the Director of Human Resources. Any student, parent or guardian who wishes to register a complaint alleging discrimination or sexual harassment in the New Haven Public School system may file a complaint with the relevant principal, Title IX Building Coordinator or the Director of Human Resources. Upon filing of a complaint, a thorough and objective investigation of all allegations will be undertaken within 7 days. Principals or Title IX Coordinators receiving a complaint at the school level, must forward a copy of the complaint to the Director of Human Resources within one (1) day of receiving the complaint. In cases involving allegations of sexual assault, mediation will not be used to resolve such complaints.

Upon the filing of a complaint, a thorough and objective investigation of all allegations will be undertaken. Written notification must be submitted within 48 hours to both parties, informing them of the outcome of the complaint or any appeals.

At all times during the Complaint Procedure, the representatives of the New Haven Public Schools should be cognizant of and endeavor to protect the legal rights of all parties involved. Additionally, confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the Board’s obligations under a law and its obligations to investigate.

**APPEAL PROCESS**

An employee who wishes to appeal the decision and disciplinary action may do so in accordance with the appropriate provisions of his/her collective bargaining contract. The timeframes for such appeals are set by collective bargaining agreements and vary by contract.

Nonunionized employees exempt from representation by a City recognized union, who wish to appeal a decision and disciplinary action, should submit a letter of appeal to the Department Head within seven (7) business days. A copy of the letter to the Department Head should be sent to the City of New Haven Director of Labor Relations.

This Complaint Procedure is not exclusive and complainants may have additional legal rights, including the right to file charges with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and/or United States Department of Education.

**STUDENT ALLEGED HARASSER**

**COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

The purpose of the following procedure is to ensure that the New Haven school district remains in compliance with State and Federal laws regarding discrimination and sexual harassment. All the proceedings shall be kept confidential to the extent consistent with the Board’s obligations under law and its obligations to investigate.
Informal Process

Prior to the filing of a formal sexual harassment complaint, an individual may seek resolution through an informal process. This avenue may be appropriate in situations where possible miscommunication has occurred, or where thoughtless, unintentional behavior has caused distress. Under the informal process, the individual should immediately inform the other party that the behavior is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste or inappropriate. Such communication may be oral or in writing, should include a description of the offensive behavior and a request that such behavior cease. It is strongly recommended that, regardless of the manner employed to address the issue of harassment the victim should keep detailed written notes on all incidents which the individual believes comprise sexual harassment. This informal process is discretionary on the part of the individual who believes she/he has been harassed. The complainant has the right to end the informal process at any time and begin the formal stage of the complaint process.

Formal Process

A student, parent or guardian who wishes to register a complaint alleging sexual harassment in the New Haven Public Schools system may file such a complaint with the relevant principal, Title IX Building Coordinator/Safe School Climate Specialist or District Title IX Coordinator/Safe School Climate Coordinator.

Upon filing of a complaint, a thorough and objective investigation of all allegations will be undertaken within 7 days. The investigation may involve all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information including the complainant, the individual accused in the complaint, witnesses, and individuals who are alleged to have been the victims of similar conduct. In cases involving allegations of sexual assault, mediation will not be used to resolve such complaints. The complainant and individual accused shall be notified of the findings of the investigation within 48 hours of completing the investigation.

At all times during the Complaint Procedure, the representatives of the New Haven Public Schools should be cognizant of and endeavor to protect the legal rights of all parties involved. Additionally, confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the Board’s obligations under law and its obligations to investigate.

APPEAL PROCESS

A student, parent or guardian who wishes to appeal the decision and disciplinary action administered at the school level, may file a formal appeal of the decision. This appeal must be made in writing and submitted within seven (7) school days to the District Title IX Coordinator, who shall conduct a thorough and objective investigation.

In response to incidents of sexual harassment, disciplinary action will be administered within the existing guidelines for New Haven Public Schools and recognized authority of the New Haven Board of Education.

REFER TO THE NHPS SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY FOR COMPLETE POLICY CONTENT AND REGULATIONS
TEXT OF RELEVANT LAWS

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972 (Federal)
“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance…”

TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 (FEDERAL)
“It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer:
  1. to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual’s ...sex...; or,
  2. to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee because of such individual’s ...sex...”

CONNECTICUT HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES ACT
“It shall be a discriminatory practice in violation of the section:
(8) For an employer, by himself or his agent, for an employment agency, by itself or its agent, or for any labor organization, by itself or its agent to harass any employee, person seeking employment or member on the basis of sex”.

You may also contact: The Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), 21 Grand Street, Hartford, CT 06106 (Tel: 860-541-3400 or 800-477-5737) Connecticut law requires that a formal complaint be filed with the Commission within 180 days of the date under which the alleged harassment occurred
SUICIDE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The New Haven Board of Education recognizes that suicide has become a major cause of death among our young people. In accordance with C.G.S 10-221(e), the New Haven Board of Education adopts the following policy.

All school employees who have knowledge of a suicide threat or attempt must report this information to the school principal who will notify the appropriate emergency services, staff members, and student’s family.

School personnel will receive annual training on youth suicide and depression, thereby enhancing detection of students at risk for suicidal behavior.

Provisions shall be made for student awareness through curriculum which addresses factors related to depression and youth suicide.

School staff will familiarize parents with the district’s policy and procedures as well as continued to promote and offer positive youth development programs.

PREVENTION

The prevention approach likely to have positive outcomes beyond that of reducing risk for suicide is to promote overall mental health among school-aged children by addressing early risk factors for depression, substance abuse and aggressive behaviors. More youth benefit from overall enhancement of academics performance and healthy peer and family relationships. (U. S. Dept. of Health and Human Services)

Administrators, teachers, and other staff receive training on preventing, recognizing suicidal behavior and warning signs, and how to appropriately respond to situations that may arise.

Prevention Guidelines For Principals

The Principal is responsible for following all New Haven Public Schools policy and procedures regarding suicide. These responsibilities include:

1. Having a designee(s) with knowledge of Suicide Prevention Policy and procedures.
2. Recognition of warning signs
3. Acceptance that despite their skills in working with students, they are not trained therapists. Therefore, principals must accept that any attempt to provide therapy is inappropriate and may further endanger the students.
4. Life-saving actions take precedence over issues of confidentiality
5. The principal and/or designee must convey to the student an image of caring and being in control.
6. The principal must assign a staff member to remain with the student.
7. Principal may contact the appropriate central office administrator(s) to request assistance if she/he does not feel that she/he and or staff members can adequately facilitate discussion regarding suicide/sudden death.
8. Principals are required to file a medical neglect report with the Department of Children and Families (DCF 136) if parents refuse to come to school, cooperate and/or if their response could be harmful to their child, who has exhibited suicidal gestures, threatened suicide or attempted suicide.
Prevention Guidelines For Teachers

As the individuals of the school who are most probably in the closest daily contact with students, teachers need not only remain alert to the possibility of an impending suicide but must be totally familiar with their responsibilities and be prepared to act accordingly. These responsibilities are:

1. Recognition of warning signs. Teachers should not only learn these signs but also use the training programs provided by the school system regarding suicide prevention to clarify any questions they may have.

2. Acceptance of the legal, as well as humane need, to inform the Principal or his/her designee regarding the teacher’s suspicions.
   - Teachers must accept that life-saving actions take precedence over issues of confidentiality.
   - Teachers cannot enter in any ‘secret’ contract with students regarding this issue.
   - Should teachers be called at home by students, and thus suspect a potential suicide, the teacher should consider and take any or all the appropriate actions:
     a. contact the parents
     b. contact the emergency communication center
     c. contact the student’s clinician and contact the principal

3. Understanding of teachers’ limitations. No matter how skilled, close or involved teachers may be with their students, teachers must accept they are not trained to do therapy and that in fact, any such attempt may exacerbate an existing situation.

Warning Signs of Suicide Potential – Elementary School

Suicide and suicide attempts are less common in elementary school age children but do occur nonetheless. The following list of warning signs cannot cover all possible manifestations of potential suicide since less is known about warning signs for younger age children. Any suspicious behavior or communication that raises concern about suicide should be taken seriously and should lead to appropriate referral to the principal and parents. The following conditions and behaviors should raise strong concern:

1. Active talk about and preoccupation with suicide, the child’s own or someone else’s in particular, talk, about a plan for suicide or other indications of having such a plan should be regarded as an extremely serious warning sign.
2. Preoccupation with the idea of death, people who have died, wanting to be dead, wanting to join someone who is dead.
3. Indications of depression such as pervasive sad mood, loss or capacity to enjoy play, social isolation, decreased ability to concentrate, decline in school performance, loss of appetite, fatigue, poor sleep, sleeping much more than usual, hopelessness, self-blame and unusual levels of guilt, poor self-esteem.
4. Repeated unexplained accidents
5. Communication about self-inflicted injury
6. Contexts in which a child feels helpless, as though there is no way out, no solution, such as in some situations of sexual or physical abuse.
7. Recent death of someone close to the child.
8. Suicide of someone close to the child; also suicide attempts or talk by someone close, such as a parent, relative, or friend.
9. Giving away, cherished possessions or making a will.

Warning Signs of Suicide Potential – Middle and High School

**Moderate to Highest Risk:**

The presence of one or more of these warning signs always indicates the need for immediate referral and aggressive intervention:

1. Active suicidal statements, recent suicidal writings, especially when coupled with a specific suicidal plan, suicidal intent, and an expressed diminished fear of death.
2. The presence of suspicious-looking scratches, wounds, bruises, and/or burns on the body.
3. The possession of weapons, ammunition or explosives
4. The suspicious possession of sharp objects, blades, cords, and rope.
5. Preoccupation with death, dying the hereafter, and/or the expressed desire to be reunited with someone who is dead.
6. Evidence through speech or behavior of putting one’s life in order, as in giving away personal possessions.
7. Sudden unexplained neglect of hygiene/appearance.
8. Pervasive appearance or expression of sadness, despair, hopelessness, helplessness, and/or sudden withdrawal.
9. Preoccupation with one’s failures, setback and inadequacies.
10. Running away from home
11. Suddenly, unexplainable cutting off ties with friends, family and affiliations resulting in marked withdrawal or isolation.
12. Presence of violent, abusive or dare-taking/risky, dangerous behavior(s).
13. Noted or suspicions of alcohol use, substance abuse, or violence
14. Unresolved grief, especially around the anniversary of the death of a loved one, or grief triggered by traumatic event.

**GENERAL PRECAUTIONS: FOR ALL STUDENTS**

1. Err on the side of caution. Do not wait for a situation to worsen if you are already concerned.
2. When in doubt, intervene and initiate a referral.
3. Never leave a suicidal student unattended.
4. Sociality is not limited to depressed, inhibited children; aggressive and impulsive children are also at risk.
5. Any number of distressing life situations may increase the risk for a child vulnerable to self-destructive thoughts and actions, including domestic conflicts, moves, parental.
6. Listen carefully and take the students’ feelings and thoughts seriously.
7. Do not challenge or dispute suicidal statements or intent. Leave nothing to chance.
8. Don’t assume that younger children understand the reality and finality of death. A younger child may take action with the belief that he/she can return to life after being dead for awhile.

**SUICIDE INTERVENTION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE SCHOOL’S MAIN OFFICE**
ALTERNATIVE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Juvenile Review Board (JRB) Referral for Repeat Aggressors

New Haven Public schools has collaborated with New Haven Family Alliance as an intervention for students identified as repeat aggressors.

The New Haven Family Alliance shall accept student referrals from the New Haven Public School system, to its Juvenile Review Board (JRB). The Juvenile Review Board is a Balanced and Restorative Justice approach to addressing youth behavior concerns in school and in the community. Based on the severity of the behavior, students reported and verified of a third act of bullying or harassment may be referred to the JRB. Referral will be determined by the Title IX District Coordinator/Safe School Climate Specialist. Acceptance to the JRB will be determined by the New Haven Family Alliance’s JRB Program Manager. The student and their parents/guardian will appear before the JRB panel of community volunteers for reflective counseling and assistance in developing an understanding of how his or her behavior affects the targeted student(s), the school community and themselves.

The goal of the collaboration is to extend this restorative justice model to the school community as an additional effort to address and reduce bullying and harassing behaviors among students, as well as assist students with developing positive social skills.

Students Against Bullying (SAB)

SAB is an anti-bullying / harassment peer based support pilot program presently implemented in two high schools and four k-8 schools. The objective is to increase student involvement to positively combat bullying and harassment behavior through knowledge individual and group self-empowerment. Minimally a group of six students at each of the pilot schools, will volunteer to serve as SAB Team members.

Students’ Role: Speak out against harassment and report any witnessed incidents of harassment in school, on school busses or school related activities; to serve as a support system for students who experience bullying/harassment; creatively promote anti-bullying behavior within their school, group presentations, art, music, etc.

Principal’s Role: Select a group of approximately six student volunteers to serve on the SAB Team. Insure team members receive training on how to recognize bullying/harassment behavior. Conduct group meetings with Title IX Building Coordinator and team members a minimum of five times during the school year. Update District Title IX Coordinator/Safe School Coordinator and /or Bullying Prevention Committee/ Safe School Climate Committee regularly.
PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION MEASURES

CONFLICT RESOLUTION CURRICULUM

The New Bully Free Classroom
A proven prevention and intervention strategies curriculum distributed to all k-8 schools.

Be Cool – Coping with Difficult People
A prevention and intervention strategies high school curriculum for conflict management.

NHPS Student/Parent Handbook
NHPS Unified Code of Conduct

These handbooks were developed to provide students and parents with a summary of important New Haven Board of Education policies and procedures. These handbooks are not intended to be all inclusive and do not contain all of the rules, regulation, directives and policies of the New Haven Board of Education. The entire policy manual is on file at each school and is available for review upon request of the Principal. All violations will be investigated and appropriate disciplinary action will be dispensed if needed, including the possibility of suspension, and/or expulsion, and/or referral to police and/or other appropriate agencies. All policies are in compliance with the Constitution of the United States, the State of Connecticut, Federal and Local policies, Please contact your school principal or the office of the superintendent for further information.

Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a national model system for integrating effective classroom management and preventive school discipline that give school staff the capacity to use effective interventions accurately and successfully at the classroom, school, and district levels. The emphasis is on the use of the most effective and most positive approach to addressing even the most severe problem behaviors.

It is a prevention-oriented approach for school personnel to (a) organize evidence-based school and classroom management practices, (b) improve the implementation of those practices, and (c) maximize positive academic and social behavior outcomes for students and staff. These supports include team-based leadership, data based decision making, continuous monitoring of student behavior, regular screening and effective on-going professional development.
**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

New Haven Public schools will provide annual in-service training programs to all school employees that must include information addressing the prevention of, identification of, and response to bullying, and the prevention of and response to youth suicide. This professional development will be determined by the Safe School Climate Specialists and the Safe School Climate Committee in each school-based program unit. It may also include:

* Classroom management  
* Cyberbullying  
* Cultural and Gender diversity trng.  
* Development Bullying Awareness Week activities  
* Positive relationship building  
* Conflict resolution  
* Violence Prevention

**FORMS**

The following relevant forms are available upon request from the Principal, Safe School Climate Specialist or school’s main office:

NHPS Internal School Bullying Report  
NHPS External School Bullying Report  
NHPS Sexual Harassment Formal Complaint Form  
NHPS Sexual Harassment Complaint Appeal Form  
Suicide Intervention Form
DEFINITIONS

Bullying  Repeated acts by any student in the New Haven Public Schools district against another student in the district that causes physical or emotional harm to a student or such student’s property, places a student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property, creates a hostile environment at school for such student, infringes on the rights of such student at school, or substantially disrupts the educational process.

Cyberbullying  The use of technology, including but not limited to email, cellular mobile telephone, instant messaging, web pages, and digital photo, to harass or bully someone.

Discrimination  Distinguishing or harassing action based on an individual’s race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, (including gender identity/expression) national origin, disability, marital status or age or because of the aforementioned protected categories of any other persons with whom the individual associates.

Harassment  Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling; graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones or the Internet; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school. When such harassment is based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability, it violates civil rights laws. (U.S. Dept. of Educ., OCR).

Sexual Harassment  Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances or request for sexual favors or any verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment; when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual; or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, or her/his academic status or progress. Sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited behavior by a male toward a female, or by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee, or a teacher to a student. Harassment may be student to student, teacher to student, student to teacher or teacher to teacher. The victim does not have to be the opposite sex of the harasser. The gender of the complainant and/or the alleged harasser is irrelevant, even if they are of the same gender. Sexual harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identify is also prohibited under State law.
Suicide    Self-injurious behavior with a fatal outcome, for which there is evidence that the person intended to kill himself or herself.
**Safe School Climate Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSC Standard</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 1: Shared Mission</strong>&lt;br&gt;Is it evident that all members of the school community are committed to physical, emotional and intellectual safety of the learners?</td>
<td>No effort has been made to engage students, staff and community stakeholders in recognizing the importance of a positive school climate to support student achievement</td>
<td>An attempt has been made to engage students, staff and/or community stakeholders in recognizing the importance of a positive school climate to support student achievement</td>
<td>Recognition, understanding and engagement in the principles, practices and strategies as well as the necessary formative data required to improve the learning environment in meaningful ways for stakeholders</td>
<td>All stakeholders are committed to and engaged in systemic improvement efforts that result in the physical, emotional and intellectual safety of all learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 1: Shared Vision</strong>&lt;br&gt;Do participants share a vision of what a positive school climate looks, feels and sounds like?</td>
<td>No effort has been made to engage stakeholders in arriving at a common understanding of what a positive school climate looks, feels and sounds like</td>
<td>Attempts have been made to articulate a common vision of what a positive school climate implies, however most stakeholders are unaware and/or unaffected by these efforts</td>
<td>A common vision for improving school climate has been embraced and endorsed; a sense of shared ownership and pathways toward meaningful professional development have been articulated</td>
<td>Day to day decision making and practice is guided and supported by the share vision; efforts to narrow any gaps between school culture “as is,” and “as envisioned” are ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 1: Shared Values</strong>&lt;br&gt;How must participants act toward one another in order to advance the mission?</td>
<td>No efforts have been made to identify and articulate the attitudes, behaviors and/or commitments necessary to advance the mission and vision for a positive school climate</td>
<td>Staff members have articulated beliefs, ground rules and norms for team functioning that mirror a positive school climate, however these statements do not yet inform day-to-day practice</td>
<td>Staff members have made a conscious effort to live by the beliefs, ground rules and norms mirroring a positive school climate in day-to-day practice; inconsistencies are confronted and managed appropriately</td>
<td>The beliefs, ground rules and norms are embedded in the school culture and are evident to all school stakeholders in overt and meaningful ways; they influence policies, procedures, daily practices and all decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSC Standard</td>
<td>Needs Improvement</td>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Standard 1: Shared Goals**  
What are the priorities? | No effort has been made to engage school stakeholders in identifying goals related to improving school climate; any existing goals rest solely with school administration | Efforts have begun to identify goals; goals are not sufficiently actionable and do not yet influence systemic decision making | Long and short term actionable school climate improvement goals have been identified and clearly communicated to all stakeholders; assessment instruments and strategies have been developed and implemented to monitor change over time | Day-to-day practice is guided by a systemic recognition and alignment with mission and vision is overt; successes are shared and celebrated; challenges are dealt with collaboratively |
<p>| <strong>Standard 2: Shared School Policies</strong> | Policies do not exist to promote the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement | Efforts have begun to create policies to promote the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement | Policies are in place to promote the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement | Policies are firmly established to promote the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement, and are reviewed on a regular basis |
| <strong>Standard 2: Shared School Policies</strong> | Policies do not exist that create a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged | Efforts have begun to establish policies that create a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged | Policies are in place that create a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged | Policies are firmly established that create a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged, and are reviewed on a regular basis |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSC Standard</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 3:</strong></td>
<td>No school community practices are identified, prioritized or supported to enhance</td>
<td>The school community recognizes that practices are needed to enhance</td>
<td>The school community’s practices are identified, prioritized and</td>
<td>Practices are firmly supported and universally followed that those</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Practices</strong></td>
<td>engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities</td>
<td>engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities</td>
<td>enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities</td>
<td>enhance engagement in teaching, learning and school-wide activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 3:</strong></td>
<td>No school community practices are identified, prioritized or supported to address</td>
<td>The school community recognizes that practices are needed to address</td>
<td>The school community’s practices are identified, prioritized and</td>
<td>Practices are firmly supported and universally followed that those</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Practices</strong></td>
<td>barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged</td>
<td>address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have</td>
<td>enhance engagement in teaching, learning and school-wide activities</td>
<td>enhance engagement in teaching, learning and school-wide activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>become disengaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 4:</strong></td>
<td>The school community does not create an environment where all members are</td>
<td>The school community recognizes the importance of creating an environment</td>
<td>The school community creates an environment where all members are</td>
<td>Practices are firmly supported and universally followed that those</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safe Environment</strong></td>
<td>welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school; socially, emotionally, intellectually</td>
<td>where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially,</td>
<td>welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally,</td>
<td>enhance engagement in teaching, learning and school-wide activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and physically</td>
<td>emotionally, intellectually and physically</td>
<td>intellectually and physically</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 5:</strong></td>
<td>There are no meaningful or engaging practices, activities and norms within the</td>
<td>The school community recognizes the importance of developing a meaningful</td>
<td>The school community develops meaningful and engaging practices,</td>
<td>Practices are firmly supported and universally followed that those</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Justice</strong></td>
<td>school community that promote</td>
<td>and engaging practices, activities and norms within</td>
<td>activities and norms that promote social and civic</td>
<td>enhance engagement in teaching, learning and school-wide activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Impact on Results**  
| Is progress monitoring inherent in the school climate improvement process? | **Articulation of what is meant by a positive school climate is not in place** | **A generalized sense of what is meant by a positive school climate is understood; efforts to improve climate are task and project oriented rather than guided by systemic mission, vision and identifiable outcomes** | **Clear indicators have been identified and aligned with school climate improvement goals; data are collected and monitored; analyzed results are shared with staff and family-community stakeholders** | **School climate data is fully embraced and informs improved practice; professional development for continuous improvement is embedded in the culture of the school; all stakeholders assume ownership and responsibility for improving student connectedness and minimizing barriers to learning** |
| NSC Standard | Needs Improvement | Developing | Strong | Exemplary |