

Anti-Bullying Protocols Coventry Public Schools August 25, 2022



Board Policy 5131.7

Bullying is prohibited on: school grounds, at school related events (on and off school grounds), at bus stops, on school busses, and on any electronic device provided by the district.

Bullying is also prohibited outside the school setting if the bullying: creates a hostile environment at school, infringes on the rights of a student, or disrupts the education process.

Students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subjected to school discipline, up to and including expulsion.



The Definition of Bullying

Connecticut anti-bullying laws and regulations include the following definitions of bullying and cyberbullying:

"Bullying" means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive, which

(A) causes physical or emotional harm to an individual,

(B) places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or

(C) infringes on the rights or opportunities of an individual at school.

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222d (2019)

3

"Bullying" shall include, but need not be limited to,

a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or 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" means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

4

What is considered bullying?

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Source: stopbullying.gov

CONFLICT VS. BULLYING

CONFLICT

- ⇒ Equal power – mutual engagement
- ⇒ Equal emotional reaction
- ⇒ Happens occasionally
- ⇒ Can be accidental
- ⇒ Not seeking power or attention
- ⇒ Feelings of remorse and responsibility
- ⇒ Effort to solve problem

BULLYING

- ⇒ Imbalance of power – one sided
- ⇒ Strong emotional reaction on part of the victim
- ⇒ Happens repeatedly
- ⇒ Intentional, threatening
- ⇒ Seeking power and control
- ⇒ No remorse – blames victim
- ⇒ No attempt to stop

When staff, parent(s), or student(s) report an interaction that may be considered as bullying, an investigation will immediately begin.



7

Steps:

1. **Safety**- an assessment will be made immediately for a need to address safety among the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator. This could include:
 - ◆ Safety plan
 - ◆ Reassigning seating in the classroom, at lunch, and/or bus, as well as locker locations.
 - ◆ Identifying a staff member who serves as a safe person for the alleged victim.
 - ◆ Changing the schedules so the alleged perpetrator and victim are not in the same classes.

8



Coventry Public Schools

REPORT OF SUSPECTED BULLYING BEHAVIORS OR DATING VIOLENCE
(School Employees Should File with the School Principal)

(Parents and Students May File with the School Principal or Any Other School Employee)

Name of Person Completing Report: _____

Date: _____

Target(s) of Behaviors/Violence: _____

Relationship of Reporter to Target (self, parent, teacher, peer, etc.): _____

Report Filed Against: _____

Date of Incident(s): _____

Location(s): _____ Time: _____

Describe the basis for your report. Include information about the incident, participants, background to the incident, and any attempts you have made to resolve the problem. Please note relevant dates, times and places.

Indicate if there are witnesses who can provide more information regarding your report. If the witnesses are not school district staff or students, please provide contact information.

Name Address Telephone Number

Have there been previous incidents (circle one)? Yes No

If "yes", please describe the behavior of concern, or the violence that occurred; include the approximate date(s) and the location(s):

Were these incidents reported to school employees (circle one) Yes No

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

Was the report verbal or written?

Proposed Solution:

Indicate your opinion on how this problem might be resolved in the school setting. Be as specific as possible.

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

Steps:

2. Obligation to Notify Others-

- Administration will notify alleged perpetrator's parents/guardians of the receipt of bullying allegations.

3. Investigation-

- Investigate promptly
- Interview staff, students, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary
- A written record is kept of the investigation

Steps:

4. Determinations-

- Determination is based upon all of the facts and circumstances.
- If bullying is substantiated, steps are taken to prevent recurrence.
- Consider if remedial action is necessary.
- Determine disciplinary actions if necessary.
- Consult with school counselors, social worker, and psychologist to determine need for counseling.

Steps:

5. Notifications-

- Administration will notify parents or guardians of the victim and the perpetrator about the results of the investigation. Administration will communicate action being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation.
- Due to confidentiality laws, specific information to the victim and their family about disciplinary action taken.
- The State of Connecticut will be notified of the verified bully for their records.
- Bullying label will remain on student's record through high school.



Coventry Public School Preventative Measures

- All schools have **Safe School Committees** that meet at least twice a year. These committees include: administration, clinical team staff, teachers, parents, and the district security specialist.
- The **Safe School Climate Plan** was developed by the district and is consistent with state law and board policy.
- Sets a **positive school climate** and includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate.
- The committee addresses **bullying concerns** and reviews **bullying investigations**.

13



Other Measures...

See Something, Say Something APP

Allows students to anonymously report concerns to the school in grades 5-12.

SEL Curriculum

Second Step in grades K-5

Character Strong in grades 6-8

Forums

Superintendent meets regularly with students from each school to hear student concerns.



14

Formal Reports vs. Informal

- Formal reports can be filed by parents or the school. These reports are filed with documentation and details of repetitive events that have occurred from the perpetrator towards the victim. The school will complete a formal investigation.
- Informal reports are when an issue is brought to the attention of an adult. The school will complete an investigation and determine what interventions need to be put in place before a formal report may be necessary.
- Regardless of formal or informal, all reports are investigated.

15

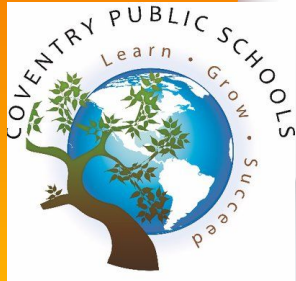
Notifying the School

The State Department of Education highly recommends the following:

- Notify or meet with administration, teachers and/or counselors immediately following any issue to attempt to resolve a problem.
- The earlier information is brought to the attention of the school, the easier it is to address.

**Connecticut State Department of Education, Parents Guide to Bullying and Harassment in Connecticut*

16



Bullying Data in Our Schools Over the Last Five Years

Coventry Grammar School

Last 5 school years (2017-2022)	Reports Received	Reports Verified
	3	0



Bullying Data in Our Schools Over the Last Five Years

George Hersey Robertson School

Last 5 school years (2017-2022)	Reports Received	Reports Verified
	2	0



Bullying Data in Our Schools Over the Last Five Years

Capt. Nathan Hale School

Last 5 school years (2017-2022)	Reports Received	Reports Verified
	6	3



Bullying Data in Our Schools Over the Last Five Years

Coventry High School

Last 5 school years (2017-2022)	Reports Received	Reports Verified
	2	0

District Wide Data

12 Suspected Reports of Bullying have been reported in the last five years

Of those 12, **three** Suspected Reports of Bullying have been verified.