

Legislative Testimony
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Board of Member form the Connecticut Association of Schools
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Good afternoon, I am Dr. Jordan Grossman and I am the proud Principal of Canton Intermediate School. I am also a Board Member for the Connecticut Association of Schools and Commission Member for the Commission on Children. I am here to ask you to make modifications of Raised Bill No SB1138 An Act Concerning Strengthening School Bullying Law. I ask you to modify the legislation to include the requirement that school districts develop and implement policies and plans that will foster safe school climate. In addition to reporting bullying, each school and district should have to report progress on maintaining a positive school climate.

The Connecticut Association of Schools offers schools the opportunity to conduct on a self assessment to measure school climate. There is research that would support that if schools have a good climate, than school achievement will rise. I encourage committee members to look at this assessment as a model when you are considering this new legislation.

The assessment looks at indicators in five broad categories: Safe and healthy environment;

- A welcoming environment to students and visitors;
- Stakeholder involvement in planning and decision-making;
- Parent community and student involvement in the school;
- Active participation in a variety of programs.

In 2010, Canton Intermediate School was recognized with exemplary school climate practices. We are comprised with a set of values and principles that are deliberately incorporated into a school community which maintains, increases, creates cultures and climates that foster student achievement based on individual differences. It is so important that schools develop a sense of “community” where students feel that they have safe place to learn.

In closing, with facebook, tweeter, and other electronic forms of communication in the hands of our children, it is not just the time to look at bullying, it is the time to look at the entire issue of School Climate and Culture.