



**PA 18-89**—sSB 453 (VETOED)

*Education Committee*

**AN ACT CONCERNING CLASSROOM SAFETY AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

**SUMMARY:** This act requires local and regional boards of education, as well as the State Department of Education (SDE), to address daily classroom safety in a manner similar to how they must address bullying and teen dating violence under existing law. Under the act, “daily classroom safety” means a classroom environment in which students and school employees are not physically injured by other students, school employees, or parents, or exposed to physical injury to others.

The act makes the following changes, among others, to school safety and school climate laws:

1. requires boards of education to address daily classroom safety in their safe school climate plans (§ 2);
2. requires boards of education to annually report to SDE instances of daily classroom safety violations (§ 2);
3. allows teachers to refer out of their classroom students who commit daily classroom safety violations and sets standards for the students’ return (§ 2);
4. requires SDE to provide school districts with training (§ 3);
5. expands the duties of school staff in safe school climate leadership positions to include daily classroom safety issues (§ 4); and
6. expands the definition of a “prevention and intervention strategy” to include daily classroom safety violations (§ 5).

The act also makes various minor, technical, and conforming changes.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2018

**§ 2 — SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN PROVISIONS**

The act requires boards of education, by September 1, 2019, to revise their safe school climate plans to additionally include provisions on daily classroom safety. Under existing law, these plans address bullying and teen dating violence.

Each revised plan must:

1. include a prevention and intervention strategy (see § 5 below) for daily classroom safety;
2. require student conduct codes to include language about daily classroom safety;
3. provide a designated procedure and support plan for daily classroom safety (see below);
4. require the school principal, when a student has violated daily classroom

## OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

- safety, to notify and provide details of the violation to (a) the parents or guardians of the student who violated daily classroom safety, and (b) when other students witness a violation, the board of education and the parents or guardians of the other students, without disclosing the identity of the student who violated daily classroom safety;
5. require schools to invite parents or guardians of a student who commits a violation to a meeting to discuss the school's interventions to prevent further violations;
  6. establish a procedure for schools to document and maintain records of daily classroom safety violations and the number of such violations for public inspection and annual reporting to SDE;
  7. prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of a violation of daily classroom safety; and
  8. require an administrator to meet, no later than two school days following the violation, with the teacher of a student who has violated daily classroom safety to discuss how the student's behavior will be addressed and the interventions that will be implemented to support the teacher and student.

### *Designated Procedure and Support Plan (§ 2)*

Under the act, the daily classroom safety procedure and support plan must include:

1. the identity of the administrator a teacher must notify when a student is violating daily classroom safety, and the identity of any other individuals who may be contacted if the administrator is unavailable;
2. the process the administrator must use to investigate and assess the facts and severity of daily classroom safety violations;
3. the location where a teacher may refer a student who is violating daily classroom safety;
4. therapeutic support for the teacher and student or students involved in an incident; and
5. a process for ensuring that the support plan complies with the state special education law for students who commit repeated daily classroom safety violations.

### § 2 — REMOVAL AND RETURN OF STUDENTS TO THE CLASSROOM

Under the act, if a teacher refers a student out of his or her classroom for a violation of daily classroom safety, the administrator can place the student in another educational setting that is best suited to meet the student's needs.

The administrator may return the student to the teacher's classroom if one of the following is met:

1. the teacher consents to the student's return or
2. the school's crisis intervention team, or a team of teachers and administrators designated by the school principal to assess whether the student should return to the classroom, determines the return is warranted

## OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

because (a) the student has received appropriate intervention and support and (b) there are adequate protections in the classroom for the safety of the teacher and other students.

### § 3 — TRAINING FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

The act requires SDE to provide daily classroom safety prevention, identification, and response training, within available appropriations, to (1) any school employee who does not hold educator certification and (2) certified employees who serve as the district safe school climate coordinator or specialist or as members of the safe school climate committee. By law, this training must be provided regarding bullying and teen dating violence.

The act allows this training to include the following:

1. developmentally appropriate strategies (a) to ensure daily classroom safety and (b) for immediate and effective interventions to ensure classroom safety;
2. information on the interaction and relationship between students violating daily classroom safety; and
3. research findings on daily classroom safety, such as information about the types of students who have been shown to be at-risk for violating classroom safety.

### § 4 — SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE LEADERSHIP DUTIES

The act adds duties regarding daily classroom safety to the following individuals and groups with safe school climate leadership roles: district safe school climate coordinators and safe school climate committees. By law, each superintendent must choose a district safe school climate coordinator from among existing school district staff.

#### *District Safe School Climate Coordinators*

Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, the act requires district safe school climate coordinators to do the following (by law, they must already perform these duties as they relate to bullying):

1. collaborate with safe school climate specialists, the district's board of education, and the superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to daily classroom safety violations in district schools;
2. provide data and information about daily classroom safety to SDE, in collaboration with the superintendent; and
3. meet with the safe school climate specialists at least twice each school year to discuss daily classroom safety issues in the district.

#### *Safe School Climate Committees*

The act requires each safe school climate committee to address issues relating to daily classroom safety in the school. More specifically, it requires the committee to do the following in addition to its duties under existing law:

## OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

1. receive copies of completed reports following investigations of daily classroom safety violations;
2. identify and address patterns of acts that violate daily classroom safety among students in the school;
3. implement school security and safety plan provisions (see BACKGROUND) on the collection, evaluation, and reporting of information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of daily classroom safety;
4. review and amend school policies relating to daily classroom safety;
5. educate students, school employees, and students' parents and guardians on daily classroom safety issues;
6. collaborate with the district safe school climate coordinator to collect data on daily classroom safety violations; and
7. perform any other duties the principal determines are related to preventing, identifying, and responding to daily classroom safety violations for the school.

As is the case under existing law regarding bullying, the act excludes parent members from the first three activities and from any other committee activities that may compromise student confidentiality.

### § 5 — DAILY CLASSROOM SAFETY PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

By law, the term “prevention and intervention strategy” may include a series of statutory items. The act expands the definition of this term to include the following:

1. implementation of a positive behavioral intervention and support process or another evidence-based model approach for ensuring daily classroom safety;
2. school rules prohibiting acts that violate daily classroom safety;
3. individual interventions with the child who violates daily classroom safety;
4. promotion of parent involvement to prevent acts that violate daily classroom safety;
5. a culturally competent curriculum, which already focused on social-emotional learning, self-awareness, and self-regulation, that now adds trauma-informed instruction; and
6. therapeutic support for students, as needed, following violations of daily classroom safety.

The law defines this strategy in generally similar terms for addressing bullying, teen dating violence, harassment, and intimidation.

### BACKGROUND

#### *School Security and Safety Plan*

The law requires each local and regional board of education to develop a school security and safety plan for each school within its district (CGS § 10-

OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

222m). The plan must align with standards developed by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, which provide an all-hazards approach to handling emergencies at public schools (CGS § 10-222n).