



House of Representatives

File No. 1025

General Assembly

January Session, 2019

(Reprint of File No. 126)

Substitute House Bill No. 7215
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 31, 2019

AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL CLIMATES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a
2 social and emotional learning and school climate advisory
3 collaborative. The collaborative shall (1) collect information concerning
4 the school climate improvement efforts of local and regional boards of
5 education, (2) document any needs articulated by local and regional
6 boards of education for technical assistance and training relating to
7 fostering positive school climates, (3) identify best practices for
8 promoting positive school climates, (4) direct resources to support
9 state-wide and local initiatives on issues relating to fostering and
10 improving positive school climates and improving access to social and
11 emotional learning in schools, (5) develop an assessment for screening
12 students in grades three to twelve, inclusive, to determine whether
13 such students are at risk for suicide, (6) develop a biennial state-wide
14 school climate survey, as described in subsection (c) of section 2 of this
15 act, (7) develop a model positive school climate policy, as described in
16 subsection (a) of section 2 of this act, (8) develop a plain language

17 explanation of the rights and remedies available under sections 10-4a
18 and 10-4b of the general statutes for distribution to parents and
19 guardians pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (c) of section 10-
20 222d of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and provide such
21 explanation to each local and regional board of education not later
22 than January 1, 2021, and (9) perform other functions concerning social
23 and emotional learning and fostering positive school climates.

24 (b) The collaborative shall consist of the following members:

25 (1) Five appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
26 one of whom is a member of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight
27 Committee, established pursuant to section 46b-121n of the general
28 statutes; one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut
29 Association of Boards of Education; one of whom is a school
30 administrator with experience in district-level, equity-focused and
31 cross-disciplinary social and emotional learning; one of whom is a
32 representative of an organization that provides free or reduced-cost
33 legal services; and one of whom is a representative of Connecticut
34 Parent Power;

35 (2) Five appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one
36 of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of Schools;
37 one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of
38 School Administrators; one of whom is a representative of the Social
39 Emotional Learning Alliance for Connecticut; one of whom is a
40 representative of the Connecticut School Counselor Association; and
41 one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of
42 Public School Superintendents;

43 (3) Three appointed by the majority leader of the House of
44 Representatives, one of whom is a representative of Special Education
45 Equity for Kids of Connecticut; one of whom is a representative of the
46 Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center; and one of whom is a
47 representative of African Caribbean American Parents of Children
48 with Disabilities, Inc.;

49 (4) Three appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of
50 whom is a representative of the Center for Children's Advocacy; one of
51 whom is a representative of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence;
52 and one of whom is a representative of the Neag School of Education
53 at The University of Connecticut;

54 (5) Three appointed by the minority leader of the House of
55 Representatives, one of whom is a representative of the American
56 Federation of Teachers-Connecticut; one of whom is a representative of
57 the Center for Social and Emotional Learning at Central Connecticut
58 State University; and one of whom is a representative of the
59 Connecticut Parent Teacher Association;

60 (6) Three appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of
61 whom is a representative of the Connecticut Education Association;
62 one of whom is a representative of the National Alliance on Mental
63 Illness, Connecticut; and one of whom is a representative of the Youth
64 Suicide Advisory Board established pursuant to section 17a-52 of the
65 general statutes;

66 (7) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

67 (8) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
68 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
69 relating to children and education;

70 (9) The Child Advocate, or the Child Advocate's designee; and

71 (10) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children
72 and Seniors, or the executive director's designee.

73 (c) All appointments to the collaborative shall be made not later
74 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy
75 shall be filled by the appointing authority.

76 (d) The cochairpersons of the collaborative shall be the executive
77 director of the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, or the
78 executive director's designee, and a cochairperson elected from among

79 the members. The first meeting of the collaborative shall be held not
80 later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

81 (e) The collaborative may designate subcommittees and advisory
82 groups to carry out its functions, provided any subcommittees so
83 designated shall be comprised of members of the collaborative.

84 (f) The staff of the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors
85 shall serve as administrative staff of the collaborative.

86 (g) Not later than January 1, 2021, and annually thereafter, the
87 collaborative shall submit a report concerning (1) its efforts to (A)
88 monitor the school climate improvement efforts of local and regional
89 boards of education, (B) document needs articulated by local and
90 regional boards of education for technical assistance and training
91 relating to fostering positive school climates, (C) identify best practices
92 for promoting positive school climates, and (D) direct resources to
93 support state-wide and local initiatives on issues relating to fostering
94 and improving positive school climates and improving access to social
95 and emotional learning, and (2) any recommendations, to the joint
96 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
97 matters relating to children and education, in accordance with the
98 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

99 Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than January 1, 2020, the
100 social and emotional learning and school climate advisory
101 collaborative established pursuant to section 1 of this act shall develop
102 a model positive school climate policy. In developing such model
103 policy, the collaborative may review safe school climate plans
104 developed and implemented by local and regional boards of education
105 pursuant to section 10-222d of the general statutes, as amended by this
106 act.

107 (b) Not later than July 1, 2020, the social and emotional learning and
108 school climate advisory collaborative established pursuant to section 1
109 of this act shall submit the assessment it developed pursuant to section
110 1 of this act for screening students at risk for suicide and

111 recommendations for implementation of such assessment in public
112 elementary, middle and high schools to the joint standing committees
113 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
114 children and education, in accordance with the provisions of section
115 11-4a of the general statutes.

116 (c) Not later than July 1, 2021, the social and emotional learning and
117 school climate advisory collaborative established pursuant to section 1
118 of this act shall develop a biennial state-wide school climate survey
119 and provide such survey to the Department of Education. Such survey
120 shall be designed to obtain confidential information from school
121 employees and the parents and guardians of students concerning such
122 employees' and parents' and guardians' impressions of the school
123 climate at the school for which such school employees are assigned or
124 such parents' and guardians' children are enrolled. Such survey shall
125 inquire as to, but need not be limited to, such school employees' and
126 parents' and guardians' impressions of (1) the student learning
127 environment at the school, including academic supports and resources
128 available to students and school safety, (2) communication by school
129 employees to parents and guardians concerning students, (3) the
130 teaching environment at the school, which includes resources, support
131 and professional development for school employees, leadership within
132 the school and the availability of collaborative planning time, (4)
133 whether a positive school climate exists at the school, (5) whether
134 individuals of all races, ethnicities and cultural backgrounds feel
135 welcomed at the school, and (6) the availability of supports and
136 strategies for the development and retention of teachers and
137 administrators, including, but not limited to, minority teachers and
138 administrators, school psychologists and school counselors, and
139 suggestions for increasing the availability of such supports and
140 strategies.

141 (d) Not later than August 1, 2021, the Department of Education shall
142 publish the model positive school climate policy developed pursuant
143 to subsection (a) of this section and the biennial state-wide school
144 climate survey developed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section on

145 the Internet web site of the department.

146 Sec. 3. Section 10-222d of the general statutes is repealed and the
147 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

148 (a) As used in this section, sections 10-222g to 10-222i, inclusive,
149 [and] section 10-222k and sections 1 and 2 of this act:

150 (1) "Bullying" means [(A) the repeated use by one or more students
151 of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying,
152 directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same
153 school district, or (B) a physical act or gesture by one or more students
154 repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same
155 school district, that: (i) Causes physical or emotional harm to such
156 student or damage to such student's property, (ii) places such student
157 in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or
158 her property, (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for such
159 student, (iv) infringes on the rights of such student at school, or (v)
160 substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of
161 a school] an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or
162 pervasive, which (A) causes physical or emotional harm to an
163 individual, (B) places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or
164 emotional harm, or (C) infringes on the rights or opportunities of an
165 individual at school. "Bullying" shall include, but need not be limited
166 to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or
167 gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic,
168 such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual
169 orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status,
170 academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical,
171 developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an
172 individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of
173 such characteristics;

174 (2) "Cyberbullying" means any act of bullying through the use of the
175 Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone
176 or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications;

177 (3) "Teen dating violence" means any act of physical, emotional or
178 sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening, that
179 occurs between two students who are currently in or who have
180 recently been in a dating relationship;

181 (4) "Mobile electronic device" means any hand-held or other
182 portable electronic equipment capable of providing data
183 communication between two or more individuals, including, but not
184 limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital
185 assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a
186 video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital
187 images are taken or transmitted;

188 (5) "Electronic communication" means any transfer of signs, signals,
189 writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted
190 in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic
191 or photo-optical system;

192 (6) "Hostile environment" means a situation in which bullying
193 among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the
194 conditions of the school climate;

195 (7) "Outside of the school setting" means at a location, activity or
196 program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic
197 device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used
198 by a local or regional board of education;

199 (8) "School employee" means (A) a teacher, substitute teacher,
200 school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor,
201 school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school
202 paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of
203 education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or
204 (B) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties,
205 has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on
206 behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high
207 school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of
208 education; [and]

209 (9) "School climate" means the quality and character of school life
210 [with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the
211 school community between and among students and adults.] based on
212 patterns of students', parents' and guardians' and school employees'
213 experiences of school life, including, but not limited to, norms, goals,
214 values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and
215 organizational structures;

216 (10) "Positive school climate" means a school climate in which (A)
217 the norms, values, expectations and beliefs that support feelings of
218 social, emotional and physical safety are promoted, (B) students,
219 parents and guardians of students and school employees feel engaged
220 and respected and work together to develop and contribute to a shared
221 school vision, (C) educators model and nurture attitudes that
222 emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning, and (D)
223 each person feels comfortable contributing to the operation of the
224 school and care of the physical environment of the school;

225 (11) "Emotional intelligence" means the ability to (A) perceive,
226 recognize and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use
227 emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to,
228 reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C)
229 understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in
230 oneself and others; and

231 (12) "Social and emotional learning" means the process through
232 which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the
233 competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness,
234 relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

235 (b) Each local and regional board of education shall develop and
236 implement a safe school climate plan to address the existence of
237 bullying and teen dating violence in its schools. Such plan shall: (1)
238 Enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to school
239 employees and require students and the parents or guardians of
240 students to be notified at the beginning of each school year of the

241 process by which students may make such reports, (2) enable the
242 parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected
243 bullying, (3) require school employees who witness acts of bullying or
244 receive reports of bullying to orally notify the safe school climate
245 specialist, described in section 10-222k, or another school administrator
246 if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable, not later than one
247 school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of
248 bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days
249 after making such oral report, (4) require the safe school climate
250 specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of
251 bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly
252 after receipt of any written reports made under this section and that
253 the parents or guardians of the student alleged to have committed an
254 act or acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student
255 against whom such alleged act or acts were directed receive prompt
256 notice that such investigation has commenced, (5) require the safe
257 school climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that
258 no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an
259 anonymous report, (6) include a prevention and intervention strategy,
260 as defined by section 10-222g, for school employees to deal with
261 bullying and teen dating violence, (7) provide for the inclusion of
262 language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying, (8) require
263 each school to notify the parents or guardians of students who commit
264 any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students
265 against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours
266 after the completion of the investigation described in subdivision (4) of
267 this subsection (A) of the results of such investigation, and (B) verbally
268 and by electronic mail, if such parents' or guardians' electronic mail
269 addresses are known, that such parents or guardians may refer to the
270 plain language explanation of the rights and remedies available under
271 sections 10-4a and 10-4b published on the Internet web site of the local
272 or regional board of education pursuant to section 4 of this act, (9)
273 require each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student
274 against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate to
275 such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to

276 ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed
277 and policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of
278 bullying, (10) require each school to invite the parents or guardians of
279 a student who commits any verified act of bullying to a meeting,
280 separate and distinct from the meeting required in subdivision (9) of
281 this subsection, to discuss specific interventions undertaken by the
282 school to prevent further acts of bullying, (11) establish a procedure for
283 each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and
284 investigations of bullying in such school and to maintain a list of the
285 number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list
286 available for public inspection, and annually report such number to the
287 Department of Education, and in such manner as prescribed by the
288 Commissioner of Education, (12) direct the development of case-by-
289 case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying
290 against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying
291 incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and
292 discipline, (13) prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an
293 individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of
294 bullying, (14) direct the development of student safety support plans
295 for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that address
296 safety measures the school will take to protect such students against
297 further acts of bullying, (15) require the principal of a school, or the
298 principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement
299 agency when such principal, or the principal's designee, believes that
300 any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct, (16) prohibit bullying
301 (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity,
302 function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus
303 stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local
304 or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic
305 device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the
306 local or regional board of education, and (B) outside of the school
307 setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for
308 the student against whom such bullying was directed, or (ii) infringes
309 on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed
310 at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the

311 orderly operation of a school, (17) require, at the beginning of each
312 school year, each school to provide all school employees with a written
313 or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan, and
314 (18) require that all school employees annually complete the training
315 described in section 10-220a or section 10-222j. The notification
316 required pursuant to subdivision (8) of this subsection and the
317 invitation required pursuant to subdivision (9) of this subsection shall
318 include a description of the response of school employees to such acts
319 and any consequences that may result from the commission of further
320 acts of bullying.

321 (c) Not later than September 1, 2014, each local and regional board
322 of education that has not had a safe school climate plan, developed
323 pursuant to this section, previously reviewed and approved by the
324 Department of Education shall submit a safe school climate plan to the
325 department for review and approval in accordance with the provisions
326 of section 10-222p. Not later than thirty calendar days after approval
327 by the department of such safe school climate plan, the board shall
328 make such plan available on the board's and each individual school in
329 the school district's Internet web site and ensure that such plan is
330 included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures
331 and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

332 (d) On and after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, each local
333 and regional board of education shall require each school in the district
334 to complete an assessment using the school climate assessment
335 instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the
336 Department of Education pursuant to section 10-222h. Each local and
337 regional board of education shall collect the school climate assessments
338 for each school in the district and submit such school climate
339 assessments to the department.

340 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2019*) Not later than June 30, 2021,
341 each local and regional board of education shall publish on the Internet
342 web site of such board the plain language explanation of the rights and
343 remedies available under sections 10-4a and 10-4b of the general

344 statutes provided pursuant to subsection (a) of section 1 of this act.

345 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2019*) Each local and regional board of
 346 education, in consultation with the Department of Education and the
 347 social and emotional learning and school climate advisory
 348 collaborative established pursuant to section 1 of this act, shall provide
 349 on the Internet web site of the department training materials to school
 350 administrators regarding the prevention of and intervention in
 351 discrimination against and targeted harassment of students based on
 352 such students' (1) actual or perceived differentiating characteristics,
 353 such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual
 354 orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status,
 355 academic status, physical appearance or mental, physical,
 356 developmental or sensory disability, or (2) association with individuals
 357 or groups who have or are perceived to have one or more of such
 358 characteristics. Such training materials may be developed in
 359 consultation with or provided by one or more organizations offering
 360 training on identifying, preventing and intervening in discrimination.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	10-222d
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2019</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2019</i>	New section

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

The bill establishes a social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative and requires them to complete a number of tasks related to model positive school climate policies. This is not anticipated to result in a cost, as participation in the collaborative is voluntary and unpaid. The bill makes various other procedural, technical and clarifying changes that do not result in a fiscal impact to the state or local and regional boards of education.

House "A" strikes the underlying bill and its associated fiscal impact and replaces it with the fiscal impact described above.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 7215 (as amended by House "A")******AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL CLIMATES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes numerous changes to the laws related to school bullying and safe school climate. Principally, it:

1. establishes a 33-member social and emotional learning and school climate advisory collaborative and tasks it with, among other things, developing a biennial state-wide school climate survey, model positive school climate policy, and student suicide risk assessment (§§ 1-3);
2. requires the State Department of Education (SDE), by August 1, 2021, to publish on its website the model policy and school climate survey the collaborative develops (§ 2);
3. modifies the definition of bullying by, among other things, eliminating the requirement that the action occur between students (§ 3);
4. (a) specifies that schools, when they contact parents and guardians whose children have been involved in bullying, must let the parents know the results of the investigation into the incident and (b) requires the schools to also notify the parents or guardians that they may refer to information on the board of education's website about rights and remedies under school law (§ 3);
5. requires boards of education to publish such information in plain language on their websites by June 30, 2021 (§ 4); and
6. requires boards of education, in consultation with the

collaborative and SDE, to provide on the department website certain training materials for school administrators regarding bullying prevention and intervention (§ 5).

*House Amendment "A" makes various changes to the underlying bill, such as (1) changing the council in the bill to a collaborative, expanding its membership, and modifying its responsibilities; (2) modifying the definition of bullying; and (3) eliminating provisions that (a) extend bullying reporting requirements to school volunteers, (b) imposed various SDE requirements related to bullying, (c) renamed safe school climate plans as safe school climate policies and made numerous modifications to the information that must be included in them.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019, except the provisions related to the collaborative are effective upon passage.

§§ 1-3 — SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND SCHOOL CLIMATE ADVISORY COLLABORATIVE

The bill establishes a 33-member Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative and tasks it with the following:

1. collecting information on school climate improvement efforts of local and regional boards of education;
2. documenting any needs the boards articulate for technical assistance and training to foster positive school climates;
3. identifying best practices to promote positive school climates;
4. directing resources to support state-wide and local initiatives to foster and improve positive school climates and improve access to social and emotional learning in schools;
5. developing an assessment to screen students in grades 3 -12 for suicide risk;
6. developing a biennial state-wide school climate survey and

model positive school climate policy;

7. (a) developing a plain language explanation to distribute to parents and guardians that describes their right to file a written complaint with the State Board of Education alleging the local or regional board of education's failure to implement the state's educational interests and the associated remedies and (b) providing the explanation of these rights and remedies to each board of education by January 1, 2021; and
8. performing other functions concerning social and emotional learning and fostering positive school climates.

Definitions

Under the bill, a “school climate” means the quality and character of school life based on patterns of students’, parents’, and school employees’ experiences of school life, including norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. Currently, school climate means 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.

The bill defines a “positive school climate” as a school climate in which:

1. norms, values, expectations, and beliefs are promoted that support feeling socially, emotionally, and physically safe;
2. students, their parents and guardians, and school employees feel engaged and respected and work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision;
3. educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning; and
4. each person feels comfortable contributing to the school’s

operation and care of its physical environment.

“Social and emotional learning” means the process through which people achieve emotional intelligence through self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

“Emotional intelligence” means a person’s ability to:

1. perceive, recognize, understand, and manage his or her emotions and those of others;
2. use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including reasoning, problem solving, and interpersonal communication; and
3. understand and identify emotions.

Membership

The collaborative members include 22 legislative appointees as described in Table 1.

Table 1: Legislative Appointees

<i>Appointing Authority</i>	<i>Number of Appointees</i>	<i>Qualifications</i>
House speaker	Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT Association of Boards of Education representative • Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee member • School administrator with experience in district-level, equity-focused, and cross-disciplinary social and emotional learning • Representative of an organization that provides free or reduced-cost legal

Appointing Authority	Number of Appointees	Qualifications
		<p>services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT Parent Power representative
Senate president pro tempore	Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT Association of Schools representative • CT Association of School Administrators representative • Social Emotional Learning Alliance for CT representative • CT School Counselor Association representative • CT Association of Public School Superintendents representative
House majority leader	Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Equity for Kids of Connecticut representative • CT Parent Advocacy Center representative • African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities, Inc. representative
Senate majority leader	Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Children's Advocacy representative • Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence representative • Representative of UConn's Neag School of Education
House minority leader	Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Federation of Teachers – CT representative • Center for Social and Emotional Learning at Central Connecticut State

<i>Appointing Authority</i>	<i>Number of Appointees</i>	<i>Qualifications</i>
		University representative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT Parent Teacher Association representative
Senate minority leader	Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT Education Association representative • National Alliance on Mental Illness – CT representative • Youth Suicide Advisory Board representative

The collaborative members also include the:

1. chairpersons and ranking members of the Children’s and Education committees and
2. education commissioner, child advocate, and Commission on Women, Children and Seniors (CWCS) executive director, or their designees.

Appointments to the collaborative must be made within 30 days of the bill’s passage, and the collaborative must hold its first meeting within 60 days of passage.

Under the bill, the collaborative must be chaired by the CWCS executive director or his designee and a cochairperson elected from among the members. CWCS staff must serve as the collaborative’s administrative staff. The appointing authorities must fill any vacancies.

The collaborative may designate subcommittees and advisory groups to carry out its functions, as long as they are composed of collaborative members.

Reporting Requirement

The collaborative must annually report to the Children's and Education committee, beginning by January 1, 2021, any recommendations and its efforts to:

1. monitor the school climate improvement efforts of the boards of education,
2. document needs the boards articulate for technical assistance and training to foster positive school climates,
3. identify best practices for promoting positive school climates, and
4. direct resources to support state-wide and local initiatives on fostering and improving positive school climates and improving access to social and emotional learning.

Model Positive School Climate Policy

The bill requires the collaborative, by January 1, 2020, to develop a model positive school climate policy. In doing so, it may review safe school climate plans that local and regional boards of education have developed and implemented (see "Safe School Climate Plans" below).

Suicide Assessment

The bill requires the collaborative, by July 1, 2020, to submit to the Children's and Education committees the assessment it develops to screen students for suicide risk and any recommendations for implementing the assessment in public schools.

School Climate Survey

The bill requires the collaborative, by July 1, 2021, to develop a biennial state-wide school climate survey and provide it to SDE. The survey must be designed to obtain confidential information from school employees and students' parents and guardians concerning their impressions of the school's climate. The survey must ask about their impressions of:

1. the student learning environment at the school, including academic supports and resources available to students and school safety;
2. school employee communication to parents and guardians about students;
3. the teaching environment at the school, including employee resources, supports, and professional development; school leadership; and collaborative planning time availability;
4. whether there is a positive climate at the school;
5. whether individuals of all races, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds feel welcome at the school; and
6. (a) the availability of supports and strategies to develop and retain teachers and administrators, including minority teachers and administrators, school psychologists, and counselors, and (b) suggestions for increasing the availability of such supports and strategies.

§ 3 — BULLYING DEFINITION

The bill modifies the definition of “bullying” to mean an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent, or pervasive and (1) causes a student emotional or physical harm, (2) places a student in reasonable fear of such harm, or (3) infringes on a student’s rights or opportunities at school. Under this definition, the actions do not necessarily have to occur between two students.

Currently, bullying is one or more students’ repeated use of a written, oral, or electronic communication directed at or referring to a student in the same school district, or a physical act or gesture repeatedly directed at another student in the district, that (1) causes a student physical or emotional harm or property damage, (2) places the student in fear of such harm or property damage, (3) creates a hostile school environment for the student, (4) infringes on his or her rights at

school, or (5) substantially disrupts the school's education process or orderly operation.

As under existing law, bullying includes written, oral, or electronic communication or a physical act or gesture on the basis of having, or associating with individuals who have, certain actual or perceived characteristics (e.g., race, gender, or disability).

§ 3 — SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLANS

Existing law requires boards of education to develop and implement a safe school climate plan to address bullying in schools, among other things. The plan must require schools, within 48 hours of completing an investigation into alleged bullying, to notify the parents or guardian of the (1) student who committed the bullying and (2) student against whom the bullying was directed.

The bill specifies that this notice must include the results of the investigation. It additionally requires the notice, which must be verbal or by email if the parents' or guardians' email addresses are known, that they may refer to the plain language explanation of their legal rights and remedies that is published on the board of education's website as required by the bill.

§ 5 — SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING

The bill requires boards of education to develop training materials for school administrators. The materials must provide information on preventing and intervening in discrimination against, and targeted harassment of, students based on their (1) actual or perceived differentiating characteristics (e.g., race, color, or physical disability) or (2) association with individuals or groups who have one or more such characteristics. The materials may be developed in consultation with or provided by one or more organizations offering training on identifying, preventing, and intervening in discrimination.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 14 Nay 0 (03/07/2019)

Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 24 Nay 2 (05/16/2019)