



General Assembly

January Session, 2019

Raised Bill No. 7110

LCO No. 4055



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:
(ED)

AN ACT CONCERNING ENHANCED CLASSROOM SAFETY AND SCHOOL CLIMATE.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2019*) (a) Not later than July 1,
2 2020, each local and regional board of education shall revise its safe
3 school climate plan, developed pursuant to section 10-222d of the
4 general statutes, to include provisions addressing classroom safety in
5 the schools under the jurisdiction of such board. Each board shall
6 implement such revised plan for the school year commencing July 1,
7 2020, and each school year thereafter. Such revised plan shall include:

8 (1) Protocols and supports for enhancing classroom safety, and
9 addressing disruptive or injurious incidents that (A) require
10 temporarily clearing the classroom and removing a majority of the
11 students to reduce the likelihood of injury, (B) result in an injury that
12 requires medical attention beyond basic first aid and that may include
13 emergency room or doctor visits, or (C) result in an injury that (i) has
14 been caused by the same person on more than one occasion, such as by
15 means of kicking, biting or punching, (ii) has been verified by the

16 school nurse or other medical personnel, (iii) may not result in an
17 emergency room or doctor visit, and (iv) disrupts the classroom and is
18 a danger to students or staff. Such protocols and supports shall
19 include:

20 (I) The identity of the administrator who is to be notified by a
21 teacher of any such disruptive or injurious incident, and the identity of
22 any other school personnel who may be contacted if such
23 administrator is unavailable,

24 (II) The process by which such administrator is to investigate and
25 assess the facts, severity and intentionality of such disruptive or
26 injurious incident,

27 (III) The location or locations where a student who is responsible for
28 or involved in such disruptive or injurious incident is sent when such
29 student is temporarily removed from the classroom, in accordance
30 with section 10-233b of the general statutes, in order to ensure that
31 such student and the other students and staff in the classroom are safe,
32 which may include, but need not be limited to, access to appropriate
33 professional staff, therapeutic resources, instructional materials and
34 technology, and any other resources conducive to addressing the
35 temporary needs of such student,

36 (IV) A plan to generally and proactively lessen negative behaviors,
37 enhance resiliency, increase the use of deescalation strategies, and
38 improve social and peer relations skills, which shall include training
39 and may include, but need not be limited to, therapeutic supports,
40 restorative practices, protocols and support provided by the
41 Department of Education pursuant to section 3 of this act, trauma-
42 informed instruction, or strategies to improve the school climate, and

43 (V) A process for ensuring that such plan, protocols and procedures
44 described in this subdivision comply with all state and federal laws
45 and regulations for students who receive special education services or
46 an accommodation for a disability, and that any recommendations for
47 such students are consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

48 of 1973, as amended from time to time, and section 10-76d of the
49 general statutes, and are consistent with the individualized education
50 program for such student developed by such student's planning and
51 placement team or revised with the advice and consent of such
52 planning and placement team;

53 (2) A notification process concerning disruptive or injurious
54 incidents that occur within a classroom that requires the principal of
55 the school to (A) notify the parents or guardians of the student or
56 students who engaged in or were injured during such disruptive or
57 injurious incident, provided such notification complies with the
58 provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,
59 20 USC 1232g, as amended from time to time, and (B) invite the
60 parents or guardians of the student or students who engaged in such
61 disruptive or injurious incident to a meeting at the school to discuss
62 specific steps, supports or interventions undertaken by the school to
63 address the incident;

64 (3) A procedure for each school to document and maintain records
65 relating to all reports and investigations of disruptive or injurious
66 incidents that occur at the school, including the number of such
67 incidents and grade level of the students involved in such incidents;

68 (4) A requirement that the superintendent of schools provide
69 information to the local or regional board of education at one board
70 meeting convened per month (A) the number of disruptive or injurious
71 incidents that occurred at schools in the school district during the past
72 month and the grade levels of such incidents, and (B) the steps,
73 supports or interventions taken to address the needs of students and
74 educators involved in such disruptive or injurious incidents, provided
75 such information is presented in a manner that complies with the
76 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC 1232g, and
77 does not reveal the name of any student or any other specific details of
78 such incidents that would constitute a violation of the Family
79 Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974;

80 (5) A prohibition against discrimination or retaliation against any
81 individual who reports or assists in the investigation of a disruptive or
82 injurious incident;

83 (6) A requirement that an administrator conduct a meeting with the
84 teacher who witnesses a disruptive or injurious incident, not later than
85 two school days following such incident, to discuss and determine the
86 steps, supports and interventions necessary to support the students
87 and teacher; and

88 (7) A requirement that notice of a disruptive or injurious incident be
89 sent, not later than two school days following such incident, to the
90 planning and placement team, if any, of a student who was involved in
91 such incident for the purpose of determining any steps, supports and
92 interventions for such student.

93 (b) Whenever, following a disruptive or injurious incident described
94 in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, a teacher has
95 continued concerns with the steps, supports or interventions, or lack
96 thereof, to address such incident, the teacher may request an
97 emergency meeting of the scientific research based intervention team
98 or crisis intervention team, as appropriate, to review the response to
99 such incident. Such emergency meeting shall occur not later than three
100 school days following such request. The committee shall review the
101 steps, supports or interventions determined pursuant to subdivision
102 (6) or (7) of subsection (a) of this section, and may amend or revise
103 such steps, supports or interventions to address the concerns of the
104 teacher, except that for any student involved in such incident whose
105 individualized education program is determined by a planning and
106 placement team, pursuant to section 10-76d of the general statutes,
107 such amendments or revisions shall serve as a suggestion for
108 consideration by such student's planning and placement team. There
109 shall be no discrimination or retaliation against any teacher who
110 requests a meeting pursuant to this subsection.

111 (c) Any steps, supports or interventions provided under this section

112 to any student who receives special education or related services or an
113 accommodation for a disability shall be determined in accordance with
114 and comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations,
115 and shall be consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of
116 1973, as amended from time to time, the Individuals with Disabilities
117 Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq., as amended from time to time,
118 section 10-76d of the general statutes, and the individualized education
119 program for such student developed by such student's planning and
120 placement team.

121 (d) Each local and regional board of education shall submit an
122 annual report to the Department of Education concerning all
123 disruptive or injurious incidents described in subdivision (1) of
124 subsection (a) of this section that occurred in the classrooms of schools
125 under the jurisdiction of such board. Such report shall include the total
126 number of such incidents, the grade levels of students involved in such
127 incidents, and the race and category of disability of students involved
128 in such incidents.

129 Sec. 2. Section 10-222h of the general statutes is repealed and the
130 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2019*):

131 (a) The Department of Education shall, within available
132 appropriations, (1) document school districts' articulated needs for
133 technical assistance and training related to safe learning and bullying,
134 (2) collect information on the prevention and intervention strategies
135 used by schools to reduce the incidence of bullying, improve school
136 climate and improve reporting outcomes, (3) develop or recommend
137 model safe school climate plans for grades kindergarten to twelve,
138 inclusive, and (4) in collaboration with the Connecticut Association of
139 Schools, disseminate to all public schools grade-level appropriate
140 school climate assessment instruments, approved by the department,
141 to be used by local and regional boards of education for the purposes
142 of collecting information described in subdivision (2) of this subsection
143 so that the department can monitor bullying prevention efforts over
144 time and compare each district's progress to state trends. Such school

145 climate assessment instruments shall (A) include surveys that contain
146 uniform grade-level appropriate questions that collect information
147 about students' perspectives and opinions about the school climate at
148 the school, and (B) allow students to complete and submit such
149 assessment and survey anonymously.

150 (b) On or before [February 1, 2014] July 1, 2021, and annually
151 thereafter, the department shall, in accordance with the provisions of
152 section 11-4a, submit a report on the status of its efforts pursuant to
153 this section including, but not limited to, the number of verified acts of
154 bullying and disruptive or injurious incidents as described in
155 subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 1 of this act in the state, an
156 analysis of the responsive action taken by school districts, an analysis
157 of student responses on the uniform grade-level appropriate questions
158 described in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of
159 this section and any recommendations it may have regarding
160 additional activities or funding to prevent bullying and disruptive or
161 injurious incidents in schools and improve school climate and safety to
162 the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
163 cognizance of matters relating to education and children and to the
164 speaker of the House of Representatives, the president pro tempore of
165 the Senate and the majority and minority leaders of the House of
166 Representatives and the Senate.

167 (c) Not later than January 1, 2020, the department shall procure or
168 otherwise invite requests for proposals to develop and implement a
169 biennial state-wide school climate survey, and thereafter enter into a
170 contract to carry out the provisions of this section and subsection (d) of
171 section 10-222d. The state-wide school climate survey shall at
172 minimum:

173 (1) Seek confidential responses from school employees, including
174 principals, assistant principals, teachers, school social workers, school
175 psychologists, school nurses, school counselors and school
176 paraprofessionals, and, in a separate survey, seek confidential
177 responses from parents, and

178 (2) Solicit information from school employees and parents, as
179 deemed appropriate and relevant for such respondent, on (A) the
180 learning environment for students, including academic supports and
181 resources, school safety and security and outreach to parents, (B) the
182 teaching environment, including resources, supports and professional
183 development for teachers, administrators and other educators, teacher
184 leadership and collaborative planning time, (C) the establishment of a
185 positive and welcoming environment for students, parents of students,
186 teachers and administrators of all races, ethnicities and cultural
187 backgrounds, and (D) supports and strategies for the development and
188 retention of new teachers, minority teachers and administrators, school
189 psychologists and school counselors.

190 (d) The department shall solicit input from organizations invited to
191 participate in the classroom safety working group convened by the
192 commissioner commencing July 19, 2018, regarding the biennial state-
193 wide school climate survey described in subsection (c) of this section.

194 [(c)] (e) The department may accept private donations for the
195 purposes of this section.

196 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2019*) The Department of Education
197 shall, within available appropriations, (1) develop and disseminate
198 strategies to assist local and regional boards of education in enhancing
199 their safe school climate plans, developed pursuant to section 10-222d
200 of the general statutes, reducing incidents of school violence and
201 promoting trauma sensitivity in schools, and (2) make available to
202 school districts designated as alliance districts pursuant to section 10-
203 262u of the general statutes, resources to promote systemic
204 improvement of school climate through training, strategies for
205 connecting youth to appropriate services and fostering trauma-
206 sensitive school communities.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	July 1, 2019	New section
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Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2019</i>	10-222h
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2019</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To require boards of education to revise their safe school climate plans to include provisions relating to disruptive or injurious incidents that occur in classrooms, to develop and implement a state-wide school climate survey, and to require the Department of Education to provide assistance to school districts relating to school climate.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]