AN ACT CONCERNING ENHANCED CLASSROOM SAFETY AND SCHOOL CLIMATE.

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

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

(1) Protocols and supports for enhancing classroom safety, and addressing disruptive or injurious incidents that (A) require temporarily clearing the classroom and removing a majority of the students to reduce the likelihood of injury, (B) result in an injury that requires medical attention beyond basic first aid and that may include emergency room or doctor visits, or (C) result in an injury that (i) has been caused by the same person on more than one occasion, such as by means of kicking, biting or punching, (ii) has been verified by the
school nurse or other medical personnel, (iii) may not result in an emergency room or doctor visit, and (iv) disrupts the classroom and is a danger to students or staff. Such protocols and supports shall include:

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

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

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

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

(V) A process for ensuring that such plan, protocols and procedures described in this subdivision comply with all state and federal laws and regulations for students who receive special education services or an accommodation for a disability, and that any recommendations for such students are consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
of 1973, as amended from time to time, and section 10-76d of the general statutes, and are consistent with the individualized education program for such student developed by such student's planning and placement team or revised with the advice and consent of such planning and placement team;

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

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

(4) A requirement that the superintendent of schools provide information to the local or regional board of education at one board meeting convened per month (A) the number of disruptive or injurious incidents that occurred at schools in the school district during the past month and the grade levels of such incidents, and (B) the steps, supports or interventions taken to address the needs of students and educators involved in such disruptive or injurious incidents, provided such information is presented in a manner that complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC 1232g, and does not reveal the name of any student or any other specific details of such incidents that would constitute a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974;
(5) A prohibition against discrimination or retaliation against any individual who reports or assists in the investigation of a disruptive or injurious incident;

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

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

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

(c) Any steps, supports or interventions provided under this section
to any student who receives special education or related services or an accommodation for a disability shall be determined in accordance with and comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, and shall be consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended from time to time, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq., as amended from time to time, section 10-76d of the general statutes, and the individualized education program for such student developed by such student's planning and placement team.

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

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

(a) The Department of Education shall, within available appropriations, (1) document school districts' articulated needs for technical assistance and training related to safe learning and bullying, (2) collect information on the prevention and intervention strategies used by schools to reduce the incidence of bullying, improve school climate and improve reporting outcomes, (3) develop or recommend model safe school climate plans for grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, and (4) in collaboration with the Connecticut Association of Schools, disseminate to all public schools grade-level appropriate school climate assessment instruments, approved by the department, to be used by local and regional boards of education for the purposes of collecting information described in subdivision (2) of this subsection so that the department can monitor bullying prevention efforts over time and compare each district's progress to state trends. Such school
climate assessment instruments shall (A) include surveys that contain uniform grade-level appropriate questions that collect information about students' perspectives and opinions about the school climate at the school, and (B) allow students to complete and submit such assessment and survey anonymously.

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

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

(1) Seek confidential responses from school employees, including principals, assistant principals, teachers, school social workers, school psychologists, school nurses, school counselors and school paraprofessionals, and, in a separate survey, seek confidential responses from parents, and
(2) Solicit information from school employees and parents, as deemed appropriate and relevant for such respondent, on (A) the learning environment for students, including academic supports and resources, school safety and security and outreach to parents, (B) the teaching environment, including resources, supports and professional development for teachers, administrators and other educators, teacher leadership and collaborative planning time, (C) the establishment of a positive and welcoming environment for students, parents of students, teachers and administrators of all races, ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, and (D) supports and strategies for the development and retention of new teachers, minority teachers and administrators, school psychologists and school counselors.

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

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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>July 1, 2019</td>
<td>New section</td>
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</table>
Sec. 2  | July 1, 2019  | 10-222h  
Sec. 3  | July 1, 2019  | 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.]