



General Assembly

Amendment

January Session, 2019

LCO No. 9568



Offered by:
REP. LINEHAN, 103rd Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. 7215 File No. 126 Cal. No. 104

"AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL CLIMATES."

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the
2 following in lieu thereof:

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

17 develop a model positive school climate policy, as described in
18 subsection (a) of section 2 of this act, (8) develop a plain language
19 explanation of the rights and remedies available under sections 10-4a
20 and 10-4b of the general statutes for distribution to parents and
21 guardians pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (c) of section 10-
22 222d of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and provide such
23 explanation to each local and regional board of education, and (9)
24 perform other functions concerning social and emotional learning and
25 fostering positive school climates.

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

27 (1) Three appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
28 one of whom is a member of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight
29 Committee, established pursuant to section 46b-121n of the general
30 statutes, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut
31 Association of Boards of Education and one of whom is a
32 representative of the Connecticut Association of Public School
33 Superintendents;

34 (2) Three appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one
35 of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of Schools,
36 one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Association of
37 School Administrators and one of whom is a representative of the
38 Social Emotional Learning Alliance for Connecticut;

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

45 (4) Three appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of
46 whom is a representative of the Center for Children's Advocacy, one of
47 whom is a representative of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence
48 and one of whom is a representative of the Neag School of Education

49 at The University of Connecticut;

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

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

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

63 (8) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
64 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
65 relating to children and education;

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

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

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

72 (d) The cochairpersons of the collaborative shall be the executive
73 director of the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, or the
74 executive director's designee, and a cochairperson elected from among
75 the members. The first meeting of the collaborative shall be held not
76 later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

77 (e) The staff of the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors

78 shall serve as administrative staff of the collaborative.

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

92 Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than January 1, 2020, the
93 social and emotional learning and school climate advisory
94 collaborative established pursuant to section 1 of this act shall develop
95 a model positive school climate policy. In developing such model
96 policy, the collaborative may review positive school climate policies
97 developed and implemented by local and regional boards of education
98 pursuant to section 10-222d of the general statutes, as amended by this
99 act.

100 (b) Not later than July 1, 2020, the social and emotional learning and
101 school climate advisory collaborative established pursuant to section 1
102 of this act shall submit the assessment it developed pursuant to section
103 1 of this act for screening students at risk for suicide and
104 recommendations for implementation of such assessment in public
105 elementary, middle and high schools to the joint standing committees
106 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
107 children and education, in accordance with the provisions of section
108 11-4a of the general statutes.

109 (c) Not later than July 1, 2021, the social and emotional learning and

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

134 (d) Not later than August 1, 2021, the Department of Education shall
135 publish the model positive school climate policy developed pursuant
136 to subsection (a) of this section and the biennial state-wide school
137 climate survey developed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section on
138 the Internet web site of the department.

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

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

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

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

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

173 (4) "Mobile electronic device" means any hand-held or other
174 portable electronic equipment capable of providing data
175 communication between two or more individuals, including, but not

176 limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital
177 assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a
178 video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital
179 images are taken or transmitted;

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

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

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

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

201 (9) "School climate" means the quality and character of school life
202 [with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the
203 school community between and among students and adults] based on
204 patterns of students', parents' and guardians' and school employees'
205 experiences of school life, including, but not limited to, norms, goals,
206 values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and
207 organizational structures;

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

217 (11) "Emotional intelligence" means the ability to (A) perceive,
218 recognize and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use
219 emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to,
220 reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C)
221 understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in
222 oneself and others; and

223 (12) "Social and emotional learning" means the process through
224 which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the
225 competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness,
226 relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

227 (b) Each local and regional board of education shall develop and
228 implement a safe school climate plan to address the existence of
229 bullying and teen dating violence in its schools. Such plan shall: (1)
230 Enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to school
231 employees and require students and the parents or guardians of
232 students to be notified at the beginning of each school year of the
233 process by which students may make such reports, (2) enable the
234 parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected
235 bullying, (3) require school employees who witness acts of bullying or
236 receive reports of bullying to orally notify the safe school climate
237 specialist, described in section 10-222k, or another school administrator
238 if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable, not later than one
239 school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of
240 bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days

241 after making such oral report, (4) require the safe school climate
242 specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of
243 bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly
244 after receipt of any written reports made under this section and that
245 the parents or guardians of the student alleged to have committed an
246 act or acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student
247 against whom such alleged act or acts were directed receive prompt
248 notice that such investigation has commenced, (5) require the safe
249 school climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that
250 no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an
251 anonymous report, (6) include a prevention and intervention strategy,
252 as defined by section 10-222g, for school employees to deal with
253 bullying and teen dating violence, (7) provide for the inclusion of
254 language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying, (8) require
255 each school to notify the parents or guardians of students who commit
256 any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students
257 against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours
258 after the completion of the investigation described in subdivision (4) of
259 this subsection of the results of such investigation and notify such
260 parents or guardians verbally and by electronic mail, if such parents'
261 or guardians' electronic mail addresses are known, that such parents or
262 guardians may refer to the plain language explanation of the rights
263 and remedies available under sections 10-4a and 10-4b published on
264 the Internet web site of the local or regional board of education
265 pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, (9) require each school to
266 invite the parents or guardians of a student against whom such act was
267 directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the
268 measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student
269 against whom such act was directed and policies and procedures in
270 place to prevent further acts of bullying, (10) require each school to
271 invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified
272 act of bullying to a meeting, separate and distinct from the meeting
273 required in subdivision (9) of this subsection, to discuss specific
274 interventions undertaken by the school to prevent further acts of
275 bullying, (11) establish a procedure for each school to document and

276 maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in
277 such school and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of
278 bullying in such school and make such list available for public
279 inspection, and annually report such number to the Department of
280 Education, and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of
281 Education, (12) direct the development of case-by-case interventions
282 for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single
283 individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same
284 individual that may include both counseling and discipline, (13)
285 prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who
286 reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying, (14) direct
287 the development of student safety support plans for students against
288 whom an act of bullying was directed that address safety measures the
289 school will take to protect such students against further acts of
290 bullying, (15) require the principal of a school, or the principal's
291 designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when
292 such principal, or the principal's designee, believes that any acts of
293 bullying constitute criminal conduct, (16) prohibit bullying (A) on
294 school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity,
295 function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus
296 stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local
297 or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic
298 device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the
299 local or regional board of education, and (B) outside of the school
300 setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for
301 the student against whom such bullying was directed, or (ii) infringes
302 on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed
303 at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the
304 orderly operation of a school, (17) require, at the beginning of each
305 school year, each school to provide all school employees with a written
306 or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan, and
307 (18) require that all school employees annually complete the training
308 described in section 10-220a or section 10-222j. The notification
309 required pursuant to subdivision (8) of this subsection and the
310 invitation required pursuant to subdivision (9) of this subsection shall

311 include a description of the response of school employees to such acts
312 and any consequences that may result from the commission of further
313 acts of bullying.

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

325 (d) On and after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, each local
326 and regional board of education shall require each school in the district
327 to complete an assessment using the school climate assessment
328 instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the
329 Department of Education pursuant to section 10-222h. Each local and
330 regional board of education shall collect the school climate assessments
331 for each school in the district and submit such school climate
332 assessments to the department.

333 (e) Not later than July 1, 2021, each local and regional board of
334 education shall publish on the Internet web site of such board the plain
335 language explanation of the rights and remedies available under
336 sections 10-4a and 10-4b provided pursuant to subsection (a) of section
337 1 of this act.

338 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2019*) Each local and regional board of
339 education, in consultation with the Department of Education and the
340 social and emotional learning and school climate advisory
341 collaborative established pursuant to section 1 of this act, shall provide
342 on the Internet web site of the department training materials to school

343 administrators regarding the prevention of and intervention in
 344 discrimination against and targeted harassment of students based on
 345 such students' (1) actual or perceived differentiating characteristics,
 346 such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual
 347 orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status,
 348 academic status, physical appearance or mental, physical,
 349 developmental or sensory disability, or (2) association with individuals
 350 or groups who have or are perceived to have one or more of such
 351 characteristics. Such training materials may be developed in
 352 consultation with or provided by one or more organizations offering
 353 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