

An optional policy to consider.

Personnel-Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Domestic Violence

The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines for all School District personnel to address domestic violence that may have an impact on employees, students or parents/guardians. It has been determined that the occurrence of domestic violence adversely affects the well-being and productivity of school district personnel, students and families. Violence of any kind is a violation of human rights and an obstacle to learning. Domestic violence can cause absenteeism, lack of focus, and mental health concerns. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board of Education (Board) to provide appropriate support and assistance to employees and students and, to identify community resources for students and parents/guardians who are affected by domestic violence.

Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of coercive and abusive behavior that includes tactics of physical, sexual, and/or psychological abuse that are intended to establish and maintain control, dominate or hurt the intimate partner in a relationship. It is a criminal act committed by an individual against wife/husband, girlfriend/boyfriend, former spouses, former girlfriend/former boyfriend, as well as same sex partners.

A victim of domestic violence means a person who has been abused or subjected to extreme cruelty by (a) physical acts that resulted in or were threatened to result in physical injury; (b) sexual abuse; (c) sexual activity involving a child in the home; (d) being forced to participate in nonconsensual sexual acts or activities; (e) threats or attempts at physical or sexual abuse; (f) mental abuse; or (g) neglect or deprivation of medical care.

Additional language to consider: Domestic violence related crimes may include: assault and battery, harassment, breaking and entering, telephone misuse, violation of civil protective orders, malicious destruction of property, sexual assault, stalking and any other crime connected with and/or coercion of an intimate partner.

The Board will not tolerate domestic violence of any kind in or around District offices, facilities, classrooms, work sites, vehicles, or while a student or employee is engaged in District business or activities. This includes the display of any violent or threatening behavior that may result in physical or emotional injury or otherwise places the safety and productivity of District personnel and/or students at risk.

The District will take reasonable measures, to the extent practical and required by law, to foster a safe working environment for all faculty, staff and students. The District will make the safety and confidentiality of victims a top priority at all times. Efforts will be made to educate staff and students on the dynamics and effects of domestic violence and the promotion of healthy relationships. All district personnel are expected to take the problem of domestic violence and its effects in the workplace and on students and their parents/guardians seriously. School personnel should remain alert and sensitive to students' behavior for signs of the effects of domestic violence. The District will take reasonable measures to keep children safe from the effects of domestic violence while on District property or while engaged in District activities.

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Domestic Violence (continued)

Employees

The District is committed to working with employees who are victims of domestic violence to prevent it from occurring in the workplace and to reduce its impact on employee well-being and productivity.

The District will offer assistance to employees impacted by domestic violence by providing:

1. a confidential means for coming forward for help when possible;
2. information on available community resources; and
3. other appropriate assistance as feasible.

No employee will be penalized or disciplined solely for being a victim of domestic violence. Any employee who threatens, harasses, or abuses a domestic partner at the workplace or from the workplace using any District resources such as work time, workplace phones, fax machines, mail, e-mail, or other means may be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees who are perpetrators of domestic violence will be encouraged to seek domestic violence perpetrator treatment and other assistance as appropriate. The District will provide information regarding counseling and certified treatment resources.

Students

The District is committed to assisting students who have been exposed to domestic violence as well as students who are victims of dating violence in order to reduce the impact on the student. The District will offer assistance to students impacted by domestic or dating violence by providing:

1. a confidential means for coming forward for help when possible;
2. readily available resource and referral information;
3. class schedule adjustments when appropriate;
4. excused absences as needed to obtain assistance; and
5. other appropriate assistance as feasible, based on individual need.

No student will be penalized or disciplined solely for being exposed to domestic violence. Students who are perpetrators of domestic or dating violence will be encouraged to seek assistance. Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed should the student perpetrator engage in any act of domestic or dating violence while at school or while participating in any school activity.

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Domestic Violence (continued)

The District will provide information concerning services and resources available to victims of domestic violence. The information shall include, but not be limited to:

1. referrals available to counseling and supportive services, including, but not limited to, the Safe Home program administered by the Office of the Secretary of State, shelter services, domestic abuse hotlines, legal counseling and advocacy, mental health care and financial assistance, and
2. procedures to voluntarily and confidentially identify eligibility for referrals to such counseling and supportive services.

The District shall provide such information to any student or parent/guardian of a student who expresses to a school employee* that such student or parent/guardian does not feel safe at home due to domestic violence and the parent/guardian of a student who is authorized to transfer such student's educational records to another school.

<p>Note: The SDE, not later than January 1, 2020, is required to publish this information and post it on its website, in addition to disseminating the information to boards of education.</p>

*A school employee is defined, by law as a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator or superintendent, guidance or school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional, or coach employed by a local or regional school board or working in a public elementary, middle, or high school or any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle, or high school pursuant to a contract with the local or regional school board (CGS §10-222d).

(cf. 1316 – Conduct on School Property)

(cf. 4118.11/4218.11 – Nondiscrimination)

(cf. 4118.112/4218.112 – Sexual Harassment)

(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)

(cf. 5131.911 – Bullying)

(cf. 5141.4 – Reporting by Mandated Reporters of suspected Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Assault)

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Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

17b-112a Definitions. Notification of referrals to applicants and recipients of temporary family assistance who are victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence training program. Regulations.

P.A. 19-146 An Act Requiring the Provision of Information Concerning Domestic Violence Services and Resources to Students, Parents and Guardians.

10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rule(s), policies, and procedures.

Policy adopted:

cps 10/19