

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Monday, December 12, 2011 7:00 PM

PPMS Library, 1 Route 164, Preston, CT 06365

I. Call to Order	Speaker(s): Dr. Welch
II. Pledge of Allegiance	Speaker(s): Chair
III. Approval of Minutes	Speaker(s): Chair
IV. Public Comment	Speaker(s): Chair
V. Board of Education Committee and Other Reports	Speaker(s): Chair
VI. Superintendent Reports, Recommendations and Goals Update	Speaker(s): Dr. Welch: Superintendent
VII. BOE Expenditure Report/Projection Report	Speaker(s): Chair
VIII. Cafeteria Report	Speaker(s): Chair
IX. Transportation Report	Speaker(s): Chair
X. New Business	Speaker(s): Chair
X.A. Votes Required	Speaker(s): Chair
X.B. Discussion	Speaker(s): Chair
XI. Old Business	Speaker(s): Chair
XI.A. Votes Required	Speaker(s): Chair
XI.B. Discussion	Speaker(s): Chair
XII. Information	Speaker(s): Chair
XIII. Executive Session	Speaker(s): Dr. Welch
XIV. Date and Time of Next Meeting	Speaker(s): Chair
XV. Adjournment	Speaker(s): Chair

Board of Education Regular Meeting

November 14, 2011 07:00PM

PVMS Library

1. Call to Order

Dan Harris called the meeting to order at 7PM. **Other members present:** Deborah Burke-Grabarek, Pauline Andruskiewicz, Sandra Gauthier, Charles Raymond and John Moulson. James Jancewicz was absent. **Also present:** Dr. Welch; Superintendent, Ivy Davis; Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Special Education, Robert Sirpenski; Director of Finance and School Business Operations, Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary. **Audience:** Susan Strader, Patricia Hibbard, Arline McCullen, Mr. and Mrs. Clancy, Bill Legler, Kim Moran, MariAnna Willey, Karin Davis, Diane Egger, Derrick Jones, Emile Levasseur, Amy Sabrowski, Billy Bender, Jennifer Crary, Mike House; Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, Dr. Walsh; Principal PVMS and Ray Bernier; Principal PPMS.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes

Dan Harris addressed the board:

"Before we move on, I want to bring a matter to the board's attention about our minutes. About a year ago, we stopped formally voting to adjourn our Executive Sessions. We simply started coming out of them when they were done and resumed our meeting in public. While that is OK according to Robert's Rules of Order, I think that we need to be more precise with how we reflect the transition from executive to public in our minutes. As an example of what I am talking about, look at the last page of the approved September minutes which were enclosed with this agenda. You will see that it might be interpreted that the vote taken at the end of the meeting occurred DURING the Executive Session rather than AFTER IT, as was the case. Anyway, we can create more clarity here and I have asked the superintendent to insert the words, "Return to Public Session" in the minutes following the conclusion of every Executive Session in the future so that there will be no misunderstanding with regard to when any vote or votes were taken."

Moved, to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2011 BOE Meeting. Burke-Grabarek/Gauthier. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

4. Public Comment

MariAnna Willey expressed her desire for 4 cameras on each bus. She believes this would ensure the safety of students and drivers. She said that her niece was assaulted on a bus in another town and the video system ensured that the problem was handled properly.

Bill Legler expressed his concern with discrepancies in the BOE budget. He does not believe that Preston needs this new camera system. He suggested that the current VHS system be repaired and that the money be used for other things.

Kim Moran introduced herself as a mom, and a bus driver for the town. She said it would be a tragedy to not put the money into the new video camera system. Drivers can not see and hear everything behind them while driving.

Amy Sabrowski introduced herself as a driver, taxpayer and mom. She came to the Transportation sub committee meeting with an open mind. She liked what she saw.

She firmly believes that drivers and students need the protection of cameras that work properly.

Susan Strader thanked Amy and agreed that drivers and students need the protection of cameras that work properly. We have the money now. She prefers the 4 camera system over the 2 camera system. The cost difference is just not significant enough to justify settling for 2 cameras. Greater benefits with the 4 camera system, better warranty.

5. Board of Education Committee and Other Reports

The Transportation Sub Committee met on 11/2/11. The other sub committees did not meet.

It was agreed that a Budget Sub Committee meeting be scheduled for 12-12-11 at 6pm in PVMS Library. Charles, Pauline and John will attend.

6. Superintendent Reports and Recommendations and Goals Update

Instructional Rounds: Dr. Welch explained that he, Ivy and the two principals, as well as a consultant, will be participating in instructional rounds. Together they will visit teachers at PPMS and PVMS in order to learn about the nature of their instructional practices. They hope to gain a better understanding of what actually goes on in the classrooms; such as student engagement. Teachers are given notice before these visits.

7. BOE Expenditure Report/Projection Report

Robert Sirpenski reviewed his recommended expenditure report with the BOE. He would like to use a report that works for both the BOE and BOF but will use 2 different reports if that is what is necessary. The BOE agreed on the new format.

Mr. Sirpenski also reminded the Board that he locked in for heating and diesel fuel prices. The town did not lock in. Therefore, in the spirit of cooperation, Robert negotiated a combined price in order to help the town get a better rate.

8. Cafeteria Report

The cash flow is getting low. We may need to use some of the BOE subsidy for the account.

9. Transportation Report

None

10. New Business

10.1. Votes Required

A 4000 gallon gas tank at the bus garage and an 8000 gallon oil tank at PPMS must be removed from their sites. The gas tank needs to be removed ASAP. The oil tank can be moved next fiscal year. The cost to do this will be covered by the savings in fuel this year. Quotes were reviewed for the removal of one or both of these tanks.

Moved, to authorize the removal of both tanks this year, but do not include any paving. Moulson/Gauthier. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Burden of Proof language: Under federal and state special education law a parent can request a meeting in front of a state hearing officer if an agreement can not be reached among the parties. The state of Connecticut puts the burden of proof on the District. This new wording recommends that the burden of proof be placed on the person asking for the hearing. The hope is that if many school boards agree, the state will place the burden of proof on the person making the complaint. Dan Harris and Deborah Burke-Grabarek were both concerned with the legal costs that a parent might encounter if the law is changed.

Ivy Davis explained that the resolution is going out to every school board in the state. It will be brought back to our board at the next meeting with additional data if possible.

E Plus Lease buy out: Preston entered into this leasing agreement in 2008. The buy out cost for these servers is \$4712.29. Emile Levasseur; Technical Coordinator recommends this purchase. The life expectancy of the servers is between 3 and 5 years. It would cost about \$25,000.00 to replace the servers.

Moved, to authorize the E Plus lease buy out for \$4712.29. Andruskiewicz/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

10.2. Discussion

Policy 9400 Board Self Evaluation: Dan Harris asked that the compiled results be brought back to the next meeting of the board. John Moulson expressed that he disagrees with the evaluation and said that he will not complete one.

Policy 9321 Time Place and Notification of Meetings: The suggestion is to increase the meeting by ½ hour increments after 10PM. Sandra Gauthier suggested 9:30PM instead of 10PM. John Moulson said that the statement does not work and should be removed all together. Dan Harris asked that the policy be brought back next month for a vote.

Preston Veterans' Memorial School Advisory Board: Karin Davis addressed the board with regard to an update on the work of the PAB. The group is made up of 7 staff members and 5 parents. The group went through 15 successful hours of training. Their first formal meeting will be held Tuesday, 11-15-11. Regular meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of each month from 5:30 to 6:30. Arline McCullen stated that the goal of the PAB is to obtain a sense of cohesion that will improve the overall environment at PVMS.

Moved, to extend the meeting by ½ hour at 8:30PM. Andruskiewicz/Burke-Grabarek. Gauthier and Raymond also in Favor. Moulson opposed. Motion Carries.

11. Old Business

11.1. Votes Required

AngelTrax Video Surveillance Camera Award:

Charles Raymond reviewed the recommendation of the Transportation Sub Committee with the board. The committee recommended the mini micro system with 2 cameras on each yellow bus.

Dr. Welch explained that the mini micro system includes 2 cameras on each bus and 1 camera on each van for a total of 18,697.00 with a 3 year warranty. The HC460 system includes 4 cameras on each bus, 2 cameras on each van, and a 5 year warranty for 25,622.00. Therefore the difference in cost is modest over the life of the equipment. The primary concern is safety for the children and the drivers. Dan Harris stated that he attended the last BOF meeting. He did not

ask for their endorsement, but the BOF did believe that the purchase of the video surveillance system would be a good idea.

Moved, to purchase the HC460 video surveillance system (4 cameras each bus and 2 cameras each van) with a 5 year warranty for 25,622. Burke-Grabarek/Gauthier.

Discussion followed. Charles disagrees with the purchase because it was not budgeted for. He believes that the VHS system should have been better maintained. No cameras needed on vans. He suggested purchasing 2 cameras for each bus and putting the money in the next budget.

Andruskiewicz also in favor of the motion on the table. Raymond and Moulson Opposed. Motion Carries.

Superintendent's Revised Goals: Dr. Welch reviewed the changes made to his goals.

Moved, to approve the superintendent's goals as presented. Andruskiewicz/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Policy 5131.911 Bullying: This policy goes along with the school climate plan which will be brought to the board next month. PVMS and PPMS will work along with NFA to train all personnel. Pauline Andruskiewicz asked that the finalized version of Policy 5131.911 be brought to the December meeting to be voted on.

Moved, to adjourn the meeting. Moulson/no second.

Moved, to extend the meeting by ½ hour at 9PM. Burke-Grabarek/Andruskiewicz. Gauthier and Raymond also in favor. Moulson opposed. Motion Carries.

11.2. Discussion

12. Information

13. Executive Session

Moved, to convene in executive session at 9:05PM for the purposes of discussing strategy in respect to collective bargaining and to discuss strategy with respect to a pending claim. Burke-Grabarek/Andruskiewicz. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Returned to public session at 9:26PM.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

December 12, 2011
7PM, PVMS Library

15. Adjournment

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26PM. Raymond/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

**Preston Board of Education
FY2012 Full Year Salary Forecast - Nov YTD**

Account	Annual Budget	YTD July - Nov Expenses	Full Year Gross Expense Forecast	Less: Full Year Grants/Offsets*	Full Year Net Expense	Full Year Surplus (Deficit)
111 - Certified Personnel						
Superintendent	\$115,257	\$48,763	115,257	-	115,257	-
Director of Cir., Inst & Sped	84,460	\$38,077	90,000	(5,540)	84,460	-
Principals	197,713	\$82,929	197,063	-	197,063	650
Business Manager	88,000	\$34,076	94,709	(13,846)	80,863	7,137
Regular Education Teachers	2,130,454	\$647,997	2,068,493	(15,000)	2,053,493	76,961
Education Jobs Grant Offset	(178,746)	(\$45,000)	(181,387)	-	(181,387)	2,641
Special Education Teachers	588,217	\$188,689	590,419	-	590,419	(2,202)
Health Services	92,183	\$36,107	96,107	-	96,107	(3,924)
Total Certified Personnel	\$3,117,538	\$1,031,637	\$3,070,661	(\$34,386)	\$3,036,275	\$81,263
112 - Classified Personnel						
Instructional Assistants	248,419	\$110,409	350,495	(123,018)	227,477	20,942
Central Office Staff	102,912	\$46,928	109,708	-	109,708	(6,796)
Technology Staff	69,067	\$30,722	68,894	-	68,894	173
School Secretaries	53,127	\$21,323	55,890	-	55,890	(2,763)
Bldg & Grounds/Custodial	209,525	\$94,959	213,358	-	213,358	(3,833)
Transportation Staff	439,769	\$147,847	436,364	-	436,364	3,405
113 - Substitutes	110,300	\$40,124	106,104	-	106,104	4,196
112 PVMS Lunch-Playground Monitors	20,240	\$5,601	19,680	-	19,680	560
114 Home Bound Tutor	9,500	\$2,321	7,571	-	7,571	1,929
122 Stipends	21,000	\$9,359	19,959	-	19,959	1,041
Café Clearing	-	\$0	-	-	-	-
Total Classified Personnel	\$1,283,859	\$509,593	\$1,388,023	(\$123,018)	\$1,265,005	\$18,854
Total Salaries	\$4,401,397	\$1,541,230	\$4,458,684	(\$157,404)	\$4,301,280	\$100,117
* Grants/Offsets include: Pre K Tuition, Title I, IDEA 611, IDEA 619						

**Preston Board of Education
FY2012 Budget Status Salary Expense
July thru November**

Account	Annual Budget	November Budget	November Expenses	November Variance	YTD July - Nov		YTD Variance (Negative)
					Budget	Expenses	
111 - Certified Personnel							
Superintendent	\$115,257	\$8,866	\$8,866	(\$0)	\$48,763	\$48,763	(\$0)
Director of Cir., Inst & Sped	84,460	6,497	6,923	(426)	\$35,733	\$38,077	(\$2,344)
Principals	197,713	15,209	15,078	131	\$83,648	\$82,929	\$719
Business Manager	88,000	6,769	6,923	(154)	\$37,231	\$34,076	\$3,155
Regular Education Teachers	2,130,454	163,881	162,660	1,221	\$655,524	\$647,997	\$7,528
Education Jobs Grant Offset	(178,746)	-	-	-	(\$44,687)	(\$45,000)	\$314
Special Education Teachers	588,217	44,771	44,617	154	\$186,667	\$188,689	(\$2,022)
Health Services	92,183	\$7,661	8,971	(1,310)	\$34,724	\$36,107	(\$1,383)
Total Certified Personnel	\$3,117,538	\$253,654	\$254,038	(\$384)	\$1,037,603	\$1,031,637	\$5,965
112 - Classified Personnel							
Instructional Assistants	248,419	\$30,046	36,637	(6,591)	\$77,364	\$110,409	(\$33,045)
Central Office Staff	102,912	7,916	8,379	(463)	\$43,540	\$46,928	(\$3,388)
Technology Staff	69,067	5,313	5,989	(676)	\$29,221	\$30,722	(\$1,501)
School Secretaries	53,127	4,620	4,774	(155)	\$18,479	\$21,323	(\$2,844)
Bldg & Grounds/Custodial	209,525	\$15,617	15,739	(122)	\$92,395	\$94,959	(\$2,564)
Transportation Staff	439,789	\$35,744	36,049	(305)	\$150,677	\$147,847	\$2,830
Substitutes	110,300	10,073	13,590	(3,517)	\$31,082	\$40,124	(\$9,042)
PVMS Lunch-Playground Monitors	20,240	2,305	2,188	116	\$6,160	\$5,601	\$560
Home Bound Tutor	9,500	2,209	46	2,162	\$4,019	\$2,321	\$1,697
Stipends	21,000	4,885	2,434		\$8,885	\$9,359	(\$474)
Café Cleaning	-	-	-		-	\$0	\$0
Total Classified Personnel	\$1,283,859	\$118,727	\$125,826	(\$9,550)	\$461,821	\$509,593	(\$47,772)
Total Salaries	\$4,401,397	\$372,381	\$379,864	(\$9,334)	\$1,499,424	\$1,541,230	(\$41,807)

**Preston Board of Education
FY2012 Budget Status Report**

July 2011 to November

2011

Account	Annual Budget	Non Salary Expenses		Balance
		November Expenses	YTD July - Nov Expenses	
212 · Health Insurance	\$938,666	\$155,745	\$563,814	\$374,852
215 · Life Insurance	\$15,400	\$625	\$7,566	\$7,834
220 · Social Security	\$145,000	\$13,387	\$64,895	\$80,105
250 · Tuition Reimbursement	\$7,000	\$0	\$1,480	\$5,520
260 · Unemployment Comp	\$35,000	\$8,555	\$11,516	\$23,484
270 · Workers Comp	\$58,200	\$0	\$14,554	\$43,646
275 · Employee Physicals	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,000	\$500
291 · Annuity Payments	\$133,101	\$1,881	\$92,630	\$40,471
295/297 · Employee Voluntary Insurances	\$0	\$109	\$1,372	(\$1,372)
Total Benefits	\$1,333,867	\$180,302	758,828	575,039
320 · Special Education Services	\$156,413	\$29,460	\$52,261	\$104,152
322 · Staff Development	\$12,600	\$3,073	\$3,861	\$8,739
330 · Professional Purchased Services	\$30,516	\$6,022	\$9,735	\$20,781
340 · Legal Services	\$40,000	\$12,333	\$12,333	\$27,667
410 · Utility Services	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
420 · Refuse Removal	\$7,280	\$0	\$2,567	\$4,713
421 · Transportation Vehicle Repairs	\$85,000	\$12,191	\$36,706	\$48,294
430 · Repairs & Maintenance	\$118,125	\$21,309	\$78,165	\$39,960
431 · Maintenance Equipment Repairs	\$5,000	\$588	\$1,308	\$3,692
432 · Technology Equipment Repairs	\$22,000	\$4,170	\$2,599	\$19,401
442 · Copier Leases	\$47,880	\$9,641	\$23,758	\$24,122
450 · Building Improvements	\$28,000	\$0	\$4,385	\$23,615
Total Purchased Services	\$553,814	\$98,786	\$227,678	\$326,136

**Preston Board of Education
FY2012 Budget Status Report**

July 2011 to November

2011

Account	Annual Budget	Non Salary Expenses		Balance
		November Expenses	YTD July - Nov Expenses	
510/512 · Spec Educ/Magnet Transportation	\$106,000	\$30,122	\$34,412	\$71,588
520 · Property/Liability Insurance	\$61,705	\$15,684	\$33,113	\$28,592
530 · Communications	\$35,880	\$2,890	\$16,598	\$19,282
531 · Postage	\$2,000	\$960	\$3,119	(\$1,119)
570 · Food Service Stoploss	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$50,000
580 · Travel	\$10,000	\$421	\$1,503	\$8,497
Total Other Purchased Services	\$265,585	\$50,077	\$88,745	\$176,840
560 · Tuition - Designated HS	\$1,806,512	\$892,964	\$892,964	\$913,548
561 · Tuition - Vo-Ag, Other	\$97,216	\$16,420	\$52,657	\$44,559
562 · Tuition - Magnet Schools	\$20,707	\$0	\$0	\$20,707
563 · Tuition - Spec Ed - LEA Placed	\$1,298,189	\$351,766	\$592,073	\$706,116
564 · Tuition - Spec Ed - DCF Placed	\$26,771	\$80,002	\$80,002	(\$53,231)
565 · Tuition - Reg Ed - DCF Placed	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Student Tuition	\$3,249,395	\$1,341,152	\$1,617,696	\$1,631,699
611/612 · Instructional/Media Supplies	\$66,382	\$24,428	\$27,248	\$39,134
613 · Custodial/Maintenance Supplies	\$36,800	\$940	\$29,504	\$7,296
620/621 · Heat Energy/Propane	\$120,120	\$1,513	\$34,139	\$85,981
622 · Electricity	\$140,000	\$34,634	\$47,628	\$92,372
626 · Gasoline/Diesel	\$86,000	\$12,210	\$72,114	\$13,886
641/642 · Textbooks/Workbooks/Library	\$22,500	(\$1,931)	\$9,182	\$13,318
650 · Technology Supplies	\$10,500	\$0	\$4,970	\$5,530
690 · Non-Instructional Supplies	\$12,346	\$3,628	\$6,991	\$5,355
Total Supplies/Commodities	\$494,648	\$75,422	\$231,774	\$262,874
730 · Instructional Equipment	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
733 · Non-Instructional Equipment	\$10,500	\$0	\$261	\$10,239
734 · Technology Equipment	\$82,886	\$11,562	\$32,988	\$49,898
735 · Technology Software/Licenses	\$19,000	\$12,823	\$22,354	(\$3,354)
Total Equipment	\$117,386	\$24,385	\$55,602	\$61,784
810 · Dues/Fees	\$12,500	\$7,691	\$18,062	(\$5,562)
Total Expense	\$6,027,195	\$1,777,814	\$2,998,385	\$3,028,810

PRESTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
325 Shetucket Turnpike
Preston, Connecticut 06365

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING DATES
Calendar Year 2012

Month	Date	Day	Type of Meeting
January	09	M	Regular Meeting
February	13	M	Regular Meeting
March	12	M	Regular Meeting
April	02	M	Regular Meeting
May	14	M	Regular Meeting
June	11	M	Regular Meeting
July	09	M	Regular Meeting
August	13	M	Regular Meeting
September	10	M	Regular Meeting
October	15	M	Regular Meeting
November	12	M	Regular Meeting
December	10	M	Regular Meeting

All meetings (unless otherwise noted) start at **7:00** p.m. in Preston Veterans' Memorial School Library located at 325 Route 165/Shetucket Tpke.

Approved
Preston Board of Education

Chairperson

Preston Board of Education

Policies, Regulations, and Bylaws

5131.911 (a)

Students

Bullying

Safe School Climate Plan

Purpose/Priority Statement

The Preston District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. The goal is the establishment of a positive school climate in which norms, values, and expectations make students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process. The District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The following plan, "The Preston Public Schools Safe School Climate Plan (Plan)," addresses the mandated areas of compliance which are required under C.G.S.10-222d as amended by P.A. 11-232. In addition to the following current efforts, the administration, faculty and staff of this District commit to continue to improve, enhance, and update both the Plan and its implementation biennially in order to best serve the students, parents, guardians and the community.

The Preston Board of Education promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

I. Prohibition Against Bullying

The Board prohibits bullying (a) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board, and (b) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, (ii) infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school.

II. Definitions

"Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district that:

Preston Board of Education

Policies, Regulations, and Bylaws

5131.911(b)

Students

Bullying (continued)

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, development or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics. *(The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.)*

“Cyberbullying” means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

“Mobile electronic device” means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted.

“Electronic communication” means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.

“Hostile environment” means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.

“Outside of the school setting” means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education.

“School employee” means (a) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional, or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (b) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who 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 board of education.

“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, (and reflects norms, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures).

Preston Board of Education
Policies, Regulations, and Bylaws

5131.911(c)

Students

Bullying (continued)

III. Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation (Complaint Process)

A. Publication of the Prohibition against Bullying and Related Procedures

The prohibition against bullying shall be publicized by including the following statement in the student handbook of each of the district schools:

“Bullying behavior by any student in the Preston Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. “Bullying” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same district that:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school,

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, gender identity, or physical mental, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

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Students

Bullying (continued)

1. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim
2. infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school,

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation (Plan) #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

B. Appropriate School Personnel

All school employees are charged with the responsibility of taking reports of bullying or if witnessing acts of bullying to notify the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) or another administrator when the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) is not available. Reports shall be appropriately investigated by the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) or another administrator when the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) is not available.

District Safe School Climate Coordinator

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Superintendent of Schools or designee shall act as District Safe School Climate Coordinator.

The Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Implement the District's safe school climate plan;
2. Collaborate with the Principals (Safe School Climate Specialists), and Board, to prevent identify, and respond to bullying in District schools;
3. Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments to the Department of Education; and
4. Meet with the Principals (Safe School Climate Specialists) at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying issues in the district and make recommended changes to the Districts safe school climate plan.

Safe School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, each

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Students

Bullying (continued)

school Principal shall serve as the Safe School Climate specialist for the school.

The Specialist in each school shall:

1. Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying in the school in accordance with the District's Safe School Climate Plan;
2. Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying in the school; and
3. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying reports in the school.

C. Annual Notification of the Complaint Process

The process by which students may make formal, informal, and anonymous complaints as set forth below shall be publicized annually in the student handbook of each of the District schools. In addition, this Safe School Climate Plan shall be placed on the District website and the website of each school.

D. Formal Written Complaints

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file written reports of conduct that they consider to be bullying. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school employees, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) or another school administrator, if the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) is unavailable, for review and action in accordance with Section IV below.

E. Informal/Verbal Complaints by Students

Students may make an informal complaint of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbal report to the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) or to any school employee, as defined, or administrator. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school employee, or administrator or the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) who receives an informal complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided. Such written report by the school employee, administrator, if not the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) shall be promptly

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Students

Bullying (continued)

forwarded to the Principal for review and action in accordance with Section IV below.

F. Anonymous Complaints

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school employee who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the Safe School Climate Specialist, if not the Principal or his/her designee, shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact that maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation of the complaint and/or possible remedial action. At such meeting, the student shall be given the choice as to whether to maintain the anonymity of the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

IV. Staff Responsibilities and Intervention Strategies

A. Teachers and Other School Staff

School employees who witness acts of bullying, as defined above, or who receive reports of bullying shall promptly notify the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) or another school administrator if the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) is unavailable, not later than one school day after such employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying. A written report must be filed not later than two school days after making such an oral report concerning the events witnessed or reported.

School employees who receive student or parent reports of suspected bullying shall promptly notify the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, such complaint shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) or another school administrator if the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) is unavailable. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a school employee, he or she shall prepare a succinct written report of the informal complaint, which shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) or another school administrator if the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) is unavailable. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a school employee shall verbally report the matter to the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) not later than the next school day.

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Students

Bullying (continued)

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school employees and others are encouraged to address the issue of bullying in other interactions with students. Teachers and other professionals may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and help eliminate bullying behavior through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially-appropriate behavior. All school employees including teachers and other professional employees should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of "bullying."

B. Responsibilities of the Safe School Climate Specialist

1. Investigation

The Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) shall be promptly notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected bullying received by any school employee. The Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) shall investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying in the school in accordance with the District's Safe School Climate Plan. All such Complaints shall be investigated promptly. The investigation must be completed promptly after the receipt by the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) of any written report. In order to allow the District to adequately investigate all formal complaints, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied must complete a consent form that allows their District to release that student's name to those third parties who the District contacts as part of its investigation of that complaint with regard to the investigation of informal complaints, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied must complete the above-mentioned consent form so long as that student has not requested anonymity.

A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of bullying were verified, and, when acts of bullying are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

The school shall notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and in the case of a divorced/split situation, to the other parent/guardian if requested. The notice must describe the school's response, measures being taken by the

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Students

Bullying (continued)

school to ensure the safety of the students against whom such act was directed, and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complainant. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

2. Remedial Actions

Verified acts of bullying shall result in intervention by the Principal or his/her designee that is intended to address the acts of the perpetrator and the needs of the victim and to assure that the prohibition against bullying behavior is enforced, with the goal that any such bullying behavior will end as a result.

Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in how serious it is, and what impact it has on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying" as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (detention, in-school suspension; suspension or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the Principal (or responsible program administrator or his/her designee). The following sets forth possible interventions for principals to enforce the Board's prohibition against bullying. No disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.

The following sets forth permissible interventions for building principals (or other responsible program administrators) to enforce the Board's prohibition against bullying.

a. Non-disciplinary Interventions

When verified acts of bullying are identified early and/or when such verified acts of bullying do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of bullying, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring such cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the

Students

Bullying (continued)

process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

In any instance in which bullying is verified, the Principal (or other responsible program administrator) shall invite the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, and the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying, to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying. In the discretion of the building Principal or other responsible program administrator, the meeting(s) described in this section may be held jointly or separately.

b. Disciplinary Interventions

When acts of bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, shall not be the basis for disciplinary actions.

In-school suspension and suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation, in accordance with the Board's Student Discipline policy.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with Board policy. This consequence shall be reserved for serious incidents of bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior.

c. Interventions for Bullied Students

The Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) shall intervene in order to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual. Intervention strategies for a bullied student may include the following:

- Counseling
- Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene I

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Students

Bullying (continued)

- in bullying situations;
- Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization;
- Peer mediation where appropriate.

3.General Prevention and Intervention Strategies

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying and direct intervention when acts of bullying are verified, other District actions may ameliorate any potential problem with bullying in school or at school sponsored activities. A focus will be placed on district and school efforts to improve school climate based upon the National School Climate Standards.

While no specific action is required and school needs for such interventions may vary from time to time, the following list of potential intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers and other professional staff members in each school:

- a. Implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying, including any such program identified by the Department of Education;
- b. A safe school climate assessment on or after July 1, 2012 and biennially thereafter to determine the prevalence of bullying. Such assessments may include, in addition to those approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education, in collaboration with CAS, the National School Climate Standards Self-Assessment Tool and the Connecticut State Department of Education's "Improving School Climate Team Rubric;"
- c. Establishment by the school Principal of a Safe School Climate Committee in each District school or the designation of an existing committee that is responsible for fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying in the school.

The Safe School Climate Committee shall:

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying;
2. Identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the school;

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Students

Bullying (continued)

3. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying;
4. Review and make recommendation to the Superintendent (Climate Coordinator) regarding the District's Safe School Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
5. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying;
6. Collaborative with the Superintendent (District Safe School Climate Coordinator) in the collection of data regarding bullying; and
7. Perform any other duties as determined by the Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying for the school.

Parent members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #2 above and from any other committee activities that may compromise student confidentiality.

- d. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur;
- e. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school;
- f. Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student, parents and school employees;
- g. School-wide training related to safe school climate;
- h. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
- i. Respectful responses to bullying concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
- j. Planned professional development programs addressing bully/victim problems;
- k. Student peer training, education and support. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- l. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping (e.g., males need to be strong and tough);
- m. Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of staff and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;
- n. Modeling by all school employees of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
- o. Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;
- p. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

Students

Bullying (continued)

V. Reporting Obligations

A. Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator

If after investigation, acts of bullying by a specific student are verified, not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation, the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) shall notify the parent or guardian of the perpetrator in writing of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in such notification. In addition, the school shall invite the parent/guardian of a student who commits any verified act of bullying (after the completion of the investigation) to a meeting to communicate to the parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety and measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying. Records will be maintained by the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) of the bullying reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

B. Reports to the Targeted Student and his/her Parent or Guardian

If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the Principal (Safe Climate Specialist) shall notify the parent or guardian of the victim of such finding, not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such bullying. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the perpetrator, as reflected in the student's educational records, shall not be disclosed to the parents or guardian of the victim, except as provided by law (e.g., court order/subpoena). In addition, the school shall invite the parent/guardian of the student against whom the verified act of bullying was directed, after the completion of the investigation, to a meeting to communicate to the parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety and measures being taken by the school to ensure the targeted student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying. Records will be maintained by the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) of the bullying reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

Notices shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and the other parent/guardian if requested. This mailing requirement shall be in effect for as long as the student attends the school in which the original request is made.

Students

Bullying (continued)

C. List of Verified Acts of Bullying

The Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) of each school shall establish a procedure to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in the school, and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. The list shall be reported annually to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. Given that any determination of bullying involves repeated acts over time, each report prepared in accordance with Section III (1) above that includes verified acts of bullying shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying unless the specific actions that are the subject of the report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying. The list shall be limited to the number of such verified acts of bullying in the school, and it shall not set out the particulars of each verified act, including but not limited to any personally identifiable student information, which is confidential information by law.

VI. Prohibition against Discrimination and Retaliation

A. Safety

Discrimination and/or retaliation against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of an act of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

The continuation and perpetuation of bullying of a student through the dissemination of hurtful or demeaning material by any other student is prohibited.

The District will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, discrimination or retaliation in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school related activities. All reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, discrimination and retaliation will be investigated promptly and prompt action will be taken to end that behavior and restore the student's against whom such bullying was directed (target's) sense of safety. This commitment is to be supported in all aspects of the school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

Before formally investigating the allegations of bullying, discrimination or retaliation, the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged student against whom such bullying was

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Students

Bullying (continued)

Directed (target) and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but are not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the alleged victim (target) and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but are not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the alleged victim (target) and/or the alleged perpetrator in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the alleged student against whom such bullying was directed (target); and altering the alleged perpetrator's schedule and access to the alleged target. The Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) will contact the victim to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If determined necessary, the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist) will work with the appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

B. Law Enforcement Notification

The School Principal shall notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such Principal believes any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct.

VII. Training Requirements for School Staff

- A. Certified staff of the District shall be provided in-service training on the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and the prevention of and response to youth suicide.
- B. Beginning teachers shall satisfactorily complete instructional modules as required by C.G.S. 10-145a which shall include a module in classroom management and climate, which shall include training regarding the prevention, identification, and response to school bullying and the prevention of and response to youth suicide.
- C. Non-certified staff of the District will participate in annual training to be provided, within available appropriations, by the Connecticut State Department of

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Students

Bullying (continued)

Education. The training may be presented in person by mentors, offered in statewide workshops, or through on-line courses. Such training may include, but is not limited to:

1. Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying among students in school and outside the school setting.
2. Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate and effective interventions to stop bullying.
3. Information regarding the interaction and relationship between students committing acts of bullying, students against whom such acts of bullying are directed and witnesses of such acts of bullying.
4. Research findings on bullying, such as information about the types of students who have been shown to be at-risk for bullying in the school setting.
5. Information about the incidence and nature of cyberbullying as defined in C.G.S. 10-222d, or
6. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

VIII. Notification Requirements

- A. A copy of this District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be provided in written or electronic format to all District employees annually at the beginning of each school year.
- B. The District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be made available on the Board's website and on the website of each individual school with the District. Such posting shall occur within thirty (30) days of the approval of such plan by the Board.
- C. The District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be included in the District's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

IX. School Climate Assessments

- A. On or after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, the Board requires each school within the District to complete an assessment using the school climate assessment Instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education.
- B. Completed assessments shall be shared with the Board and then submitted by the Board to the State Department of Education.

X. Bullying Through the Use of Technology (Cyberbullying)

An emerging form of bullying is the use of technology to threaten, intimidate, ridicule, humiliate, insult, or harass. Technology enables aggressive expression toward others and does not rely on physical strength or physical contact. By using a

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Students

Bullying (continued)

cell phone or the Internet, a student can quickly and aggressively spread rumors, threats, hate mail, or embarrassing photos through text messages, e-mails, or instant messages.

There are a number of social networking sites (MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) available to our students that can be misused and/or abused for bullying purposes. Any alleged misuse or abuse must be reported to any staff member or the Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist).

The District's discipline policy states that misuse, on or off campus, of electronic devices, for threatening/bullying/hazing or harassment is a violation and can be the basis for discipline on or off campus. When information is received that a student or students are involved in bullying through the use of technology either as the actor or a member of a group, or the victim, the following will be considered:

- If it takes place on campus or at a school sponsored event, disciplinary action will be taken.
- If it takes place off campus a school may take disciplinary action if the incident poses a likelihood of substantial disruption to the educational process or the orderly day to day operations of the school.

XI. Relationship to Other Laws

- A. Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the district and school rules, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the "Plan" prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or district policies.
- B. In addition, nothing in the "Plan" is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action under applicable laws, or local school or District policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the "Plan" covers the behavior.

XII. Immunity for Board of Education, School Employees, Others

Members of the Board of Education and school employees are protected by statute against damage claims in the implementation of a safe school climate plan and, in accordance with a school district safe school climate plan, report, investigate, or respond to bullying. PA 11-232 also extends this immunity to reports of bullying incidents by parents, students, and others to a school employee according to a safe

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Students

Bullying (continued)

school climate plan.

To be immune, these parties must act in good faith and, in the case of a school employee or Board of Education, within the scope of their duties. The immunity does not cover gross, wanton, reckless, or willful misconduct.

Regulation Approved:

5131.911
Appendix A

ANNUAL STUDENT HANDBOOK BULLYING NOTICE

Bullying behavior by any student in the Preston Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- B. Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. Infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or physical, mental, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

- A. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- B. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- C. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures, in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

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5131.911 (a)

Students

Hazing

Bullying

The Preston Board of Education promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

The Board believes that a school environment in which students feel safe, supported, engaged and helpfully challenged is optimal for learning and healthy development. The Board seeks an environment in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe; an environment that is free of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Definitions

“Bullying” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, development or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics. *(The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.)*

“Cyberbullying” means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

“Mobile electronic device” means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted.

“Electronic communication” means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data

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5131.911(b)

Students

Hazing

Bullying (continued)

or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.

“Hostile environment” means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.

“Outside of the school setting” means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education.

“School employee” means (a) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional, or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (b) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who 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 board of education.

“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, (and reflects norms, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures).

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs
3. threats and intimidation
4. extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
5. exclusion from peer groups within the school
6. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school (“cyberbullying”)
7. Targeting of a student based on the student’s actual or perceived “differentiating” characteristics such as race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; socioeconomic or academic status; physical appearance; or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability.

Such conduct is disruptive of the educational process and, therefore, bullying is not acceptable behavior in this district and is prohibited.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of

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Students

Hazing

Bullying (continued)

Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

1. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim
2. infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

A comprehensive program, to improve the school climate, involving everyone in the schools and the community, to address bullying at all school levels is essential to reducing incidences of bullying. Such a program must involve interventions at all levels, school-wide, classroom and individual.

The District's program: *(Also outlined in the section pertaining to the "Safe School Climate Plan."*

1. Requires the development and implementation of a safe school climate plan by the Board of Education to address the existence of bullying in its school;
2. Permits anonymous reports of bullying by students to school employees and written reports of suspected bullying by parents or guardians;
3. Requires school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying to orally notify the safe school climate specialist or another school administrator if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such an oral report;
4. Requires the safe school climate specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written report;
5. Requires the safe school climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
6. Requires each school to have a prevention and intervention strategy, as defined by statute, as amended, for school employees to deal with bullying, including language about bullying in student code of conduct and in all student handbooks;
7. Provides for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;
8. Requires each school to notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student

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Students

Hazing

Bullying (continued)

- pimarily resides and to the other parent/guardian if requested. The notice must describe the school's response and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying;
9. Requires each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom the act was directed, to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed to prevent further acts of bullying;
 10. Establishes a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and report such number to the Department of Education in such a manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
 11. Requires the development of case-by –case interventions for addressing reported incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
 12. Prohibits discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
 13. Requires the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that addresses safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying;
 14. Requires the principal of a school or the principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such principal or the principal's designee believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;
 15. Prohibits bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education, and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;
 16. Requires, at the beginning of each school year, for each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan, and
 17. Requires all school employees to annually complete the training required by C.G.S. 10-220a, as amended. Such training shall include identifying and responding to bullying and preventing and responding to youth suicide;

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Students

Hazing

Bullying (continued)

Note: Certified employees are required to complete annual training on the prevention and identification of bullying and response to bullying and the prevention and response to youth suicide.

The State Department of Education, within available appropriations, is required to provide annual training to non-certified school employees.

18. Requires students and the parents/guardians of students to be notified annually of the process by which they may make reports of bullying;
19. As required, but not later than January 1, 2012, the Board of Education shall approve the safe school climate plan developed pursuant to statute and submit such plan to the Department of Education for its review, analysis, and cooperative assistance; and
20. Requires that not later than thirty calendar days after approval by the Board, the safe school climate plan shall be made available on the Board's and each individual school in the District's Internet website and such plan is to be included in the District's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

The Board expects prompt and reasonable investigations of alleged acts of bullying. The safe school climate specialist of each school is responsible for handling all complaints of alleged bullying. The safe climate specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying promptly.

In addition, the norms that are established by adults through consistent enforcement of all policies pertaining to conduct and modeling appropriate behavior at school and at home will reduce the instances and damage of bullying. It is necessary for students to promote the concept that caring for others is a valued quality, one that is accepted and encouraged.

Prevention and Intervention Strategy

The District shall implement, as required by C.G.S. 10-222d, as amended, a prevention and intervention strategy which may include, but is not limited to:

1. Implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying identified by the Department of Education.
2. School rules prohibiting bullying, harassment, and intimidation and establishing

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Hazing

Bullying (continued)

- appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts.
3. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom, and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur.
 4. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school.
 5. Individual interventions with the bully, parents and school employees and interventions with the bullied child, parents, and school employees.
 6. School wide training related to safe school climate.
 7. Student peer training, education and support.
 8. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings, and individual interventions.

District Safe School Climate Coordinator

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Superintendent of Schools shall appoint, from among existing District staff, a District Safe School Climate Coordinator.

The Coordinator shall:

1. Implement the District's safe school climate plan.
2. Collaborate with safe school climate specialists, the Board, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying in District schools;
3. Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education; and
4. Meet with the safe school climate specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying issues in the District and make recommended changes to the District's safe school climate plan.

Safe School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, each school Principal shall serve, or designate someone to serve, as the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school.

The specialist in each school shall:

1. Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying in the school in

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Students

Hazing

Bullying (continued)

- accordance with the District's Safe School Climate Plan;
- 2. Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying in the school; and
- 3. Act as primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying reports in the school.

Safe School Climate Committee

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Principal of each District school shall establish a new committee or designate at least one existing committee that is responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying in the school. The committee must include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, appointed by the Principal.

The Safe School Climate Committee shall:

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying;
2. Identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the school;
3. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying;
4. Review and make recommendation to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator regarding the District's Safe Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
5. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying;
6. Collaborate with the District Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying; and
7. Perform any other duties as determined by the School Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying for the school.

Parent members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #2 above and from any other committee activities that may compromise student confidentiality.

Safe School Climate Plan

The Board of Education shall develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan to address the existence of bullying in its schools. Such plan shall:

1. Enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees and require
2. students and the parents or guardians of students to be notified annually of the process by

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Students

Hazing

Bullying (continued)

which they may make such reports;

3. Enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying;
4. Require school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying to orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist, or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report; Require the Safe School Climate Specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports made under this section;
5. Require the Safe School Climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
6. Include a prevention and intervention strategy for school employees to deal with bullying;
7. Provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;
8. Require each school to notify the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation. The required notification and invitation shall include a description of the response of school employees to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying;
9. Require each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying;
10. Establish a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection and annually report such number to the Department of Education, and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
11. Direct the involvement of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
12. Prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;

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Students

Hazing

Students (continued)

13. Direct the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that addresses safety measures the school will take to protect such student against further acts of bullying;
14. Require the Principal of a school, or the Principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such Principal, or the Principal's designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;
15. Prohibit bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;
16. Require, at the beginning of each school year, each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's Safe School Climate Plan; and
17. Require that all school employees annually complete the training described in C.G.S. 10-220a, as amended.

- (cf. 0521 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
- (cf. 5114 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
- (cf. 5131 – Conduct)
- (cf. 5131.21 – Violent and Aggressive Behavior)
- (cf. 5131.8 – Out-of-School Misconduct)
- (cf. 5131.912 – Aggressive Behavior)
- (cf. 5131.913 – Cyberbullying)
- (cf. 5131.91 – Hazing)
- (cf. 5144 – Discipline/Punishment)
- (cf. 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.51 – Peer Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 6121 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 6121.1 – Equal Educational Opportunity)

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Students

Hazing

Bullying (continued)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student's records. Inspection and subpoena of school or student records.

**10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160 and PA 11-232
PA 06-115 An Act Concerning Bullying Policies in Schools and Notices Sent to Parents or Legal Guardians.**

PA 11-232 An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws.

Policy Adopted:

Preston Board of Education

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9321(a)

Bylaws of the Board

Time, Place, Notification of Meetings

Regular Board Meetings

There shall be a regular meeting of the Board each month unless canceled by special action of the Board. At its regular December meeting, the Board of Education shall set the schedule of regular meetings for the subsequent calendar year; such schedule to be filed with the Town Clerk no later than 30 days prior to the first scheduled meeting of the following January. The schedule will include the date, time, and location of each meeting.

All regular meetings shall be open to the public and the press. All regular meetings shall not exceed *10PM* unless a majority of the Board votes to increase the meeting in half hour intervals with the exception of executive sessions held after regular Board meetings. Changes of regular meetings from normal dates shall be filed with the Town Clerk and publicized in accordance with requirements of the Freedom of Information Commission. Only items on the regular meeting agenda may be taken up by the Board unless a two-thirds vote of the Board approves additions to a regular meeting agenda.

Special Board Meetings

The Chairperson of the Board may call a special meeting whenever he/she deems it necessary and must call a special meeting when requested to do so by three members of the Board. The Secretary shall in the absence of the Chairperson, or in his or her inability to act, have the powers of the Chairperson to call special meetings as outlined herein.

Notice of special meetings of the Board of Education shall be given at least 24 hours prior to the meeting by filing a notice of the time and place and the business to be conducted in the office of the Town Clerk; however, in case of emergency, any such special meeting may be held without complying with the foregoing requirement for the filing of notice, but a copy of the minutes of any such special meeting adequately setting forth the nature of the emergency and the proceedings occurring at such meeting shall be filed with the Town Clerk not later than 72 hours following the holding of such meeting. In addition, such written notice delivered to the Town Clerk less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting must also be delivered to the residence of each Board member, unless at, or prior to, the time the special meeting convenes a Board member files with the Town Clerk or Secretary of the Board of Education a written waiver of such notice.

In determining the time within which or by when a notice is required to be given, made available, posted or filed, Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, and any other day when the Town Clerk's office is closed shall be excluded.

Only business identified on the call of a special meeting shall be discussed or transacted by the

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Board at such special meeting.

- (cf. 1331 Smoke Free Environment)
- (cf. 9121 Board of Education Officers)
- (cf. 9323 Agenda Construction)
- (cf. 9324 Meeting Conduct & Parliamentary Procedures)
- (cf. 9325.1 Quorum)
- (cf. 9325.2 Order of Business)
- (cf. 9326 Minutes)

Legal Reference: **Connecticut General Statutes**
1-200 Definitions. ("Public Agency")
1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public. Recording of votes.
Schedule and agenda of meetings to be filed. Notice of special meetings.
Executive sessions (as amended by P.A. 83-148 requiring "filing" of notice
instead of "posting" with clerk; Saturdays, Sundays, holidays or days when
office is closed are excluded from time element)

Bylaw adopted by the Board: 4/10/06
Amended: 11/8/10

9400

Bylaws of the Board

Monitoring Products and Processes

Self-Evaluation

The Preston Board of Education is made up of duly elected individuals to oversee the Public Schools of the community. This very responsible and complex job requires that the Board blend its diverse opinion into a common purpose which will give direction to the school system. The local community looks to its Board of Education to provide leadership for the school system. The success of the system depends on how well that role is carried out.

Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Preston Board of Education that there shall be an annual program of self-evaluation in which each member shall participate.

Annually the board will schedule dates to conduct its self-evaluation. The evaluation will include, but not be limited to, the following leadership areas: community leadership of education, influencing educational policy, community involvement, communicating with the public, the decision making process, planning and setting goals, allocating resources, developing Board policy, policy oversight, selecting and evaluating the Superintendent, working with the Superintendent, promoting good employee relations, setting expectations for Board member conduct, conducting the work of the Board, Board member development.

Policy Review and Evaluation

The Board shall follow through the policies it has formulated. It shall evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff, and shall weigh the results. The Board shall rely on the school staff, students, and the community to provide evidence of the effect of the policies which it has adopted.

Legal Reference: **Connecticut General Statutes**

10-14m - 10-14r Education evaluation and remedial assistance.

10-220 Duties of boards of education.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: 6/12/06



PRESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent of Schools
325 Shetucket Turnpike
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Superintendent of Schools
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December 6, 2011

Dear

I thoroughly enjoyed attending last Friday evening's presentation of, "Charleston" at Preston Plains Middle School. You and your fellow students put on a first class performance.

As you no doubt learned from your participation in this musical, it takes teamwork and commitment in order to produce a quality program. So, you should take great pride in your contribution to this highly successful event.

Best wishes for your continuing success.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John J. Welch".

John J. Welch, Ed. D.

cc: Mr. Bernier
Mrs. Greene
Preston Board of Education