

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Monday, January 9, 2012 7:00 PM

PPMS Library, 1 Route 164, Preston, CT 06365

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

Board of Education Regular Meeting

December 12, 2011 07:00PM

PVMS Library

1. Call to Order

Dr. Welch (acting chair) called the meeting to order at 7PM.

Members Present: Pauline Andruskiewicz, Deborah Burke-Grabarek, Dan Harris, John Moulson, Charles Raymond, Sandra Gauthier and Jan Clancy. **Also Present:** Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary, Ivy Davis; Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Special Education, Robert Sirpenski; Director of Finance and School Business Operations **Audience:** Dr. Walsh; Principal PVMS, Ray Bernier; Principal PPMS, Bill Legler, Diane Egger, Arline McCullen, Susan Strader, Karin Davis, Mike Clancy, Mr. and Mrs. Frechette, Michael House; Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds and Patricia Hibbard; Transportation Coordinator.

Deborah Burke-Grabarek nominated Pauline Andruskiewicz as Chairperson.
Jan Clancy nominated John Moulson as Chairperson.

Moved, to close nominations. Moulson/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

All in favor of electing Pauline Andruskiewicz as Board Chair: Burke-Grabarek, Andruskiewicz and Gauthier. Clancy, Harris and Raymond opposed. Moulson abstained.

All in favor of electing John Moulson as Board Chair: Moulson, Clancy, Raymond and Harris. Gauthier, Burke-Grabarek and Andruskiewicz opposed.

John Moulson elected Board Chair.

Dan Harris nominated Charles Raymond as Vice Chairperson.
Deborah Burke-Grabarek nominated Pauline Andruskiewicz as Vice Chairperson.

Moved, to close the nominations. Harris/Raymond. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

All in favor of electing Charles Raymond as Vice Chairperson. Moulson, Raymond, Clancy and Harris. Gauthier, Andruskiewicz and Burke-Grabarek opposed.

All in favor of electing Pauline Andruskiewicz as Vice Chairperson.
Andruskiewicz, Gauthier, Burke-Grabarek. Clancy, Moulson, Harris and Raymond opposed.

Charles Raymond elected Board Vice Chairperson.

Pauline Andruskiewicz nominated Deborah Burke-Grabarek as Board Secretary.
Charles Raymond nominated Jan Clancy as Board Secretary.

Moved, to close the nominations. Harris/Raymond. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

All in favor of electing Deborah Burke-Grabarek as Board Secretary. Burke-Grabarek, Andruskiewicz and Gauthier.

All in favor of electing Jan Clancy as Board Secretary. Harris, Moulson, Raymond, and Clancy. Burke-Grabarek, Andruskiewicz and Gauthier opposed.

Jan Clancy elected Board Secretary.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved, to adopt the minutes of 11/14/11 as amended. Harris/Andruskiewicz. Moulson, Gauthier and Raymond also in favor. Clancy abstained. Motion Carries.

4. Public Comment

Karin Davis addressed the Board. She congratulated Mr. Moulson on the election but told him that she was appalled at his behavior at the 11/14/11 BOE Meeting. She felt that his refusal to do the Board Self Evaluation was unacceptable and that he should refrain from "pen clicking" and "rocking in his chair."

Susan Strader also addressed the Board. She expressed her concern as a parent and a teacher about the Standards Based Report Cards at the middle school. She also expressed her hope that Mr. Moulson would behave professionally since he is an elected official.

Jan Clancy said that as a previous audience member she had trouble hearing Board members speak. Therefore she asked that all Board members be more aware of projecting their voices to the audience.

5. Board of Education Committee and Other Reports

Transportation Sub Committee: met before 11/14/11 BOE Meeting
School Consolidation Sub Committee: no meeting
Audit Sub Committee: no meeting
Community Relations Sub Committee: no meeting
Budget Sub Committee: met 12/12/11 at 6PM. Dr. Welch reviewed the assets and liabilities shared at that meeting.

Jan Clancy asked if the sub committees are currently on going. John Moulson explained that the committees would be reviewed next month.

6. Superintendent Reports, Recommendations and Goals Update

Instrumental Music/Choral Concert: 12/15/11, 7PM, PVMS. Eighty-five students in grades 4 through 8 participate in the program.

Angel Trax Bus Video Surveillance cameras will be installed on 12/27 through 12/29.

7. BOE Expenditure Report/Projection Report

Robert Sirpenski presented 3 different reports to the BOE.

1. FY2012 Full Year Salary Forecast
2. FY2012 Budget Status July thru November Salary Expense
3. FY 2012 Budget Status Report July to November

Deborah Burke-Grabarek asked about the substitute line item. Mr. Sirpenski and Dr. Welch explained that the cost is somewhat inflated by professional development needs.

8. Cafeteria Report

Mr. Sirpenski also presented a cafeteria report. He will be meeting with Tom O'Connor, Food Service Coordinator, to discuss point of sale, an enhanced menu at PPMS and a satellite meal prep station.

9. Transportation Report

Patricia Hibbard reviewed her report with the Board. The gasoline tank was successfully removed at the bus garage. Two new drivers passed their DMV testing and are now qualified spare drivers. Angel Trax will install cameras 12/27-12/29.

10. New Business

10.1. Votes Required

BOE Meeting Date Calendar

Moved, to approve the BOE Meeting Date Calendar as amended.

Raymond/Andruskiewicz. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Jan Clancy asked if the Board would consider holding executive sessions at 6pm before a scheduled BOE meeting. John Moulson agreed that having it at the end of a meeting or taking the agenda out of order are not always the best ways to handle executive session. He said that it would be reviewed.

Safe School Climate Plan

John Moulson asked that this regulation be tabled until next month's meeting.

10.2. Discussion

Common Core Standards

Ivy Davis gave a power point presentation. The goal of common core standards is to strive for a national curriculum in math and language arts. This will enable U.S. students to compete with those students of other countries.

Connecticut joined the Smarter Balance Consortium. These assessments will replace the CMT/CAPT in 2014-2015. Testing will be administered online the final 12 weeks of every school year.

11. Old Business

11.1. Votes Required

Policy 9321: Time, Place, Notification of Meetings

Moved, to delete the second sentence in paragraph 2 of policy 9321.

Harris/Moulson. Raymond, Burke-Grabarek, Gauthier, Clancy also in favor.

Andruskiewicz Opposed. Motion Carries.

John Moulson asked that Policy 5131.911 Bullying be tabled until the next month's meeting.

11.2. Discussion

Policy 9400 Board Self Evaluation

Sandra Gauthier asked John Moulson why he refused to do the eval. She said that John is a stickler for policy and it is wrong for him to be against this one. John said that he will not change his mind. He will not complete the eval.

Karin Davis asked to speak from the audience but Mr. Moulson would not allow it since Public comment passed. The Board discussed whether or not to allow public comment at other times in the meeting. No decision was agreed upon.

12. Information

13. Executive Session

Moved, to convene in Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and strategy with respect to a pending claim; Mr. Sirpenski was invited to stay.Harris/Burke-Grabarek.Unanimous. Motion Carries. (9:12PM)

Returned to public session at 10:04PM.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

January 9, 2012

7PM

PVMS Library

15. Adjournment

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 10:04PM. Harris/Raymond. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

9132

Committees and Advisory Committees

Standing Committees

As deemed necessary, the Board of Education may establish standing committees from among its membership to make recommendations for Board action. The following rules will govern the appointment and function of such committees which shall:

- A. be established through action of the Board of Education;
- B. have their members appointed by the Board Chairperson
- C. be informed in writing at the time of committee formation of committee purpose, functions, and duties;
- D. make recommendations for Board action, but it may not act for the Board except in those instances where authority to act has been specifically delegated to the committee by the Board;
- E. be dissolved at the end of the Board's year or at any time by a vote of the Board.

The Board Chairperson and the Superintendent of Schools shall be ex-officio members of all standing committees.

Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be created for special assignments. The same rules shall apply to special committees as apply to standing committees, except that they shall be dissolved immediately upon completion of an assignment. The Board Chairperson and the Superintendent of Schools shall be ex-officio members of all ad hoc committees.

Duties of the committee shall be outlined at the time of appointment, and the committee shall be considered dissolved when its final report has been made to the Board of Education.

Committees as Public Entities

All Board of Education committee meetings are public meetings unless the committee is composed entirely of non-Board members and the Board successfully has petitioned the Freedom of Information Commission prior to the committee formation for such committee to be exempt from this requirement.

All committees of the Board of Education shall follow the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act as required by statute.

Legal Reference: **Connecticut General Statutes**

1-7 through 1-21k Freedom of Information Act.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: 12/12/05

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

Account	Annual Budget	YTD July - Dec Budget	YTD July - Dec 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	\$57,629	\$57,629	115,257	-	115,257	-
Director of Cir., Inst. & Sped	84,460	\$42,230	\$45,000	90,000	(5,000)	85,000	(540) IDEA
Principals	197,713	\$98,857	\$98,007	\$196,014	-	196,014	1,699
Business Manager	88,000	\$44,000	\$40,999	\$89,461	(13,846)	75,615	12,385 Town
Regular Education Teachers	2,130,454	\$819,405	\$809,743	\$2,067,071	(15,000)	2,052,071	78,383 Pre K
Education Jobs Grant Offset	(178,746)	(\$44,687)	(\$90,000)	(181,387)	-	(181,387)	2,641
Special Education Teachers	588,217	\$231,438	\$233,306	\$590,234	-	590,234	(2,017)
Health Services	92,183	\$42,385	\$45,619	96,107	-	96,107	(3,924)
Total Certified Personnel	\$3,117,538	\$1,291,257	\$1,240,304	\$3,062,756	(\$33,846)	\$3,028,910	\$88,628
112 - Classified Personnel							
Instructional Assistants	248,419	\$107,410	\$146,639	350,495	(110,300)	240,195	8,224 Title I, IDEA, PreK
Central Office Staff	102,912	\$51,456	\$55,319	109,708	(2,942)	107,366	(4,454)
Technology Staff	69,067	\$34,534	\$35,947	\$72,521	-	72,521	(3,454)
School Secretaries	53,127	\$23,059	\$26,942	55,890	-	55,890	(2,763)
Bldg & Grounds/Custodial	209,525	\$108,012	\$110,658	213,358	-	213,358	(3,833)
Transportation Staff	439,769	\$186,421	\$187,202	436,364	-	436,364	3,405
113 - Substitutes	110,300	\$41,155	\$49,629	106,104	-	106,104	4,196
112 PVMS Lunch-Playground Monitors	20,240	\$8,465	\$7,207	19,680	-	19,680	560
114 Home Bound Tutor	9,500	\$6,227	\$2,935	7,571	-	7,571	1,929
122 Stipends	21,000	\$13,770	\$12,459	19,959	-	19,959	1,041
Café Clearing	-	\$0	(\$360)	-	-	-	-
Total Classified Personnel	\$1,283,859	\$580,548	\$634,576	\$1,391,650	(\$112,642)	\$1,279,008	\$4,851
Total Salaries	\$4,401,397	\$1,871,805	\$1,874,880	\$4,454,406	(\$146,488)	\$4,307,918	\$93,479
* Grants/Offsets include: Pre K Tuition, Title I, IDEA 611, IDEA 619							

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

Account	Annual Budget	December		December Variance	YTD July - Dec		YTD July - Dec Expenses	YTD Variance (Negative)
		Budget	Expenses		Budget	Expenses		
111 - Certified Personnel								
Superintendent	\$115,257	\$8,866	\$8,866	(\$0)	\$57,629	\$57,629	(\$0)	
Director of Cir., Inst & Sped	84,460	6,497	6,497	(426)	\$42,230	\$45,000	(\$2,770)	
Principals	197,713	15,209	15,078	131	\$98,857	\$98,007	\$850	
Business Manager	88,000	6,789	6,923	(154)	\$44,000	\$40,999	\$3,001	
Regular Education Teachers	2,130,454	163,881	161,747	2,134	\$819,405	\$809,743	\$9,662	
Education Jobs Grant Offset	(178,746)	(44,687)	(45,000)	313	(\$89,374)	(\$90,000)	\$627	
Special Education Teachers	588,217	44,632	44,617	15	\$231,299	\$233,306	(\$2,007)	
Health Services	92,183	\$7,661	9,512	(1,851)	\$42,385	\$45,619	(\$3,234)	
Total Certified Personnel	\$3,117,538	\$208,828	\$208,666	\$162	\$1,246,431	\$1,240,304	\$6,127	
112 - Classified Personnel								
Instructional Assistants	248,419	\$30,046	36,229	(6,183)	\$107,410	\$146,639	(\$39,229)	
Central Office Staff	102,912	7,916	8,391	(475)	\$51,456	\$55,319	(\$3,863)	
Technology Staff	69,067	5,313	5,225	88	\$34,534	\$35,947	(\$1,413)	
School Secretaries	53,127	4,620	5,619	(1,000)	\$23,099	\$26,942	(\$3,843)	
Bldg & Grounds/Custodial	209,525	\$15,617	15,699	(82)	\$108,012	\$110,658	(\$2,646)	
Transportation Staff	439,789	\$35,744	39,355	(3,611)	\$186,421	\$187,202	(\$781)	
113 - Substitutes	110,300	10,073	9,504	569	\$41,155	\$49,629	(\$8,473)	
112 PVMS Lunch-Playground Monitors	20,240	2,305	1,607	699	\$8,465	\$7,207	\$1,258	
114 Home Bound Tutor	9,500	2,209	614	1,595	\$6,228	\$2,935	\$3,293	
122 Stipends	21,000	4,885	3,100		\$13,770	\$12,459	\$1,311	
Café Clearing	-	-	(360)		\$0	(\$360)	\$360	
Total Classified Personnel	\$1,283,859	\$118,728	\$124,983	(\$8,401)	\$580,549	\$634,576	(\$54,028)	
Total Salaries	\$4,401,397	\$327,556	\$333,649	(\$8,239)	\$1,826,980	\$1,874,880	(\$47,900)	

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

		Non Salary Expenses			
	Annual	December		YTD July - Dec	Balance
Account	Budget	Expenses		Expenses	
212 · Health Insurance	\$938,666	(\$18,289)		\$544,627	\$394,039
215 · Life Insurance	\$15,400	(\$36)		\$7,531	\$7,869
220 · Social Security	\$145,000	\$13,393		\$78,289	\$66,711
250 · Tuition Reimbursement	\$7,000	\$0		\$1,480	\$5,520
260 · Unemployment Comp	\$35,000	\$331		\$11,847	\$23,153
270 · Workers Comp	\$58,200	\$0		\$14,554	\$43,646
275 · Employee Physicals	\$1,500	\$117		\$1,117	\$383
291 · Annuity Payments	\$133,101	\$8,229		\$100,859	\$32,242
295/297 · Employee Voluntary Insurances	\$0	(\$690)		\$682	(\$682)
Total Benefits	\$1,333,867	\$3,055		\$760,984	\$572,883
320 · Special Education Services	\$156,413	\$2,865		\$55,116	\$101,297
322 · Staff Development	\$12,600	\$70		\$3,931	\$8,669
330 · Professional Purchased Services	\$30,516	\$3,816		\$13,551	\$16,965
340 · Legal Services	\$40,000	\$0		\$12,333	\$27,667
410 · Utility Services	\$1,000	\$181		\$181	\$819
420 · Refuse Removal	\$7,280	\$244		\$2,812	\$4,468
421 · Transportation Vehicle Repairs	\$85,000	\$12,353		\$49,059	\$35,941
430 · Repairs & Maintenance	\$118,125	\$8,619		\$86,785	\$31,340
431 · Maintenance Equipment Repairs	\$5,000	\$0		\$1,308	\$3,692
432 · Technology Equipment Repairs	\$22,000	\$1,605		\$4,204	\$17,796
442 · Copier Leases	\$47,880	\$170		\$23,928	\$23,952
450 · Building Improvements	\$28,000	\$9,166		\$13,551	\$14,449
Total Purchased Services	\$553,814	\$39,090		\$266,758	\$287,056
510/512 · Spec Educ/Magnet Transportation	\$106,000	\$11,341		\$45,753	\$60,247
520 · Property/Liability Insurance	\$61,705	\$15,684		\$48,797	\$12,908
530 · Communications	\$35,880	\$1,696		\$18,295	\$17,585
531 · Postage	\$2,000	\$384		\$3,503	(\$1,503)
570 · Food Service Stoploss	\$50,000	\$25,000		\$25,000	\$25,000
580 · Travel	\$10,000	\$104		\$1,607	\$8,393
Total Other Purchased Services	\$265,585	\$54,209		\$142,954	\$122,631
560 · Tuition - Designated HS	\$1,806,512	\$0		\$892,964	\$913,548
561 · Tuition - Vo-Ag, Other	\$97,216	\$0		\$52,657	\$44,559
562 · Tuition - Magnet Schools	\$20,707	\$49,986		\$49,986	(\$29,279)
563 · Tuition - Spec Ed - LEA Placed	\$1,298,189	\$38,121		\$630,194	\$667,995
564 · Tuition - Spec Ed - DCF Placed	\$26,771	\$12,104		\$92,106	(\$65,335)
565 · Tuition - Reg Ed - DCF Placed	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0
Total Student Tuition	\$3,249,395	\$100,211		\$1,717,907	\$1,531,488
611/612 · Instructional/Media Supplies	\$66,382	\$6,485		\$33,733	\$32,649
613 · Custodial/Maintenance Supplies	\$36,800	\$696		\$30,199	\$6,601
620/621 · Heat Energy/Propane	\$120,120	\$3,577		\$37,716	\$82,404
622 · Electricity	\$140,000	\$0		\$47,628	\$92,372
626 · Gasoline/Diesel	\$86,000	\$0		\$72,114	\$13,886
641/642 · Textbooks/Workbooks/Library	\$22,500	\$4,603		\$13,784	\$8,716
650 · Technology Supplies	\$10,500	\$0		\$4,970	\$5,530
690 · Non-Instructional Supplies	\$12,346	\$1,231		\$8,222	\$4,124
Total Supplies/Commodities	\$494,648	\$16,592		\$248,366	\$246,282
730 · Instructional Equipment	\$5,000	\$0		\$0	\$5,000
733 · Non-Instructional Equipment	\$10,500	\$0		\$261	\$10,239
734 · Technology Equipment	\$82,886	\$14,534		\$47,521	\$35,365
735 · Technology Software/Licenses	\$19,000	\$311		\$22,665	(\$3,665)
Total Equipment	\$117,386	\$14,845		\$70,447	\$46,939
810 · Dues/Fees	\$12,500	\$0		\$18,062	(\$5,562)
Total Expense	\$6,027,195	\$228,001		\$3,225,478	\$2,801,717



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



December 23, 2011

John J. Welch, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Preston Public Schools
325 Shetucket Turnpike
Preston, CT 06365-8631

Dear Dr. Welch:

Your December 16, 2011, letter requested clarification regarding the 2012-13 Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR). Below is a summary of the 2012-13 MBR determination pursuant to Section 1 of Public Act 11-234.

Base MBR

The 2012-13 MBR shall equal the 2011-12 budgeted appropriation(s) to the board of education.

Reductions to MBR

Under certain circumstances, legislation provides for potential reductions to the MBR:

1. If your district's October 2011 resident student count is less than the October 2010 count, your MBR is reduced by \$3,000 for each such reduced count. However, the maximum reduction under this provision cannot exceed one-half of one percent of the 2012-13 base MBR.
2. If your district's October 2011 designated high school students have decreased from the prior year, your MBR is reduced by the 2011-12 tuition rate for each such reduced count. However, the maximum reduction under this provision is one-half of one percent of the 2012-13 base MBR.
3. The new legislation also provides the opportunity for districts to request of the Commissioner of Education a reduction to the MBR as a result of closing schools due to declining enrollment. The Commissioner has sole discretion as to approving such requests.

John J. Welch, Ed.D.
December 23, 2011
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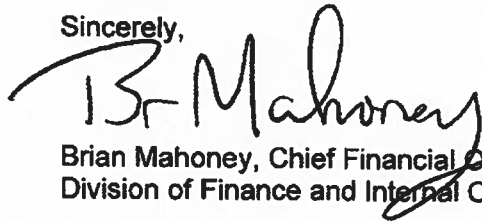
Based on the information provided in your letter, it would appear that, under current law, Preston's 2012-13 MBR would be subject to both one-half percent reductions as a result of declining resident students and designated high school students. Below is a summary of Preston's 2012-13 MBR.

A. 2012-13 Base MBR (2011-12 budgeted appropriation)	\$10,428,592
B. One-Half Percent Reduction for Resident Students (Item A x 0.005)	\$52,143
C. One-Half Percent Reduction for Designated High School Students (Item A x 0.005)	\$52,143
D. 2012-13 MBR (Item A minus (Item B + Item C))	\$10,324,306

Again, please note that this information is predicated under current law and the information provided in your correspondence.

Please let me know if you have any further questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Brian Mahoney, Chief Financial Officer
Division of Finance and Internal Operations

BM

December 5, 2008
Volume II, Number 4

From the Superintendent's Desk...

Following enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 by the Congress, many states in the country, including Connecticut, acted to develop so-called "curriculum frameworks" to help facilitate the law's primary focus of ensuring that every American child receives a high quality, 21st century education that prepares him to succeed in the global economy.

Each state's frameworks are notable for the specification of learning standards or outcomes that students are expected to attain by subject, adjusted according to grade level.

In response to the work done by the Connecticut Department of Education to develop frameworks, Preston Public Schools revised its curricula, curricula which may be readily accessed on our web page at <http://www.prestonschools.org/curricula.html>.

One of the significant outgrowths accompanying the development of curriculum frameworks has been the corresponding emphasis placed on modifying student report cards to reflect student progress toward the attainment of those standards. Thus the term "standards-based reporting" has come into vogue to distinguish it from traditional reporting practices.

Here in Preston the effort to develop a standards-based reporting system began 2 years ago at Preston Veterans' Memorial School and has now expanded to grade six at Preston Plains Middle School. In 2009-2010, this reporting system will extend to grades seven and eight as well.

As the following chart from Ken O'Connor's book entitled, The Last Frontier: Tackling the Grading Dilemma depicts, standards-based reporting looks very different from a traditional, grade-based reporting system:

Traditional Grading System

1. System is based on assessment methods goals and (quizzes, tests, homework, and so on). One grade is given for each subject.

Standards-Based Grading System

1. System is based on learning performance standards. One grade is given for each learning goal.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>2. Assessments are norm-referenced and based on a percentage system. Criteria are often unclear or assumed.</p> | <p>2. Standards are criterion referenced and proficiency based (using a limited of levels to assess performance on a scale). Criteria and targets are known to all.</p> |
| <p>3. Use an uncertain mix of assessment of achievement, attitude, effort, and behavior. Use penalties and extra credit. Include group scores.</p> | <p>3. Measure only achievement. No penalties or bonuses are given. Includes individual evidence only.</p> |
| <p>4. Score everything – regardless of purpose.</p> | <p>4. Use only summative assessments for grading purposes.</p> |
| <p>5. Include every score, regardless of when it was collected. Assessments record the average – not the best work.</p> | <p>5. Emphasize the most recent evidence of learning when grading.</p> |
| <p>6. Calculate grades using the means.</p> | <p>6. Use median, mode, and professional judgment to determine grades.</p> |
| <p>7. Assessments vary in quality. Some evidence comes only from teacher recollection.</p> | <p>7. Use only quality assessments and carefully record data.</p> |
| <p>8. The teacher makes decisions about grading and announces these decisions to students.</p> | <p>8. Discuss all aspects of grading with students.</p> |

What is important to understand about a standards-based versus traditional reporting system is the emphasis that the former system places upon communicating what students actually know and are capable of doing in response to clear standards. Historically, traditional grading practices and reporting systems fail to address that point. Rather, the emphasis has been placed on assigning a “value” (e.g., A,B,C etc.) to the apparent quality of a student’s achievement absent any analysis or comment about what that achievement comprises.

In the final analysis, Preston Public Schools has taken a very significant step in acknowledging the limitations of its previous and arguably dated student reporting system by creating a far more authentic and transparent alternative. Perhaps its only drawback is length; it requires far more space to address the important learning standards

developed for each subject and grade level. However, that seems like a small price to pay in order to better inform parents about what their child is learning in school.

Preston Board of Education

Policies, Regulations, and Bylaws

5145.15

Students

Directory Information

Directory information, as defined below, may be disclosed by Preston Public Schools without prior written consent unless the district is notified in writing to the contrary.

“Directory information” means one or more of the following items: student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field(s) of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, photographic, computer and/or video images, grade levels, electronic mail address, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, including honor roll publication, and the most recent previous public or private school attended by the student, parent’s name and/or email address.

A student’s Social Security Number or student ID number is prohibited from designation as directory information.

Any person or organization denied the rights accorded under this policy shall have the right to request a review of the decision by the Board of Education by filing a written request with the Superintendent of Schools.

Public Notice

Preston Public Schools will give annual public notice to parents/guardians of students in attendance. The notice shall identify the types of information considered to be directory information and the District’s option to release such information. Such notice will be given prior to the release of directory information.

Exclusions

Exclusions from any or all directory categories named as directory information must be submitted in writing to the Principal by the parent/guardian, within ten days of the annual public notice. (cf. 5125 - Student Records; Confidentiality)

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

1-210 (11) Access to public records. Exempt records.

10-221b Boards of education to establish written uniform policy re treatment of recruiters.

Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (section 438 of the General Education Act, as amended, added by section 513 of P.L. 93-568, codified at 20 U.S.C. 1232g and Final Rule 34 CFR Part 99, December 9, 2008).

P.L. 106-398, 2000 H.R. 4205: The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001.

P.L. 107-110 “No Child Left Behind Act” Title IX, Sec. 9528.

Policy adopted:

**NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS
Release of Certain Information
Under the "No Child Left Behind Act"**

_____200_

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Pursuant to the federal "No Child Left Behind Act," P.L. 107-110 (Title IX, Sec. 9528), the _____ School District must disclose to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon request, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of high school students.

The district must also notify parents/guardians of their right and the right of their child to request that the District not release such information without prior written consent.

Parents/guardians wishing to exercise their option to withhold their consent to the release of the above information to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning must sign this form below and return it to the Building Principal by _____.

Date

**Reservation of Consent for the Release of Certain Student
Information under the "No Child Left Behind Act"**

Please do not release the name, address and telephone number of _____

Name of Student

to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning.

Print Name of Student

School

Grade

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date

RECORD OF PARENT ANNUAL NOTICE

Dear Parent:

It is important that you and your child read and review the contents of this handbook. It contains notices of rights that you and your child have under law. Please sign and return this page to indicate that you have read and reviewed the handbook with your child.

I understand and consent to the responsibilities in the District's student behavior policies as outlined in this handbook. I also understand and agree that my child, _____ shall be held accountable for the
(full name)

behavior and consequences outlined in the discipline policy at school and at school-related activities, including school-sponsored travel, and for any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location. I understand that any student who violates the rules established by the Connecticut Inter-scholastic Athletic Conference is subject to suspension from participation as described in those rules. I further understand that any student who violates the school's rules of behavior shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including referral for criminal prosecution for violations of law.

Regarding student records, I understand that certain information about my child is considered directory information. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, date of attendance, awards received in school and most recent previous school attended. Directory information may be released by the District to anyone who requests it unless I object in writing to the release of any or all of this information within ten school days of the time this handbook was issued to my child. I have marked through those types of directory information listed above that I wish the District to withhold.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this signed form to school.

**PERMISSION TO RELEASE CERTAIN
DIRECTORY INFORMATION WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that [School District], with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, [School District] may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the [School District] to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses and telephone listings - unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.¹

If you do not want [School District] to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing by [insert date].

[School District] has designated the following information as directory information: [Note: an LEA may, but does not have to, include all the information listed below.]

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Electronic mail address

¹ These laws are: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7908), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110), the education bill, and 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by section 544, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's armed forces.

**PERMISSION TO RELEASE CERTAIN
DIRECTORY INFORMATION WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT**

Degrees, honors, and awards received

Date and place of birth

Major field of study

Dates of attendance

Grade level

The most recent educational agency or institution attended

**DENIAL OF PERMISSION TO RELEASE CERTAIN
DIRECTORY INFORMATION WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT**

Dear Parent/ Guardian:

Certain directory information may be released to media, colleges, civic or school-related organizations and state or governmental agencies including military recruiters, as well as published programs for the athletic, music and theater presentations of this school district.

Directory information includes the following kinds of information:

1. Name of student
2. Address of student
3. Telephone number
4. E-mail address of student
5. Major field(s) of study
6. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
7. Height and weight of members of athletic teams
8. Dates of attendance
9. Degrees and awards received, including publication of honor roll
10. Most recent school attended
11. Date of birth, place of birth
12. Photographic, computer and/or video images
13. Videotape not used in a disciplinary manner
14. Parent's name/e-mail address

Please circle the specific categories of information, if any, listed above that you do **not** wish to be released without your specific prior written permission.

_____ The release of all Directory Information is denied.

This form must be completed and returned to the school principal within ten (10) days after publication of the notice on "Directory Information."

_____	_____	_____
Name of Student	School	Grade
_____	_____	
Parent's Signature	Date	

Preston Board of Education

Policies, Regulations, and Bylaws

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

Preston Board of Education

Policies, Regulations, and Bylaws

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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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5131.911(c)

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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Students

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 students and the parents or guardians of students to be notified annually of the process by

Students

Hazing

Bullying (continued)

which they may make such reports;

2. Enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying;
3. 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;
4. 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;
5. Include a prevention and intervention strategy for school employees to deal with bullying;
6. Provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;
7. 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;
8. 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;
9. 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;
10. 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;
11. 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)

12. 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;
13. 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;
14. 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;
15. 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
16. 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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5131.911(j)

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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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:

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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).

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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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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 District's 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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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, he or she 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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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

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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

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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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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. Collaborate 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.

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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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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.