




# New Bullying Prevention Legislation in Pennsylvania

Monday, November 24, 2008  
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

This presentation is offered by the  
Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Center for Safe Schools



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## Bullying Legislation

- **24 PS 13-1302-A Office for Safe Schools**
- (C) (7) Development and implementation of research-based violence prevention programs that address risk factors to reduce incidents of problem behaviors among students including, but not limited to, **bullying**.



## Bullying Prevention Legislation

**Each School Entity shall:**

- No later than **January 1, 2009**, adopt a policy or amend its existing policy relating to bullying.



## Requirements...

- Incorporate the policy into the **code of student conduct**.
- The policy shall delineate **disciplinary consequences** for bullying



## Requirements...

- **Identify** the appropriate **school staff person** to receive **reports** of incidents of alleged bullying.



## Define Bullying

### Basic Definition:

"Bullying" shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts that:



## Definition continued...

- Occurs in a school setting\*  
\* *“School setting” shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervise or sanctioned by the school.*



## Definition continued...

- Is severe, persistent **or** pervasive;
- Is directed at another student **or** students; and
- Has the effect of doing **any** of the following:
  - Substantially interferes with a student's education;
  - Creates a threatening environment; or
  - Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.



## Definition continued...

A school entity is **not prohibited** from defining bullying in such a way as to encompass acts that occur **outside a school setting**, if those acts

- are severe, persistent **or** pervasive;
- are directed at another student **or** students; and
- Have the effect of doing **any** of the following:
  - Substantially interferes with a student's education;
  - Creates a threatening environment; or
  - Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school



## Requirements...

- When a school entity reports acts of bullying in its School Safety report it shall report the incidents that qualify as bullying under the its adopted definition.



## Requirements...

The policy must be available:

- On its publicly accessible **internet website** (if available).
- In **every classroom**.

The policy must be posted at a **prominent location** within each school building.



## Requirements...

The policy and procedures for reporting bullying incidents must be **reviewed** with students within **ninety (90) days** after their adoption and thereafter **at least once each school year**.



## Requirements...

A copy of the bullying policy must be submitted annually to the department.

- **It must include information related to the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention and education programs**

The policy will be submitted as part of the **Annual School Safety Report**



## Requirements...

The policy must be **reviewed every three (3) years**.



## Existing Bullying Prevention Policies?

- No school entity shall be required to establish a new policy **if one currently exists and reasonably fulfills the requirements**.



## Best practice...

- The policy may provide for **research-based** prevention, intervention and education programs.



## Strategies for Effective Bullying Prevention



- Focus on the whole school environment



- Assess bullying at your schools



- Obtain staff and parent support



- Provide training for ALL staff members



- Form a committee/team at school to coordinate bullying prevention efforts



- Establish and enforce school rules, policies and procedures regarding bullying



- Increase adult supervision in “hot spots” for bullying



- Intervene consistently and appropriately in bullying incidents



- Focus some classroom time on bullying prevention and intervention



- Continue efforts over time



- Link bullying prevention efforts to existing school violence prevention programs/approaches and student support services



## Research programs & resources

Examples...

- Bully Proofing Your Schools
- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
- Ophelia Project
- Second Step
- [www.center-school.org/bullyingprevention](http://www.center-school.org/bullyingprevention)  
Center for Safe Schools
- [www.stopbullyingnow.org](http://www.stopbullyingnow.org)  
US Department of Health and Human Services  
National Bullying Prevention Campaign



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