

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Checklist – Required Content of Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans under G.L. c. 71, §370

This checklist is provided by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for optional local use. Some schools and districts may find it helpful to use when creating or reviewing their Plans for inclusion of all elements required by the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, section 370.

School districts, charter schools, Department-approved private* special education schools, and collaborative schools must submit their Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans to the Department by December 31, 2010. These Plans must be submitted via the [Security Portal](#)'s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan DropBox or via email to ssces@doe.mass.edu. *NOTE: Other non-public schools (those that are not Department approved special education schools) are required to create Plans, but NOT to submit them to the Department. See <http://www.doe.mass.edu/bullying/> for more information, including a Model Plan and a Sample Incident Reporting Form.

What is Required by the Law to Be Included in the Plan	Elements (key words)	In the Plan?	
		yes	Not yet
i. Descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation.	bullying		
	cyberbullying		
	retaliation		
ii. Clear procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians and others to report bullying or retaliation. a. Identifies the principal or another school official as responsible for receiving reports.	reporting procedures for students, staff, parents/guardians, others		
	school official identified to receive reports		

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		yes	Not yet
iii. A provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously; provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.	anonymous reporting allowed		
	no discipline solely because of an anonymous report		
iv. Clear procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation.	procedures for responding to reports		
	investigative procedures		
v. The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor for bullying or retaliation; provided, however, that the disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.	range of possible disciplinary actions		
	balance discipline with teaching appropriate behavior		
vi. Clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a target and assessing that target's needs for protection.	procedures for restoring target's safety		
	assessing target's needs		
vii. Strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying, or has reliable information about an act of bullying.	protections for reporters, witnesses, or interviewees regarding bullying		

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		yes	Not yet
viii. Procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a target and an aggressor; provided, further, that the parents or guardians of a target shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and provided, further, that the procedures shall provide for immediate notification pursuant to regulations promulgated under this subsection by the principal or person who holds a comparable role to the local law enforcement agency when criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.	When investigations conclude that bullying occurred: notice to parents/guardians of target (includes notice of actions to prevention further incidents) notice to parents/guardians of aggressor Immediate notice to law enforcement pursuant to regulations		
ix. A provision that a student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.	possible disciplinary actions for false accusations and consequences		
x. A strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors and targets and for appropriate family members of said students.	counseling or referral for targets, aggressors, and families		
xi. Affords all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law.	protection for all students regardless of legal status		

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<p>xii. A provision for ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff members, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities and paraprofessionals, to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a aggressor, target and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.</p>	ongoing professional development for all staff		
	strategies to prevent bullying incidents		
	strategies for interventions to stop incidents		
	information regarding the complex interaction and power differential		
	research findings, including information on vulnerable or at-risk students		
	cyberbullying		
	Internet safety as it relates to cyberbullying		
<p>xiii. Provisions for informing parents and guardians about the bullying prevention curriculum of the school district or school and shall include, but not be limited to: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school district or school Plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyberbullying.</p>	how parents will be told about curriculum		
	reinforcing it at home		
	bullying dynamics		
	online safety and cyberbullying		

What is Required by the Law to Be Included in the Plan	Elements (key words)	In the Plan?	
		yes	Not yet
<p>xiv. Each plan shall recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics.</p>	<p>recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics</p> <p>or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of the characteristics.</p>		
<p>xv. Chapter 86 requires schools and districts to administer a student survey developed by the Department every four years to assess “school climate and the prevalence, nature and severity of bullying in schools.”¹ The survey results will be used to assess the effectiveness of bullying prevention curricula and instruction that is required under the bullying prevention and intervention statute.</p>	<p>administer a student survey every four years to assess “school climate and the prevalence, nature and severity of bullying in schools.</p>		
<p>xvi. The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about the Department’s problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system. This information will be made available in both hard copy and electronic formats</p>	<p>inform parents or guardians about:</p> <p>Department’s problem resolution system</p> <p>process for seeking assistance or filing a claim</p>		

¹G.L. c. 71, §370(k).

OTHER REMINDERS RELATED TO THE LOCAL PLANS:

The Plan shall be developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians. Furthermore, the consultation shall include, but not be limited to, notice and a public comment period (although non-public schools shall only be required to give notice to and provide a comment period for families that have a child attending the school).

The Plan shall be updated at least biennially.

The school/district shall provide to students and parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms and in the languages which are most prevalent among the students, parents or guardians, annual written notice of the relevant student-related sections of the Plan.

The school/district shall provide to all school staff annual written notice of the Plan. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the Plan applicable to the school. Relevant sections of the Plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in a school district or school employee handbook.

The Plan shall be posted on the website of each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school.

Each school principal or the person who holds a comparable position shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan at his school.

Lastly, while not required, some communities may wish to include a timeline for implementation of training and professional development efforts, changes and/or additions to the curricula, and collaboration with families.