

LITCHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN

The Litchfield School District Safe School Climate Plan is based on the following National School Climate Standards, drafted by the National School Climate Council and written by leaders from across the country. The National School Climate Council asks that “each school community consider how best to translate these standards into practice in ways that build on past experiences, values, strengths, priorities, and contextual needs of the local school community.” More information on these standards and the work of the National School Climate Council can be found at www.schoolclimate.org.

Standard 1: The school community has a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing and sustaining a positive school climate.

Standard 2: The school community sets policies specifically promoting (a) the development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement, and (b) a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.

Standard 3: The school community’s practices are identified, prioritized and supported to (a) promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical and civic development of students, (b) enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities; (c) address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged; and (d) develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.

Standard 4: The school community creates an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.

Standard 5: The school community develops meaningful and engaging practices, activities and norms that promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.

Section I: Supporting Safe School Climate

The following personnel are responsible for monitoring the implementation of each school’s Safe School Climate Plan:

SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE COORDINATOR (district level): Julie G. Haggard, Director of Pupil Services

Responsible for:

- Communicating building Safe School Climate plans to parents, students and staff annually
- Ensuring all Safe School Climate Plans are adequate, aligned and published in all handbooks and on the district and/or school website
- Collaborating with the safe school climate specialists
- Providing data to the superintendent regarding safe school climate
- Meeting at least twice annually with the safe school climate specialists to make recommendations concerning amendments to the district’s safe school climate plan
- Notifying safe school climate specialists before the first day of school of the dates for Safe School Climate meetings
- Organizing in-service training for district employees that includes information addressing the prevention or, identification of, and response to safe school climate incidents, and the prevention of and response to youth suicide
- Attend training related to safe school climate as needed

SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE SPECIALISTS (building level):

Center School: Lisa Deltano, principal

Litchfield Intermediate School: Dr. Michael Pascento, principal

Litchfield Middle School: Stephanie Kubisek, principal

Litchfield High School: Kristen Della Volpe, principal

Responsible for:

- Investigating or supervising the investigation of reported safe school climate incidents in accordance with the district's safe school climate plan
- Collecting and maintaining records or reports and investigations of safe school climate incidents in the school
- Maintains an incident log that records the date of safe school climate incident reports and if they were verified or non-verified
- Ensuring the building safe school climate plan is adequately implemented
- Attend training related to safe school climate as needed
- Communicating safe school climate incident reports to administration

SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE COMMITTEE (may be an existing committee; MUST include one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school):

Center School: CARE Team (principal, school psychologist, school counselor, nurse and district social worker) and parent

Litchfield Intermediate School: CARE Team (principal, school psychologist, school counselor, nurse and district social worker) and parent

Litchfield High School: Student Intervention Team (principal/assistant principal, school psychologist, school counselor(s), nurse and district social worker) and parent

Responsible for:

- Developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to safe school climate in school

The following explains how each school proactively supports a safe school climate:

Center School

- Consistently implements Safe School Climate Plan
- Annually reviews our Safe School Climate Plan and our safe school climate practices with certified and non-certified personnel
- Town Meetings
- School-wide positive reinforcement programs
- Bi-weekly developmental guidance lessons
- Colors, Countries, Cultures program

Litchfield Intermediate School

- Consistently implements Safe School Climate Plan
- Annually reviews our Safe School Climate Plan and our safe school climate practices with certified and non-certified personnel
- Keys of Good Character-Character Program
- Monthly guidance lessons
- Leadership Council Activities
- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling and lunch bunches
- ISS program

Litchfield Middle and High School

- Consistently implements the Safe School Climate Plan
- Annually review our Safe School Climate Plan and our Safe School Climate Practices with certified and non-certified personnel
- Advisor/Advisee program
- Bi-weekly 7th and 8th grade developmental guidance lessons including topics such as positive peer interactions.
- In-School Suspension program with student reflection and counseling component
- Extra-curricular clubs and organizations with community service components
- School-wide assemblies led by character specialists
- Individual Counseling
- Peer Mediation
- Lunch Bunch and Movie Club
- 7th and 8th grade high school peer mentoring
- 7th and 8th grade Enrichment Program
- 7th and 8th grade team building activities such as Ropes Course and Winter Survival

Section II: Reporting and Recording School Climate Concerns

Reporting Safe School Climate concerns

Students and parents/guardians may make anonymous reports to any school employee, which includes but is not limited to: teachers, substitutes, administrators, superintendent, school counselors, psychologist, social worker, nurse, instructional assistant, coach, or 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 our schools pursuant to a contract with the Board of Education and has regular contact with and providing services to, or on behalf of, students (i.e. interns, cafeteria personnel, bus drivers, secretaries, custodians, etc.)

NOTE: No disciplinary action can be issued solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Reporting Safe School Climate concerns to the Safe School Climate Specialist

Employees (as defined above) who receive reports or witness acts by others that compromise our safe school climate MUST orally notify the safe school climate specialist within one school day of the witnessed act or received report. A written report must be filed no later than two school days of the oral report.

The safe school climate specialist shall promptly investigate or designate an investigator for all written reports, anonymous or otherwise.

Section III: Investigating School Climate Incidents

Beginning an investigation

Upon direction from the safe school climate specialist, the investigator shall promptly complete a School Climate Incident Report. Investigations must include interviews with the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator and potential witnesses and/or any adult who may have been observed the incident. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall review the final report with the safe school climate specialist. If at any time in the investigation the investigator suspects any incident constitutes criminal conduct (such as gang-related activity, firearms or other weapons defined in BOE policy 5114), he/she shall immediately consult with the safe school climate specialist. If such conduct is determined to be criminal, the safe school climate specialist will immediately contact the principal or the principal's designee to determine if the appropriate local law enforcement agency should be notified.

Completing an investigation

The safe school climate specialist will determine if the incident was:

A) A verified act of bullying:

In accordance with state law (PA 11-232) and Board policy, “bullying” is (A) the repeated use by one or more students of a **written, oral, or electronic communication, such as cyber bullying**, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or (B) a **physical act or gesture** by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that: (i) causes **physical or emotional** harm to such student or damage to such student’s property, (ii) places such student in a **reasonable fear of** harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) creates a **hostile** environment at school for such student, (iv) **infringes on the rights** of such student at school, or (v) **substantially disrupts the education process** or the orderly operation of a school.

- **Cyber bullying:** 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.
- Safe school climate violation/bullying includes communications, acts or gestures based on: 1) any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical developmental or sensory disability, or 2) by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

School districts **must prohibit bullying at a school-sponsored or school-related activity**, whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the district; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the district. School districts must also prohibit bullying **outside of the school setting** if such bullying 1) creates a hostile school environment 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.

B) A verified act of a safe school climate violation: The reported behaviors do not constitute the full definition of bullying but do require intervention.

C) A non-verified act of a safe school climate violation or bullying: Non-verified acts are those in which the report could not be substantiated.

Promptly after completing a Safe School Climate Incident Report investigation, the safe school climate specialist will notify the parents /guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying or safe school climate violation, and the parents/guardians of students against whom such acts were directed. Also, parents /guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying, and the parents/guardians of students against whom such acts were directed will be invited to meet with the safe school climate specialist to review the measures being taken to ensure the student’s safety and prevent further acts of bullying.

Section IV: Addressing Safe School Climate Incidents

All verified and non-verified acts of bullying or safe school climate violations shall be recorded by the safe school climate specialist in the Safe School Climate Incident Log. This log only records the date of the report and if the report was a non-verified act of a safe school climate violation or bullying; a verified act of a safe school climate violation; or a verified act of bullying. The Safe School Climate Incident Report is considered the personal notes of the Safe School Climate Specialist as defined by the Freedom of Information Act.

For verified acts of bullying, the safe school climate specialist or his/her designee shall develop a Student Safety Support Plan to address the safety measures the school will take to protect the student against further acts of bullying, and measure the student will take to protect against further acts of bullying.

SUMMARY OF REPORTING PROCEDURE

Step 1	Within ONE SCHOOL DAY of witnessed or reported incident	School employee orally notifies Safe School Climate Specialist of alleged behavior, reported or witnessed, a violation of the Safe School Climate Plan.
Step 2	Within TWO SCHOOL DAYS of witnessed or reported incident	School employee completes and submits written report to the building Safe School Climate Specialist
Step 3	PROMPTLY	Safe School Climate Specialist or a designee completes a Safe School Climate Incident Report. If anonymous, no disciplinary action can be issued solely on the basis of the anonymous report. Investigation may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with witnesses or possible witnesses, adult and/or student • Contact with target and individual who allegedly committed a Safe School Climate violation
Step 4	PROMPTLY	Safe School Climate Specialist reviews information from investigation and completes “Investigation” Section of original Safe School Climate Incident Report.
Step 5	Within 48 hours of completion of Investigation	Safe School Climate Specialist notifies parents/guardians of students who commit any VERIFIED acts of bullying, and parents/guardians of students against whom such acts were directed. Safe School Climate Specialist may notify the appropriate local law enforcement agencies if the principal or designee believes that any act of bullying constitutes criminal conduct.
Step 6	Promptly after investigation	Safe School Climate Specialist meets to develop student safety supports plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed. These support plans must address the safety measures the school will take to protect students from further acts of bullying.
Step 7	Promptly after investigation	Written invitation to parents/guardians of students who commit any VERIFIED acts of bullying, and parents/guardians of students against whom such acts were directed to meet with school personnel to communicate the measures being taken to ensure the student’s safety and prevent further acts of bullying.
Step 8	Promptly after steps 1 through 7 are completed	Safe School Climate Specialist files original Safe School Climate Incident Report and any support documents, copies of communication with parents/guardians, and copies of student safety support plans and logs incident in the Safe School Climate Incident Report Log.

Litchfield Public Schools

Safe School Climate Violation Reporting Form for Reporter of Incident(s)

Please fill this form out to report bullying, harassment, or intimidation and submit it to the building level principal.

Public Act No. 11-232 definition of bullying - "Bullying" means (A) 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 (B) a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, that: (i) Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, (ii) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for such student, (iv) infringes on the rights of such student at school, or (v) 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, 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;

School: _____

Date: _____

Note to Person Reporting: This form will be confidentially maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and will not be shared with anyone except those working to assist in this important matter.

Name of Person Reporting (You may write 'anonymous'):	Grade:	Parent: Yes No
Name of Alleged Victim(s)/Person(s) being hurt:	Grade:	
Name of Alleged Perpetrator(s):	Grade:	
Witness(es):		

Date of incident/When did this happen?	Time:	Location/Place:
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Place an next to the statement(s) that best describes what happened:

<input type="checkbox"/> Physical aggression (shoving, punching, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Exclusion or rejection of the student
<input type="checkbox"/> Getting another student to hit/harm student	<input type="checkbox"/> Spreading rumors/gossip
<input type="checkbox"/> Teasing, name calling, criticizing	<input type="checkbox"/> Making rude and/or threatening gestures
<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidating, threatening, extorting, or exploiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic communication
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

What did the alleged offender(s) say or do? Be as specific as possible.	Please describe: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ <p style="text-align: right;">(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)</p>
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How often/many times has this happened? When?	_____ _____ _____ _____ <p style="text-align: right;">(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)</p>
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I have read this document and agree this summary is a true and accurate record of my report.

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Litchfield Public Schools

BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING, HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION INCIDENT INVESTIGATION FORM (updated 12/18)

This form is to be used by a principal, safe school climate specialist or coordinator, civil rights coordinator or their designee(s) to document an investigation of conduct reported as or suspected to be cyberbullying, sexual harassment, discriminatory harassment based upon membership in a protected class or retaliation against a student or students. Investigations shall be thorough, impartial and prompt (under the circumstances) and follow timelines for responsiveness as set forth in the law, board policy and applicable grievance procedures.

COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE SECTIONS AND ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

1. Investigator(s):

Name: _____
Position(s): _____

2. Name of complainant/title/position: _____

3. Information about the incident:

Name of Target(s): _____

Name of Aggressor(s): _____

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: _____

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible): _____

If Cyberbullying, what is the point of origin: _____

4. Witnesses (*List people who saw the incident or have information about it.*):

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

(Be sure to ask both the target and aggressor for suggested names of any witnesses)

5. Date of Formal Written Complaint/Report: _____

AND/OR

Date of Oral Complaint: _____

AND/OR

Date conduct was witnessed by employee: _____

(School employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying must 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 must file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report)

Summarize incident (*attach complaint/written report*): _____

6. Date of Commencement of Investigation: _____

7. Notification of Commencement of Investigation:

To Parent/Guardian of Aggressor: _____

Date /Manner of Notification: _____

To Parent/Guardian of Target: _____

Date /Manner of Notification: _____

(The parents or guardians of the student alleged to have committed an act(s) of bullying and those of the student against whom such alleged act(s) were directed are required by law to receive prompt notice that such investigation has commenced.)

8. Date of Completion of Investigation: _____

9. Date of Formal Written Summary Report or Findings: _____

10. Date of Written Notification of Findings: *

To Parent/Guardian of Aggressor: _____

To Parent/Guardian of Target: _____

To others (specify): _____

11. Date of Invitation to Parent Meeting: *

To Parents/Guardians of Target _____

To Parents/Guardians of Offender(s)

*(*Notification of verified bullying is required to be provide to parent/guardian of both the target and aggressor not later than 48 hrs. after completion of the investigation; such notification may include required invitation to a parent meeting)*

12. Interviews:

Interviewed aggressor(s)

Name: _____

Date (s): _____

Written Statement Yes No If yes, attach written statement(s)

Oral Statement Yes No

Summarize oral statement: (including date/place it was given and name(s) of any other individuals present) _____

Interviewed target(s)

Name: _____ Date (s): _____

Written Statement Yes No If yes, attach written statement(s)Oral Statement Yes No

Summarize oral statement (including date/place it was given and name(s) of any other individuals present)

 Interviewed witnesses

Name: _____ Date: _____

Written Statement Yes No If yes, attach written statement(s)Oral Statement Yes No

Summarize oral statement (including date/place it was given and name(s) of any other individuals present)

*(Attach any written statements and/or additional sheets if needed for summary of oral statements)***13. Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor(s)?** Yes NoIf yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously? Yes No

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING, HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND/OR RETALIATION?

 Yes No

If yes, specify: _____

14. List and describe all documentation considered as part of the investigation (i.e. bus referral/report, student records, student attendance records, medical records, nurse referral, disciplinary referral, police report, photographs, surveillance tapes, emails, text messages, postings, other physical evidence(attach copies whenever possible): _____*(Care is required when dealing with evidence consisting of pictures or images which may constitute child pornography. Do not copy or further disseminate images. Consider contacting the local police when in doubt).***15. Summarize your investigation (include who was spoken to, where and when/dates as well as who conducted or witnessed such interviews, include the substance of any oral/written statements given, indicate credibility as appropriate, specify what documentation or other information was considered and the weight given to it and why, state any conclusions reached regarding the incident, individuals, or the veracity or**

reliability of individuals/ information and note where information was or failed to be corroborated).

16. Check all of the following that apply with respect to this investigation:

- Target and offender(s) are students in the same school or school district
- Target and offender(s) are not students in the same school district
- Target and offender(s) are currently in or have recently been in a dating relationship
- Offender is a school employee
- Offender is a third party non-employee
- Involves repeated activity by one student against the target
- Involves repeated activity by more than one student against the target
- Involves a written, oral or electronic communication
- Involves a physical act

Describe the act and/or any injury:

Involves emotional harm to target
Describe the nature of the harm/effect:

- Involves damage to target's property
Describe the damage/cost of repair:

Target has reasonable fear of harm to self or property
Explain:

- Offender's actions have created a hostile environment at school for the target or others
Explain:

Target's rights at school have been infringed
Explain:

- Offender's actions have substantially disrupted the educational process or orderly operation of a school
Explain:

SAMPLE LETTER
Safe School Climate Violation
Perpetrator

[date]

Parents/guardians of

Re: Safe School Climate incident report involving [student name]

Dear :

As we discussed on {date}, this letter is to inform you that a Safe School Climate Incident Report was filed with the Litchfield High School Safe School Climate Specialist that alleged that your son/daughter, [name], committed a safe school climate violation.

As a result of the investigation, the safe school climate specialist has verified that [student name] was involved in behavior which caused physical or emotional harm to another student or damage to such student's property, (ii) placed such student in a reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) created a hostile environment at school for such student, (iv) infringed on the rights of such student at school, or (v) substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of a school. (PA 11-232). We consider this behavior to have not met our expectation regarding Standard 4 of the National School Climate Standards, which states that all members are welcomed, supported and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

In accordance with Public Act No. 11-232 and Litchfield BOE Policy 5131.2, [name] has been issued (detail consequences). Also, this incident has been recorded in [student's name] cumulative discipline record. We expect the above defined behavior against any and all individuals will cease immediately. Future infractions will result in further consequence as deemed appropriate by administration (BOE policy 5131.2), and may be considered acts of bullying. Please refer to our Safe School Climate Plan for a complete definition of bullying.

As we also discussed on [date], if you wish to review this matter, please contact the safe school climate specialist at 860-567-7530.

Sincerely,

Safe School Climate Specialist

Enclosure: BOE policy

SAMPLE LETTER
Safe School Climate Violation
Target

{date}

Parents of

Re: Safe School Climate Incident Report involving {student name}

Dear :

As we discussed on {date}, this letter is to inform you that a Safe School Climate Incident Report was filed with the Litchfield High School Safe School Climate Specialist which alleged that {name} was the target of a Safe School Climate violation.

As a result of the investigation, the safe school climate specialist has determined that [student name] was a target of behavior which violated our safe school climate expectations. Actions have been taken to ensure your son's/daughter's physical and emotional safety.

As we also discussed, if you wish to review this matter, please contact the safe school climate specialist at 860-567-7530.

Sincerely,

Safe School Climate Specialist

Enclosure: School Climate Plan
BOE Policy 5131.2

SAMPLE LETTER
Verified Act of Bullying
Perpetrator

[date]

Parents of

Re: Safe School Climate Incident Report involving [student name]

Dear :

As we discussed on {date}, this letter is to inform you that a Safe School Climate Incident Report was filed with the Litchfield High School Safe School Climate Specialist which alleged that you son/daughter, [name], committed a safe school climate violation.

As a result of the investigation, the safe school climate specialist has verified that [student name] has repeatedly directed behavior toward another student(s) which caused physical or emotional harm or damage to such student's property, (ii) placed such student in a reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) created a hostile environment at school for such student, (iv) infringed on the rights of such student at school, or (v) substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of a school. (PA 11-232)

In accordance with Public Act No. 11-232 and Litchfield BOE Policy 5131.2, [name] has been issued (detail consequences). Also, this incident has been recorded in [student's name] cumulative discipline record. We expect the above defined behavior against any and all individuals will cease immediately. Future infractions will result in further consequence as deemed appropriate by administration (BOE policy 5131.2). Please refer to our Safe School Climate Plan for a complete definition of bullying.

Enclosed is a second copy of the Litchfield Board of Education policy 5131.2 which you received on [date of first offense letter] and was reviewed with [student name] on [date]. As we also discussed on [date], if you wish to review this matter, please contact the safe school climate specialist at 860-567-7530.

Sincerely,

Safe School Climate Specialist

Enclosure: School Climate Plan
 BOE Policy 5131.2

SAMPLE LETTER
Verified Act of Bullying
Target

{date}

Parents of

Re: Safe School Climate Incident Report involving {student name}

Dear :

As we discussed on {date}, this letter is to inform you that a Safe School Climate Incident Report was filed with the Litchfield High School Safe School Climate Specialist which alleged that {name} was the victim of a Safe School Climate violation.

As a result of the investigation, the safe school climate specialist has determined that [student name] was a victim of behavior by another student enrolled in our school district which violated our safe school climate expectations.

The safe school climate specialist will ensure a safety support plan is developed to address the safety measures the school will take to protect [student] against further such behaviors. As we also discussed, if you wish to review this matter or your son/daughter's safety support plan, please contact the safe school climate specialist at 860-567-7530.

Sincerely,

Safe School Climate Specialist

Enclosure: School Climate Plan
BOE Policy 5131.2