

BATH COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

AGENDA ITEM: INFORMATION { } ACTION { X } CLOSED MEETING { }

SUBJECT: **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT - ACTION**

Resolution to Observe VSBA Bullying Prevention Month

BACKGROUND: **The VSBA Board of Directors has designated January as Bullying Prevention Month in an effort to promote awareness of school bullying.**

RECOMMENDATION: **Recommend approval.**

<http://youtu.be/Oj6fAB869IA>

VIRGINIA SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, school bullying has become an increasingly significant problem in the United States and Virginia; and

WHEREAS, almost thirty percent of the youth in the United States are estimated to be involved in bullying each year, either as a bully or as a victim; and

WHEREAS, an estimated one hundred sixty thousand students in kindergarten through twelfth grade miss school every day due to a fear of being bullied; and

WHEREAS, bullying can take many forms, including verbal, physical, and most recently in cyberspace, and can happen in many places on and off school grounds; and

WHEREAS, it is important for Virginia parents, students, teachers, and school administrators to be aware of bullying, and to encourage discussion of the problem as a school community; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia School Board Association has developed a model policy on anti-bullying to encourage positive behaviors and to eliminate bullying behaviors; and

Now, THEREFORE; Bath County Public Schools recognizes the month of January 2012, as the VSBA Bullying Prevention Month, with the intention that the issue of bullying and its prevention be discussed in Virginia schools and classrooms during that time.

Adopted by the Bath County School Board on the ninth day of January, 2012.

Chairman, Bath County School Board

**Sue Hirsh
Clerk, Bath County School Board**

The U.S. Department of Education released today (12/6/11) *Analysis of State Bullying Laws and Policies*, a new report summarizing current approaches in the 46 states with anti-bullying laws and the 41 states that have created anti-bullying policies as models for schools.

SAFE and DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

Analysis of State Bullying Laws and Policies (2011) reviews states' bullying laws and model bullying policies and school districts' bullying policies. The report uses the U.S. Department of Education's guidance document, *"Anti-Bullying Policies: Examples of Provisions in State Laws,"* as an organizing framework for the review.

Key findings include: As of April 2011, 46 states had bullying laws, 45 of which directed school districts to adopt bullying policies. Forty-one states had model bullying policies. Thirty-six states included provisions in their education codes prohibiting cyberbullying or bullying using electronic media. Thirteen states specified that schools have jurisdiction over off-campus behavior if it creates a hostile school environment.

ABSTRACT

Report Title and Link

Analysis of State Bullying Laws and Policies

Program/Policy

In August 2010, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services co-hosted the first Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention Summit. This summit highlighted the need for complete information on 1) the current status of state bullying legislation and 2) how existing bullying laws and policies translate into practice within school districts and local schools. This report addresses the first question.

The review of legislation and policies is based on a framework conceptualized by the U.S. Department of Education ("the Department"). In December 2010, in response to several requests for technical assistance surrounding the drafting of anti-bullying laws and policies, the Department released a guidance document titled *"Anti-Bullying Policies: Examples of Provisions in State Laws."* The document identified key policy components present in state anti-bullying statutes as of the end of 2010.

Main Study Questions

- 1) To what extent do states' bullying laws cover U.S. Department of Education-identified key legislative and policy components?
- 2) To what extent do states' model bullying policies cover U.S. Department of Education-identified key legislative and policy components?
- 3) To what extent do school districts' bullying policies cover U.S. Department of Education-identified school district policy subcomponents?

Findings and Implications

- Forty-six states have bullying laws and 45 of those laws direct school districts to adopt bullying policies. However, three of the 46 states prohibit bullying without defining the behavior that is prohibited.

- Thirty-six states include provisions in their education codes prohibiting cyberbullying or bullying using electronic media. Thirteen states specify that schools have jurisdiction over off-campus behavior if it creates a hostile school environment.
- Forty-one states have created model bullying policies, 12 of which were not mandated to do so under law. Three other states, including Hawaii, Montana, and Michigan, also developed model policies in the absence of state bullying legislation.
- Among the 20 school district bullying policies reviewed in this study, districts located in states with more expansive legislation produced the most expansive school district policies. However, several school districts in states with less expansive laws also substantially expanded the scope and content of their policies beyond the minimum legal expectations.

Study Rationale

Study requested by the Office of Safe and Healthy Students.

Study Design

Researchers reviewed and coded 1) state laws and statutes in all 46 states with enacted legislation, 2) state model policy documents from the 41 states with such documents, and 3) district and school board policies for a sample of 20 school districts. Researchers used a similar coding process to answer each of the study questions. As an example, the state laws were coded in two ways: 1) whether each key element was represented in a state's statutes in any form and 2) with a 0–2 rating of each key element to measure its expansiveness. Ratings were based on criteria developed for purposes of the study and reflected the scope of definitions and legislative provisions in state laws.

Study Limitations

The analyses in this study relied heavily on the key elements framework developed by the U.S. Department of Education in 2010. Researchers did not attempt to validate this framework. Additionally, the district information (study question 3) is not nationally representative due to the small sample size, although the 20 school districts were selected on a geographically stratified random basis.

Study Budget

\$477,767

Contractor

EMT Associates, Inc.