Griswold High School

GHS School Climate Committee

Principal	School Psychologist
Associate Principal	School Social Worker
Student Supervisor	Bullying Interventionist
Parent	Guidance Counselor
Two students	Campus Wide Athletic & Activities Director

Promoting a Safe School Climate

There are many things the high school does to promote and ensure a safe, comfortable school climate at Griswold High School. Many of these things include, but are not limited to:

- Building administration meets with each grade level at the beginning of school to stress the importance of respect and tolerance and remind students of the consequences when a person does not follow the school rules
- Building administration hires Camfel Productions each year to put on a multi-media presentation that supports the ideals of respect, hard work, and tolerance
- Building administration hires Mark Manella each year to speak to the freshmen and seniors each spring. His message centers on respect and tolerance of all people
- Established Advisory Program that supports Student Success Plans and creates a scenario in which every student is matched with an adult advisor
- Every year, we do activities and lessons within our Advisory groups about bullying
- The high school has a comprehensive discipline vs. intervention model that is designed to improve student behavior and educate students on how to act respectfully and responsibly
- The high school has an established Student Hotline (376-7688) that a student can call to report an incident of bullying
- The high school has an established anti-bullying program that a student who has bullied must go through that is designed to improve his or her behavior
- The high school Student Supervisor works with support personnel, building administration, faculty, staff, students, and parents to deter negative behavior and promote positive behavior
- Each year, the high school holds two pep rallies that are solely focused on academic, civic, and social success in and out of the classroom
- RISE Program that promotes respect, integrity, service, and endurance and recognizes children and adults that exhibit model behavior
- Building administrators will review annually with school faculty and staff the Safe School Climate Plan
- As a part of our freshmen Health class, presenters come in from Safe Futures to discuss healthy relationships and dating safety
- CT DOT Save-a-Life Tour program came to present about the dangers of texting and driving

Reporting System

Any person can report an incident he/she believes to be bullying, intimidating, or harassing behavior to any school employee, which includes, but is not limited to building administrator, teacher, staff, social worker, nurse, coach, or any other person that has regular contact with students of Griswold as an employee of Griswold Public Schools. Furthermore, that person may report the incident by completing the *Conflict Reporting Form* and turning it in to the building Principal, the Associate Principal (School Climate Specialist), or Student Supervisor. He can also complete the form and turn it in to a Guidance Counselor, teacher, or staff member who can, in turn, turn it in to one of the building administrators or Student Supervisor that are responsible for following up on the report.

Any school employee that witnesses or receives a report of possible bullying or harassment must report the behavior to building administration orally **within one school day** and file a written report **within two school days** after making the oral report.

In an effort to make reporting as easy and convenient as possible, hard copies are available in the Student Supervisor's office, at the main office, or can be downloaded off the high school's website at http://www.griswold.k12.ct.us, clicking on Griswold High School, and clicking on the Parents tab on the left side of the page. The form can be printed and turned in to the Student Supervisors at school. People can also report an incident, anonymous or not, by calling the Student Hotline at (860) 376-7688.

Investigating a Conflict Report

All incidents reported will be investigated. Anonymous reports, however, will be more limited, because the investigating team will not have as many people they can interview and gather information. The investigating team can include the Building Principal, the Associate Principal (Safe School Climate Specialist), the Student Supervisor, and the Campus-Wide Activities and Athletic Director, as well as other people when deemed necessary.

An investigation will include many strategies, all of which will begin based on the information provided by the initial report. It could include interviewing the alleged victim, the alleged perpetrator(s), and any other students, teachers, or staff that may have been witness to the incident(s) of bullying. During the investigation, any person with knowledge of the situation will be interviewed and asked to give a written statement explaining what they saw and heard and any other pertinent information related to the incident. No person interviewed is required to give a statement in writing, but it is encouraged. Any person interviewed during an investigation will not be discriminated against and their confidentiality will be protected. Any retaliation on a person who has shared information will not be tolerated, and that behavior will be addressed by the building administration. During the investigation, the cameras that are set up inside the high school and around the perimeter of the school could be consulted to see if there is any visual evidence that supports the report.

Any anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated. No disciplinary action will be taken solely based on the anonymous report.

During the investigation, the parents of the alleged perpetrator and victim will be notified by phone by members of the investigating team and told what was reported and what the next steps are. They will be kept apprised of any developments related to the reported incident.

Notifying the Parents/Guardians of the Students Involved

At the conclusion of the investigation, the alleged perpetrator and victim will meet separately with members of the investigating team and be told the results of the investigation. If there are disciplinary consequences related to the incident, then they will be given at that time. The students will also be told how to act going forward to avoid any future problems.

After meeting with all students involved, members of the investigating team will contact the parents/guardians of the perpetrator and victim within 48 hours of concluding the investigation and explain the results of the investigation. If any disciplinary consequences have been given, they will share them at that time. The parents/guardians will be given an opportunity to come in and meet with members of the team to go over all aspects of the situation.

Follow-Up

It is vital to follow-up with the victim and his or her family afterwards to make sure that no further acts of bullying have occurred after the situation has been addressed by school officials. For that reason, ***a team member will check in with both the victim and his or her family two weeks and four weeks after the situation has been resolved*** if an occurrence of bullying has been determined. Throughout the follow-up process, strict confidentiality will be maintained. The purpose of the follow-up is to verify nothing further has happened, including any retaliation, and that the student once again feels safe and comfortable at school. If, through the follow-up, it is determined that another incident has occurred, it will be addressed immediately. During the follow-up, we will monitor and respond to any instances of retaliation against any individuals that report or assist in the investigation.

Recording & Filing Bullying Incidents

It is important to file and record all incidents of reported bullying whether or not the report becomes a bona fide act of bullying. Having an organized system will allow the school to prevent acts of bullying from continuing and reflect on previous cases.

An official case will be started with any official reporting of an **alleged** act of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. All evidence collected and determinations made will be filed in the folder created for that case. A separate, organized filing cabinet will be designated solely for bullying incidents. All files will be kept until all students involved in the situation have graduated. Once they have graduated, the file will be destroyed.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the *Conflict Incident Summary Form* will be completed. This form will include detailed conclusions about the incident that has been

reported, including whether or not the situation was determined to be bullying, disciplinary or other actions taken, and recording the dates and times when we follow up with the students involved in the incident and their families. A brief written summary of the incident will also be included. The form will be for office use, and it will only be used to refer back to in case future incidents occur.

Local law enforcement will be notified by the School Climate Specialist or designee of any acts of bullying that constitute criminal conduct.

In the event that a person calls the high school to find out our number of incidents of bullying, we can use the filing system to quickly provide an accurate response.

Educating Students and Preventing Future Occurrences

Children who are perpetrators need to be educated on what bullying is, why they shouldn't bully, and how to prevent that type of behavior in the future. In order to achieve that, Griswold High School has several approaches in place. There is a structured discipline-versus-intervention model that includes in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and other approaches to discipline. Students who are identified as bullies will be required to meet with a bullying interventionist for bullying education. Repeat offenders will also meet with her again.

At the beginning of each and every year, the building Principal and Associate Principal meet with all students by class and explain the dangers of bullying, communicate our zero tolerance for threatening and intimidating behavior, and explain how to report an incident of bullying once it has occurred. This time with each class sets the tone of respect that permeates our building and drives everything we do.

Griswold High School also schedules school wide activities and events that are aimed at promoting respect, responsibility, and healthy decision making. Time is utilized during our Advisory groups to discuss bullying. There are multiple guest speakers and presentations scheduled each year that promote respect and responsibility.