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STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

February 3, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman

SUBJECT: Presentation on Bullying

The subject of bullying is receiving attention from media, the Governor's office, the state Legislature, student advocacy groups, educators, and the Michigan Department of Education through the State Board of Education and staff.

The Governor addressed the need for students to feel safe from schoolyard bullies in her State of the State address to a Joint Committee of the Legislature. Currently, there are six bills pending in the Legislature, and there is an expectation that there will be at least one more introduced by Representative Glenn Anderson in the near future. His bill would be called Matt's Safe School law, after a young man who committed suicide in East Lansing. The State Board of Education Legislative Subcommittee has been meeting with representatives of several student advocacy groups and Michigan Department of Education staff to find methods of keeping kids in school. Bullying has been one element of that conversation.

Since adopting the Policies on Safe Schools in May 2000 (Attachment A), the State Board has recommended that schools undertake proactive, preventive approaches to ensure a safe school environment; provide access to programs and options for troubled youth; and offer post-traumatic support to victims of school violence incidents. The Policies for Creating Effective Learning Environments (Attachment B), adopted by the State Board in December 2000, recommended that schools assess environments and implement strategies to strengthen a positive learning climate, and model appropriate behaviors. The State Board provided further guidance to local districts when it adopted Policies on Bullying (Attachment C) in July 2001. In addition, the a Model Code of Student Conduct was developed by the Department in 2001. The Universal Education Referent Group was another effort by the State Board to promote a positive school atmosphere that fostered a safe learning environment for all students.

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Each of the current bills pending in the Legislature would require local districts to develop anti-bullying policies. Some simply require that local boards adopt such a policy; others are more prescriptive as to the development of the policy and required elements of the policy. Some require local districts to submit a copy of their policy to the Department of Education.

Among many proactive possibilities for keeping kids in school, the State Board of Education Legislative Subcommittee has discussed several options for providing guidance to local districts to deal with school bullying, such as development of a model anti-bullying policy, professional development for school staff in positive classroom management techniques and anti-bullying strategies, and promotion of successful interventions for changing bullying behavior (i.e., transformative conferencing and positive behavioral support).

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

POLICIES ON SAFE SCHOOLS

Providing a safe school environment for our students is of the utmost importance for Michigan's public schools. The State Board of Education recognizes that many local schools have undertaken very successful school violence prevention programs, and we applaud those efforts. This good work should guide all schools in their efforts to provide a safer learning environment.

POLICIES

We believe that proactive approaches to preventing violent behavior by children and youth in schools and communities are more effective than reactive, punishment-based approaches. By addressing the core causes of misconduct, preventive approaches can protect society and help at-risk students become productive citizens. Such proactive approaches could include training school personnel to identify students who are likely to become serious behavior problems, incorporating preventive approaches in school safety plans, integrating school safety into one or more aspects of curriculum and programs, preparing students to be responsible citizens, integrating school safety into one or more aspects of the student culture, providing for full day, full service schools, providing early childhood education, and establishing alternative dispute mechanisms such as peer mediation. Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools and state education programs over which the State Board has policymaking authority should undertake proactive, preventive approaches to ensure a safe school environment.

We recognize that public schools cannot assume sole responsibility for the behavior of the students they serve and that schools must work to secure parental involvement and develop collaborative relationships with local and state agencies and their communities to ensure a safer school environment. By marshaling the resources of the broader local and state communities, collaborative efforts can diversify safety efforts, maximize resources, and address all facets of school safety issues. Collaborative partners, for example, could include local governments, mental and physical health agencies, police, prosecutors, and correctional authorities; local businesses; civic, service, and nonprofit organizations; faith-based organizations; and the state Departments of Community Health, Career Development, Consumer and Industry Services, Corrections, and the Family Independence Agency. Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools and state education programs over which the State Board

has policymaking authority should involve parents and the broader community in collaborative efforts to help ensure a safe school environment.

We believe that students and society are best served by providing alternative educational settings for troubled youth who engage in serious misconduct, including those removed from the regular classroom. By providing proper supervision and rehabilitative opportunities, as well as basic academic and work skills, alternative education can better protect society and help troubled youth become productive citizens, than providing no such supervision or options. Supervision and options for troubled youth, for example, could include alternative educational programs, supervision by law enforcement, distance learning opportunities, self-paced monitored study, vocational education, military schools, and nontraditional off-site options. Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools and state education programs over which the State Board has policymaking authority should provide, or help provide, access to one or more educational or supervisory programs, options, and alternatives for troubled youth.

We recognize the traumatic effect serious violent incidents have on students and educators and believe that schools should be prepared to offer post-traumatic support to victims of violence. By providing post-traumatic support, victims are not forgotten in the wake of a tragedy and are better able to recover from such incidents. Post-traumatic support for victims, for example, could include crisis response teams, post-trauma plans, and coordinated, interagency responses with mental health services and non-profit organizations. Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools and state education programs over which the State Board has policymaking authority should offer appropriate post-traumatic support to victims of school violence incidents.

These Policies on Safe Schools are guidelines for local schools as they work to achieve safer schools for Michigan's children. These Policies shall also serve as the policy framework for the Department of Education, as well as programs in other state administrative agencies in which the State Board of Education possesses policymaking authority, in developing, establishing, administering, and evaluating the operations of local school districts and schools. The State Board shall also use these policy initiatives to guide its efforts, including developing recommendations to the Legislature, the Governor, and state agencies; formulating grant criteria; and developing and implementing other State Board programs, activities and policies. These Policies on Safe Schools shall be effective with the commencement of the 2000-2001 academic school year.

Adopted May 18, 2000

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

POLICIES FOR CREATING EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

State Board of Education policies have sought to ensure that all children have the opportunity to meet state education standards. While we recognize children face physical, emotional, social, or cultural barriers to learning, schools can help overcome these and other obstacles by providing a safe and supportive learning environment.

While many factors, including quality of curriculum and teaching strategies are critically important to student achievement, student ability to achieve also is strongly influenced by the learning environment within every school building, school system, and community. The following policies supplement and bolster existing State Board of Education policies related to Character Education, Family Involvement, and Safe Schools. These policies also reaffirm the good work undertaken by teachers and administrators in these areas, and identify ways in which schools and communities can work together for the benefit of all children in Michigan.

POLICIES

We believe that schools and communities can promote educational success by fostering a healthy learning environment. Schools that are structured using a research-based approach, with support of learning as the primary goal, are most successful toward creating quality school environments. Further, quality schools stress responsibility for every adult and student member, foster family and community involvement, and provide appropriate resources for students and staff. **Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools periodically assess their current learning environments and implement strategies to strengthen and maintain a positive learning climate.**

We recognize that a child's intellectual growth cannot take place without having met his or her basic physical needs. The curriculum for every child's preschool through high school experience should include the opportunity to participate in physical education. Every child should have the opportunity to maximize his or her own health through the knowledge and skills that are taught in these critical subject areas. **Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools offer daily recess periods or periods of physical activity for all elementary and middle school students, and offer physical education programs that promote physical activities for all students, with accommodations for children who need them.**

We believe that a school's climate and environmental support for healthy behaviors must be in place so that what is taught in class is practiced in daily life. Reports from the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continue to cite regular physical activity, proper nutrition, and prevention of the use of tobacco as key factors toward improving overall health for children. Nutrition, for example, plays an important part in the learning process. Meals served in schools, whether breakfast or lunch, should be attractively prepared and presented and adhere to appropriate dietary guidelines for children. **Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools help students and families make good health choices for lifelong benefit.**

We acknowledge that respect for all students and belief in the potential for success of each student by all members of a school staff are critical to student academic success. A respectful and caring climate makes it possible for students to feel safe and secure in school and enables learning to take place. This respect and caring must be communicated and practiced between administration and staff, among staff members, both professional and para-professional, and between staff and parents, as well as between staff and students and between student and student. **Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools promote safe learning environments by ensuring that appropriate behaviors are modeled by staff and practiced by students.**

These Policies for Creating Effective Learning Environments are guidelines for local schools as they work to achieve positive learning atmospheres for all Michigan children. **These Policies shall also serve as the policy framework for the Department of Education, as well as programs in other state administrative agencies over which the State Board of Education possesses policymaking authority**. The State Board shall also use this policy framework to develop recommendations for the Legislature, the Governor, and state agencies; to formulate grant criteria; and to develop and implement other State Board programs, activities and policies. These Policies for Creating Effective Learning Environments shall be effective with the commencement of the 2000-2001 academic school year.

Adopted December 14, 2000

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

POLICIES ON BULLYING

As previously expressed in our *Policies on Safe Schools* (May 18, 2000), providing a safe school environment for our students is of the utmost importance for Michigan's public schools. Bullying is one particularly troubling aspect of student misbehavior that endangers school safety. Bullying, which is the repeated abuse of a student over time by other students, can take many forms including any combination of physical, emotional, and verbal abuse, all of which are unacceptable in our schools.

Recent tragedies involving violence in schools across the nation have involved the issues of bullying and revenge. The consequences of bullying are far-reaching and cause problem behaviors, poor psycho-social functioning, avoidance of school attendance, severe emotional problems (including suicide), and physical problems. Some students who observe unchallenged bullying behavior are likely to copy this anti-social behavior. We recognize that bullies are often children who have been bullied or abused themselves. Bullying and being bullied are indicators that something is wrong, and children who experience either or both need help.

Studies have reported that individuals with a history of bullying are likely to exhibit criminal behavior by the time they reach their mid-20s. Individuals who have been bullied are found to have a higher rate of depression and poor self-esteem. By striving to prevent bullying, schools reduce risks of violence and teach students resiliency skills.

POLICIES

The *Policies on Safe Schools* adopted by the State Board of Education on May 18, 2000, states that public schools and state education programs over which the State Board has policymaking authority should undertake proactive, preventive approaches to ensure a safe school environment. In fact, many school districts have found that implementing a successful anti-bullying program can reduce bullying and other anti-social behaviors among students, and produce positive changes in the school climate. **Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools and state education programs over which the State Board has policymaking authority should develop a plan designed to prevent bullying, and develop methods to react to bullying when it occurs, as an integral part of a district-wide safety and discipline plan.**

We recognize that the causes of bullying are varied. Home and/or environment, individual temperament, and social context are factors that contribute to the bullying problem. Much bullying occurs without the knowledge of teachers, and parents, and many victims are reluctant to tell adults of their problems with bullying. Thus, an anti-bullying program must address supervision of students; encouraging students to be involved in the program by asking and listening to them; educating teachers and other staff members on the nature and seriousness of bullying on a student's physical, emotional, social, and academic well-being; training teachers and other staff members to effectively intervene when bullying occurs; providing individualized interventions with bullies and victims; and strongly advocating meaningful communications between teachers and parents. We also recognize that each school has its local circumstances and challenges. Accordingly, each school district should select the course of action that best addresses its needs. Developing a clear formal policy regarding bullying provides everyone with a clear understanding of acceptable behavior. To determine which course best suits a school's needs, we recommend that the program contain elements that involve the entire school community in assessing the nature and prevalence of bullying at each school, and in crafting and implementing the anti-bullying programs. School administrators, faculty, non-instructional staff (e.g. secretaries, bus drivers, food service, maintenance), parents, the student body as a whole, as well as the students identified as bullies and victims, therefore, should all be included in this process. Anti-bullying programs consisting of these components have resulted in substantial reductions in reported and observed incidents of bullying. Moreover, these programs have resulted in significant reductions in anti-social behavior and significant improvements in the school learning and social atmosphere. **Therefore, it is the policy of the State Board of Education that public schools and state education programs over which the State Board has policymaking authority should institute an anti-bullying program incorporating the basic elements described herein, to promote a positive school atmosphere that fosters learning, and to create a safe and fear-free school environment in the classroom, playground, and at school-sponsored activities.**

Adopted July 19, 2001

[Children] …who face violence, hunger, substance abuse, unintended pregnancy, and despair cannot possibly focus on academic excellence. There is no curriculum brilliant enough to compensate for a hungry stomach or a distracted mind.
American Cancer Society, National Action Plan for Comprehensive School Health Education, 1992

In 1987, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention first proposed the concept of a coordinated school health program with eight components. These separate but interconnected components exist at some level in every school, but are often not formally linked or coordinated. Coordinated school health is a way to do business in a more efficient and effective manner - not one more thing to do but another way to do what must be done.

Coordinated School Health is:

- centered on the needs of our children;
- systematic in its approach;
- built on a team effort; and
- a rigorous process that aims to eliminate gaps and redundancies.

State Vision for Coordinated School Health

School-aged children are socially, emotionally, and physically healthy and engaging in behaviors that promote lifelong health and academic achievement within a supportive family, school, and community environment.

Working Together for Student Success

State of Michigan
Coordinated School Health Advisory Council - December 2004

Conclusion

Coordinated school health and safety policies are critical tools in assisting districts to implement effective programs and practices. When implemented, such policies reduce risk behaviors, improve health, and increase academic achievement. The Michigan State Board of Education policies provide guidance to local school boards in developing policies that address district needs, strengthen school health initiatives, and enhance communication on school health issues. Moreover, district policies provide consistent messages to students, staff, families, and community partners. Everyone benefits from a coordinated approach that supports improved health outcomes as well as academic achievement.

In the larger context, schools are society's vehicle for providing young people with the tools for successful adulthood. Perhaps no tool is more essential than good health.
Council of Chief State School Officers

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In the search bar type "School Health" then click on Coordinated School Health and Safety Programs

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Michigan State Board of Education & Coordinated School Health and Safety Programs

Working Together for Student Success

Approved Policies 2000-2005

Introduction

Schools are under high pressure to demonstrate academic success with competing priorities, yet critical issues are impacting the health of school-aged students. In response to these critical issues, the Michigan State Board of Education has unanimously approved numerous policies that support coordinated school health and safety programs and initiatives.

The Michigan State Board of Education, Michigan Department of Education, other state departments and their partners jointly recognize that coordinated school health and safety programs and initiatives can positively impact student academic achievement and empower students with the knowledge, skills, and judgment essential to make healthy and responsible choices in life. The State Board encourages all Michigan school districts to adopt school health and safety policies that will assist them in ensuring that students are healthy and able to academically achieve.

Both research and common sense tell us that when students are fit, healthy, and ready to learn, they achieve more success in all areas of their lives.

A healthy school environment depends on policies. Schools that want to minimize hazards and distractions to teaching and learning, create a climate in which students and school staff can do their best work, and expect that all students can succeed will ensure that the necessary policies are in place.
Health Is Academic, 1998

Policy Title and Date of Adoption www.michigan.gov/mde	The Michigan State Board of Education Policies that align with the components of coordinated school health programs and initiatives (CSHP) since 2000. Below, please find the Michigan State Board of Education policies and model policies organized by the nine components of coordinated school health. **Policy Summaries**	Coordinated School Health - Academic Support	Health Education	Physical Education/Activity	Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services	Health Promotion for Staff	Parent and Community Involvement	School Health Services	Healthy School Environment	Nutrition Services	State Board Policy	Model Policy
Model Local Wellness Policy – 10/2005	This model policy affirms that schools should provide a healthy campus-wide environment where students are taught healthy eating and physical activity knowledge, skills, and values by staff who role model healthy lifestyles.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
24/7 Tobacco-Free Schools – 6/2005	This policy strongly recommends that Michigan school boards adopt local policies that: prohibit use of all tobacco products, by all persons, in any venue under the jurisdiction of the school, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year; prohibit tobacco advertising; identify alternatives to suspension for students in violation; encourage and help students and staff to quit using; and build on existing school policies.	x	x			x		x	x		x	
Management of Asthma In Schools – 1/2005	This policy advocates for the benefits of a clear school policy for asthma management that can make a difference in school performance and recommends that each Michigan district establish asthma-friendly schools to better manage asthma symptoms and reduce school absences among students with asthma.	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	
Quality Character Education – 6/2004	This policy affirms that quality character education helps students achieve academically and includes using a secular approach; focusing on social skills; building a caring school community; providing opportunities for ethical action; and engaging families as partners.	x	x		x	x	x		x		x	
Comprehensive School Health Education – 6/2004	This policy affirms that health education is critical to academic and employment success and recommends at least 50 hours of health education instruction at every grade, K-12, an emphasis on critical knowledge and skills; performance-based assessment; highly qualified and certified teachers; and collaboration with the school partners.	x	x			x	x				x	
Offering Healthy Food and Beverages - 12/2003	This policy ensures that students have access to food and beverages that promote health and foster learning. Healthy food and beverages that comply with this policy are recommended to schools to offer and promote healthful food choices in venues outside federally regulated child nutrition programs.	x					x		x	x	x	
Coordinated School Health Programs to Support Academic Achievement - 9/2003	This policy affirms that schools cannot achieve their primary mission of education if students and staff are not physically, mentally, and socially healthy. The Board recommends that districts develop local coordinated school health programs and school health councils to make recommendations to the school board; that schools develop school health teams representing staff, families, students, and community in each building; and that each district designates a school health program coordinator.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Promote Health and Prevent Disease and Pregnancy – 9/2003	This policy recommends that local school boards select, adopt, and implement comprehensive sexuality education programs that are based on sound science and proven principles of instruction with recommendations for parent and community involvement; program content; meeting diverse student needs; principles of effective programs; professional development for instructors; and ongoing program evaluation.	x	x				x				x	
Quality Physical Education – 9/2003	This policy affirms that quality physical education programs play a unique role of educating students and in acquiring skills so they may lead a physically active life. Key components include curriculum, instruction and assessment, certified teachers, instruction of 150 minutes per week for elementary students and 225 minutes per week for middle school and high school students.	x		x					x		x	
Statewide Safe School Choice Policy – 4/2003	This policy establishes a persistently dangerous school definition; steps schools must take if labeled persistently dangerous; and school choice options for students who are the victims of a violent offense at school as required by the *No Child Left Behind Act*.	x			x		x		x		x	
Administering Medications – 11/2002	This model policy recommends that, under the direction of a school administrator, a school employee may administer medication to students with written permission of the parent/guardian and compliance with physician instructions.	x					x	x				x
Policies on Bullying – 7/2001	This policy recommends that schools develop methods to react to bullying when it occurs, as part of a district-wide safety and discipline plan, and promoting a positive school atmosphere that fosters a safe learning environment.	x	x		x		x		x		x	
Model Code of Student Conduct – 7/2001	This model code of student conduct is a tool provided to assist Michigan school districts in developing, updating, revising, and implementing their local codes of student conduct, which are required by Michigan law.	x			x		x		x			x
Students with Diabetes – 1/2001	This departmental memo provides clear guidelines, procedures, emergency plans, and communication processes to assist with the management of diabetes in the school setting.	x					x	x				x
Safe Schools – 5/2000	This policy recommends that schools undertake proactive, preventive approaches to ensure a safe school environment; provide access to programs and options for troubled youth; and offer post-traumatic support to victims of school violence incidents.	x			x		x		x		x	
Creating Effective Learning Environments – 12/2000	This policy recommends that schools assess environments and implement strategies to strengthen a positive learning climate; offer daily recess periods, physical activity, and physical education programs for all elementary and middle school students; and help students and their families make good health choices and model appropriate behaviors.	x		x			x		x	x	x	