

Appendix I
Site Visit Interview Protocol: District Representative

U.S. Department of Education State Bullying Laws and Policies Implementation Study
Field Interview Protocol
District Representative

The U.S. Department of Education is sponsoring a study about bullying in schools. The purpose of the study is to describe how districts and schools are implementing state laws and policies related to bullying. We are asking you to share your observations about bullying among students on school campuses in your district and your experiences developing and implementing the district's bullying policy. [DISTRICT NAME] has been randomly selected as one of 12 school districts nationally to participate in the bullying study. You have been invited to participate in this study because you may be knowledgeable about bullying practices in this district.

POTENTIAL RISKS OR BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

There are no anticipated risks involved in taking part in this study. Participation may not benefit you personally. However, the information gathered in this study may be valuable for developing effective policies for responding to bullying in schools.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will not share information identifying you or your district with anyone outside of the study team except if required by law. No one in your school or district administration will be told of your responses to interview questions and your responses will not be tied to any review or evaluation of your professional performance. Responses will be summarized in individual case studies for districts and schools to provide examples of policy implementation in a manner that does not associate responses with a specific individual and does not identify a school or district by name.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION/WITHDRAWAL

If you agree to complete the interview, you will be considered a participant in a research study on the implementation of state bullying laws and policies. Your participation in the research study is completely **voluntary**. You may decide not to join, to only answer some questions, or to leave the study at any time. There is no penalty for choosing not to participate.

U.S. Department of Education State Bullying Laws and Policies School Implementation Study
 School District Representative Interview

Respondent Information	
Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
1. What is your position with the district ?	
2. What are your specific roles and responsibilities with regard to preventing or responding to bullying problems within the district?	

Development of District/School Site Policy	
Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
3. Tell me about the process for developing your district's anti-bullying policy.	
3a. What year was the district bullying policy created? _____ -- _____ school year	
3b. What prompted the policy's development? <input type="radio"/> Legislative changes <input type="radio"/> Direction from the State Department of Education <input type="radio"/> Response to a specific incidents <input type="radio"/> Other: _____	
3c. Who was responsible for developing the policy (i.e., individual or department within the district)?	
3d. If the policy was developed through a collaborative process , which stakeholder groups participated? <input type="radio"/> District employees <input type="radio"/> School employees <input type="radio"/> Families <input type="radio"/> Students <input type="radio"/> Community groups or organizations (specify) <input type="radio"/> Local law enforcement <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <input type="radio"/> Did not involve a collaborative process	
3e. How would you describe the roles of different stakeholders or stakeholder groups (respondent's own role, roles of district and school personnel, parents, students) in developing the policy?	

Development of District/School Site Policy

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>3f. What were the most important influences shaping the development of the district's bullying policy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Research and evidence-base practice <input type="radio"/> State legislative requirements <input type="radio"/> State model policies and guidelines from your state <input type="radio"/> State model policies and guidelines from other states <input type="radio"/> State school boards' association guidelines <input type="radio"/> Other sources 	
<p>3g. Did the district choose to adopt a model policy provided by the State Education Agency or state school boards' association?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> District adopted state model policy <input type="radio"/> District adopted school boards' association model policy <input type="radio"/> District adopted some provisions of the [state model/school boards' association model] <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <p>[PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How useful was the state model policy or guidelines by the State Department of Education in developing the local policy? • If the district chose not to adopt the state model policy or only adopted key provisions, what were the factors influencing this decision? 	
<p>3h. What challenges did you encounter in developing the policy?</p> <p>[PROBE]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were there any areas of disagreement on key policy provisions? If so, what were the issues and how were they resolved? 	
<p>3i. What types of technical assistance or support for developing the school district policy was available through the state department of education?</p> <p>[PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the district utilize the support that was available? • If the district utilized the technical support that was available from the state, what types of assistance was requested? 	
<p>3j. Do schools develop their own bullying policies? If so, what are the requirements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> No, schools must adopt the district policy <input type="radio"/> Yes, schools may develop their own policies <input type="radio"/> Yes, schools must develop their own policies <p>[PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If schools do develop their own policies, briefly describe the process (i.e., who is involved, are policies reviewed by the district?) • How are school site policies similar to or different from district policies? 	

Development of District/School Site Policy

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
3k. How would you describe the leadership role of your local school board in supporting policy development, implementation, and enforcement of policy guidelines?	

Communication

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
4. Tell me about how the district policy is communicated to school administrators and other school personnel, families, and students.	
4a. How is the district policy communicated to school personnel? <input type="radio"/> Posted on the district website <input type="radio"/> Posted on school campuses <input type="radio"/> Published in the district employee manual <input type="radio"/> Reviewed as part of in-service training <input type="radio"/> Other: _____	
4b. How is the district policy communicated to parents and students? <input type="radio"/> Posted on the district website <input type="radio"/> Posted on school campuses <input type="radio"/> Published in the student handbook or code of conduct <input type="radio"/> Directly mailed to parents <input type="radio"/> Discussed with students (e.g., at school assemblies, or in the classroom) <input type="radio"/> Other: _____	
4c. Is the bullying policy communicated to parents in languages other than English for students or families with limited English proficiency?	

School Personnel Training

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
5. Tell me about any training that is provided to school personnel on bullying policies.	
5a. Does the district provide training on bullying issues for school personnel ? <input type="radio"/> Yes, school-level bullying training <input type="radio"/> Yes, district-wide bullying training <input type="radio"/> No, district does not provide bullying training	

School Personnel Training

Interview Questions

Open-Ended Elaboration

5b. How would you describe the **structure and content of training**?

[PROBES]

- Who **conducts the training program**?
- How **often is training provided**?
- How is the **training structured**? (e.g., part of in-service training covering multiples topics, online training)?
- How much **time is spent training** on bullying issues?
- What **issues or topics** are covered in the training curriculum?
 - How to identify or recognize bullying behavior
 - How to appropriately intervene in bullying situations
 - How to implement or enforce bullying policies
 - How to promote positive school climate
 - How to conduct an investigation
 - Other: _____

5c. How was the **training curriculum selected or developed** (standardized curriculum or custom designed)?

[PROBES]

- If a standardized curriculum is used, identify the name of the training curriculum and developer?
- If the district developed its own customized training curriculum, who was involved in this process?
- Did the district receive any support from the State Department of Education in developing the curriculum?

5d. Who is **required to participate** in the training programs and is their participation mandatory or optional?

	Any training?	Mandatory training?	Voluntary/optional training?
District administrators	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School administrators	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Counselors/psychologists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yard supervisors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation personnel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other personnel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[PROBE]

- How does the **district ensure that all required staff receive the training**? What strategies are used to incentivize participation or to monitor compliance?

School Personnel Training

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
5e. What kinds of feedback have you received from school personnel regarding the relevance of utility of training content? How was feedback obtained? How was feedback used?	
5f. Have there been any challenges associated with implementing staff training ? If so, how have these challenges been resolved?	

Prevention

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
6. Tell me about any bullying prevention or education programs for students in the district.	
6a. Does the district implement school programs or approaches to address bullying (prevention, intervention, and whole-school approaches to promote school climate)? <input type="radio"/> Yes, school-level bullying prevention programming <input type="radio"/> Yes, district-wide bullying prevention programming <input type="radio"/> No, schools do not implement bullying prevention programming	
6b. How would you describe the structure and content of the bullying program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the specific program components? • How is the program delivered (e.g., whole-school approach, in-class curriculum)? • Which grade levels are targeted by the program? • In what ways, if any, does the school program involve families of students? 	
6c. Does the program integrate a standardized or evidence-based curriculum ? If so, what curriculum do you use? <input type="radio"/> Yes (specify the name of the curriculum) <input type="radio"/> No	
6d. How was the program selected ? <input type="radio"/> Recommended by the state <input type="radio"/> Recommended by other entity <input type="radio"/> Identified through research <input type="radio"/> Other: _____	
6e. What are the expectations for schools to implement school programs? <input type="radio"/> District requires implementation of district-wide prevention program <input type="radio"/> District requires implementation of a prevention program, schools have the option to choose the curriculum <input type="radio"/> District encourages schools to implement prevention program (no specific mandate) <input type="radio"/> District does not encourage or require prevention program implementation <input type="radio"/> Other	

Prevention

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>6f. Has the district received any technical assistance from the state to assist with school program development? If so, what types of assistance have been provided?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes (specify the name of the curriculum)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	
<p>6g. Does the district provide training or other support to school personnel on how to implement the school program? Please describe any training or support that is provided.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	
<p>6h. Have there been any challenges to implementing the school program? If so, how were these challenges resolved?</p>	
<p>6i. What types of feedback have you received from schools regarding the school program? How was feedback obtained? How was feedback used?</p>	

Investigations and Written Records

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>7. Tell me about the district's involvement in investigating reporting bullying incidents.</p>	
<p>7a. What are the specific roles and responsibilities for the district in conducting a bullying investigation?</p>	
<p>7b. At what stage in the reporting and investigation process does the district become involved?</p>	
<p>7c. What are the steps required in the investigation process?</p>	
<p>7d. Does the district provide any special accommodations for reporting or investigations to assist students and families with special resource needs (e.g., accommodations for families with low literacy or limited English proficiency, or students with disabilities)?</p>	
<p>7e. Is there any written record of the investigation? Please describe the types of written reports and how they are maintained.</p>	
<p>7f. Are there any specific timelines required for investigating bullying complaints?</p>	
<p>7g. Does the district policy distinguish between bullying and harassment? If so, what are the differences in how bullying and harassment incidents are handled? Are there any challenges related to defining and addressing these different types of behavior?</p>	

Investigations and Written Records

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
7h. What is the typical scope of a bullying investigation ? What is the resulting impact on district resources?	
7i. What have been some of the most significant issues or challenges related to investigating bullying behavior ?	

Cyberbullying

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
8. We are interested in understanding more about the issue of cyberbullying among students within the district and how cyberbullying incidents are addressed.	
8a. What are the specific challenges associated with the identification, reporting, and investigation of cyberbullying incidents ?	
8b. How does the district address concerns regarding rights of free speech when responding to cyberbullying incidents?	
8c. Does the district enforce student codes of conduct for off-campus bullying or cyberbullying behavior that disrupts the school environment? If so, what criteria are applied to determine jurisdiction over off-campus incidents? What are the challenges to enforcement?	
8d. What are the limits of school jurisdiction over off-campus conduct ? Are there any challenges associated with these limits over jurisdiction?	

Responses to Bullying Behavior

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
9. Tell me about the consequences for bullying behavior and how bullying issues are ultimately resolved.	
9a. What types of consequences or disciplinary actions are imposed for students who are involved in serious bullying incidents?	
9b. Does the district any positive behavioral supports or non-punitive consequences to address students' bullying behavior? If so, what approach is used? How do you decide which consequences are assigned?	
9c. Are there prescribed consequences or do administrators have some flexibility in assigning consequences based on individual circumstances?	

Responses to Bullying Behavior

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>9d. How are decisions made about reporting to law enforcement when bullying violates criminal law? Are there established guidelines for law enforcement reporting?</p> <p>[PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the policy require mandatory law enforcement reporting for potential criminal violations? • What are the advantages or disadvantages of specific policy provisions? 	
<p>9e. Are parents notified when their child is involved in a bullying complaint? If yes, under what circumstances?</p>	
<p>9f. Are there any special procedures for communicating with families about a bullying incident that involves an LGBT student who may not be “out” to his or her family?</p>	
<p>9g. How would you describe the relationship between the district administration and school resource officers (SRO) with regard to managing and enforcing bullying problems?</p>	

Supports for Targets of Bullying

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>10. Tell me about any types of support services that are available to students who bully or students who have been the victims of bullying.</p>	
<p>10a. Does the district provide specific protections for victims or reporters to prevent retaliation? If so, how would you describe them?</p> <p>[PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any strategies used to protect students who are most frequently targeted by bullying? • If so, what are the strategies? 	
<p>10b. What types of supports are available within the district to support students who have been the victims of bullying?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> District provides mental health counseling to students <input type="radio"/> District provides mental health counseling through cooperative agreements with community-based providers <input type="radio"/> District refers students to community-based mental health providers <input type="radio"/> No mental health services or linkages 	
<p>10c. What are some of the challenges to addressing the needs of bullying involved youth?</p>	

Support for Policy

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>11. We are also interested in the degree to which teachers, staff, and the community understand and support the anti-bullying policies in your school.</p>	
<p>11a. How would you characterize the reaction of school personnel to the bullying policy and its requirements?</p>	
<p>11b. What components of the policy receive the strongest support?</p>	
<p>11c. What components have received less support? What is it about these components that produce concern?</p>	

Transparency & Monitoring

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>12. Tell us about how the district and individual school sites monitor and record bullying incidents.</p>	
<p>12a. What are the expectations for schools to record and report information on bullying incidents?</p>	
<p>12b. What format is used for data reporting?</p>	
<p>12c. How frequently is data reported by schools?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Quarterly <input type="radio"/> Twice per year <input type="radio"/> Annually <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ 	
<p>12d. How frequently is data reviewed at the district level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Quarterly <input type="radio"/> Twice per year <input type="radio"/> Annually <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ 	
<p>12e. How is the information used by the district (e.g., planning and program development, school accountability)?</p>	
<p>12f. What steps does the district take to ensure that individual schools are in compliance with bullying policies (e.g., processes for monitoring, sanctions)?</p>	
<p>12g. What are some of the liability concerns for the district?</p>	

Costs to Implement

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>13. Tell me about the costs of implementing the bullying policy for the district and for schools.</p>	
<p>13a. Has the district added any additional full- or part-time staff to implement bullying provisions? [PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTE's added? • Estimated cost? 	
<p>13b. Has the district purchased any bullying training or prevention curricula or supporting materials (including presentations, training)? [PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What materials/services? • Estimated cost? 	
<p>13c. Does the district receive any funding assistance from the state or other sources to implement bullying provisions? [PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assistance? • What sources? • What dollar amounts? 	
<p>13d. Has the district incurred any other direct costs associated with the implementation of bullying policies or programs? [PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What costs? • What dollar amounts? 	
<p>13e. To what extent has funding been an issue for the schools in your district in implementing anti-bullying policy?</p>	
<p>13f. What have been the most costly aspects of implementing anti-bullying policy (e.g., training, information dissemination, infrastructure development, investigation, liability concerns, and protection)?</p>	
<p>13g. Are there other current initiatives to address safety, school climate and violence prevention other than bullying policy? If so, how do these initiatives either support or impede implementation of bullying policy?</p>	

Policy Application and Effectiveness

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
<p>14. Tell me about some of the challenges associated with implementing the bullying policy in the district? [PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the particular components or requirements of the policy that are most challenging to put into practice? • What is it about these components that makes them challenging? • How have you coped with these challenges? What have you done to resolve them in particular cases? • What (additional) steps would help you put the policy into practice in your district? 	
<p>15. Are there components or requirements in your district's bullying policy that stand out as particularly effective in addressing bullying? If yes, what are these components? What makes these components of the policy effective?</p>	
<p>16. How effective are your school district's bullying policies in reducing bullying problems? [PROBES]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which problems are most effectively addressed? • Which problems are least effectively addressed? • What specific policy components or requirements contribute most to effectiveness? • What specific policy components or requirements contribute the least to effectiveness? 	
<p>17. What advice would you give to others districts that are developing bullying policies and programs?</p>	
<p>18. What kinds of further resources or support would be helpful for your district to address bullying more effectively?</p>	
<p>19. Have district or school site policies ever been evaluated to assess their effectiveness?</p>	