Appendix J
Site Visit Interview Protocol: School Administrator– Student Conduct

U.S. Department of Education State Bullying Laws and Policies Implementation Study
Field Interview Protocol
School Administrator – Student Conduct

The U.S. Department of Education is sponsoring a study about bullying in schools. The purpose of the study is to find out 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 your school campus and your experiences responding to bullying situations. [SCHOOL NAME] has been randomly selected as one of 24 school sites 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 or on this school campus.

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 Administrator Interview – Student Conduct

Respondent Information	
Interview Questions	**Open-Ended Elaboration**
1. How **long have you served as the Vice-Principal at this school**? ○ Less than one year ○ 1-2 years ○ 3 -4 years ○ 5-9 years ○ 10 years or more	
2. What are your specific **roles and responsibilities with regard to preventing or responding to bullying** on your school campus or in your school?	

Problem Definition	
Interview Questions	**Open-Ended Elaboration**
3. **3 Tell me about bullying that happens among students at your school.**	
3a. How do you **recognize a bullying situation** when you see one? What criteria do you use to determine when a conflict between students should be defined as bullying? What challenges do you encounter when determining whether or not an incident constitutes bullying behavior?	
3b. In what ways are bullying **behaviors disruptive?**	
3c. **Where and when** does **bullying** most frequently occur?	
3d. Are there **individual students or groups of students** in your school who are more vulnerable to bullying? If so, who are these students, and why are they more likely to be targeted?	

Development of District/School Site Policy	
Interview Questions	**Open-Ended Elaboration**
4. Tell me about your school's bullying policy.	
4a. Were you **involved in developing the policy**? If yes, what was your role? ○ Yes ○ No	

Development of District/School Site Policy

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
4b. [If school administrator participated in policy development] What challenges did you **encounter in developing the policy**?	
4c. Were there any **areas of disagreement on key policy provisions**? If so, what were the issues and **how were they resolved**?	

Communication

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
5. Tell me about how the policy is communicated to school personnel, students and their families.	
5a. How is the **district policy communicated** to school personnel? ○ Posted on the district website ○ Posted on school campuses ○ Published in the district employee manual ○ Reviewed as part of in-service training ○ Other: _____	
5b. How is the **district policy communicated** to parents and students? ○ Posted on the district website ○ Posted on school campuses ○ Published in the student handbook or code of conduct ○ Directly mailed to parents ○ Discussed with students (e.g., at school assemblies, or in the classroom) ○ Other: _____	
5c. Is the bullying policy **communicated to parents in languages other than English** for students or families with limited English proficiency?	

Reporting/Monitoring

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
6. Tell me about how bullying situations are usually handled.	
6a. What are the **expectations for reporting** by school personnel and students? Is reporting mandatory? ○ Yes, immediate, mandatory reporting by students and school personnel ○ Yes, immediate, mandatory reporting by school personnel ○ Yes, school personnel must intervene to stop bullying; if a situation is unresolved, school personnel must report. ○ No, encouraged reporting only ○ Unaware of reporting requirements	
6b. How do you **enforce reporting expectations**? Are their sanctions for school personnel who fail to report incidents?	
6c. Is there a **designated person on campus** who is responsible for receiving reports or complaints? Who is that person?	
6d. Describe the **procedures for reporting** bullying incidents by school personnel. ○ Must submit a standard reporting or complaint form ○ Must submit report in writing (no standardized form or structure) ○ May submit a verbal report ○ May submit an anonymous report. ○ Other: _____	
6e. Describe the **procedures for reporting** bullying incidents by students or family members. ○ Must submit a standard reporting or complaint form ○ Must submit report in writing (no standardized form or structure) ○ May submit a verbal report ○ Other: _____	
6f. Describe any mechanisms for students to **report bullying problems anonymously**. ○ Allows anonymous procedures ○ Does not allow anonymous reporting procedures	
6g. What happens to reports once they are submitted? How is **information recorded and maintained**?	
6h. What have been some of the most **significant issues or challenges related to reporting** or failing to report bullying behavior?	

Cyberbullying

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
7a. We are interested in understanding more about the issue of cyberbullying among students within your school and how cyberbullying incidents are addressed.	
9a. What are the specific **challenges associated with the identification, reporting, and investigation of cyberbullying incidents**?	
9b. How does your school address concerns regarding **rights of free speech** when responding to cyberbullying incidents?	
9c. Does the school **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 school jurisdiction over off-campus incidents? What are the challenges to enforcement?	
9d. What are the **limits of school jurisdiction over off-campus conduct**? Are there any challenges associated with these limits over jurisdiction?	

Investigations and Written Records

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
8. Tell me about what happens after a bullying incident is initially reported. Describe the steps involved in conducting an investigation.	
8a. Once bullying is reported, **what prompts an investigation**? How do you determine whether student actions warrant an investigation?	
8b. What are the specific **roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in a bullying investigation**?	
8c. Are the families **of the involved students notified of a complaint**? ○ Yes, required parental notification for bullies and victims ○ Yes, required parental notification for bullies only ○ Yes, required parental notification for victims only ○ No parental notification is required	
8d. 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?	
8e. What are the **steps involved in the investigation process**?	

Investigations and Written Records

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
8f. Is there any **written record of the investigation?** Please describe the types of written reports and how they are maintained.	
8g. Are there any **specific timelines required for investigating** bullying complaints?	
8h. Are schools required to **involve the district administration in an investigation or to notify the district of a bullying complaint**?	
8i. Are there any specific **steps taken by the school to safeguard victims or witnesses** from further bullying or retaliation? Describe these safeguards.	
8j. Does the school take any **specific steps to safeguard groups or classes of students** who are frequent targets of bullying?	
8k. What have been some of the most **significant issues or challenges related to investigating** bullying behavior? How have **challenges been addressed or resolved?**	

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.	
9e. What types of **consequences or disciplinary actions are imposed** for students who are involved in bullying?	
9f. Does the school use any **positive behavioral supports or non-punitive consequences** to address students' bullying behavior?	
9g. Are there **prescribed consequences** or do administrators have some flexibility in assigning consequences based on individual circumstances?	
9h. How are decisions made about **reporting to law enforcement when bullying violates criminal law**? Are there established guidelines for law enforcement reporting?	
9i. Does the policy require mandatory **law enforcement reporting for potential criminal violations**? What are the advantages or disadvantages of specific policy provisions?	

Responses to Bullying Behavior

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
9j. How would you **describe the relationship between the school administration and the school resource officer (SRO)** with regard to managing and enforcing bullying problems? Who supervises the SRO?	
9k. What are some of the most **significant challenges enforcing bullying prohibitions**?	

Support for Policy

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
10. We are interested in the degree to which teachers, staff, and the community understand and support the anti-bullying policies in your school.	
10a. What components of the policy receive the strongest support among parents and school personnel?	
10b. What components have received less support? What issues related to these components produce concern?	

Transparency & Monitoring

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
11. Tell me about how information on bullying incidents is monitored and recorded.	
11a. What are the **expectations for data reporting** to the district?	
11b. What is the **structure and format** that you use for reporting data to the district?	
11c. Who is responsible for recording and compiling records?	
11d. What are the **criteria used for determining which types of incidents or complaints are reported** (e.g., all incidents, only incidents that are investigated, only incidents resulting in suspension or expulsion?)	

Transparency & Monitoring

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
11e. How frequently is data reported to the district? ○ Monthly ○ Quarterly ○ Twice per year ○ Annually ○ Other: _____	

Policy Application and Effectiveness

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
12. **Tell me about some of the challenges associated with implementing the bullying policy in your school**. [PROBES] • 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?	
13. Are there components or requirements in your school'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?	
14. How **effective** are your school's bullying policies in reducing bullying problems? [PROBES] • 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?	
15. Have you **observed any changes in the school environment** since the bullying policy has been implemented? ○ Increased awareness of bullying ○ Increased reporting of incidents ○ Increased consistency of enforcement ○ Improved school climate ○ Reduced frequency of bullying ○ Other: _____	

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Policy Application and Effectiveness	
Interview Questions	**Open-Ended Elaboration**
16. What **advice would you give to others schools** that are developing bullying policies and programs?	
17. What **kinds of further support** could the school district provide **to help you deal with bullying more effectively**?	