Appendix H
Site Visit Interview Protocol: State Education Agency (SEA) Representative

The U.S. Department of Education is sponsoring a study about bullying in schools. The purpose of the study is to describe bullying policy implementation within local school districts and school sites. We are interested in determining the factors that facilitate or impede implementation (e.g., legislation, state model policies, and school contextual factors) and identifying lessons from the field that can inform the development of policies and school-based practices to promote positive climate and reduce bullying behavior. We are asking you to share your observations about bullying in schools and your impressions about the policies that are being used to combat bullying behavior in your state. You have been invited to participate in this study because you may be knowledgeable about the development of model policies and guidance for school districts that supports local implementation of laws and policies.

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 with anyone outside of the study team except if required by law. No one in your state education agency 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 states, 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
State Education Agency (SEA) Representative Interview

Respondent Information	
Interview Questions	**Open-Ended Elaboration**
1. What is your **job position and title**?	
2. How **long have you worked for the State Department of Education** in this role? ○　　Less than one year ○　　1-2 years ○　　3 -4 years ○　　5-9 years ○　　10 years or more	
3. What are your **specific professional roles and responsibilities** related to bullying in schools?	
4. How much **time** do you spend on bullying issues? [PROBE] • Could you give an estimate of approximately what percentage of your time? ○　　Less than 5% ○　　5 to 10% ○　　11 to 30% ○　　31 to 50% ○　　51 to 75% ○　　More than 75%	

State Model Policy Development	
Interview Questions	**Open-Ended Elaboration**
5. Tell me about the development of the state model policy on bullying and other technical support and resources that are provided to school districts within your state.	
5a. What **year was the state model bullying policy created**?	
5b. What **prompted the policy's development**?	
5c. Which organizations or departments within your state were **responsible for developing the policy**? ○　School boards association ○　State Department of Education ○　External contractor (e.g., university) ○　Other: _____	

State Model Policy Development

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
5d. Was the policy developed through a **collaborative process**? If so, which stakeholder groups participated? ○ State agency representatives ○ State school boards association representatives ○ District administrators ○ School administrators ○ Teachers ○ Families ○ Students ○ Community groups or organizations (specify) ○ Law enforcement ○ Other: _____ ● Did not involve a collaborative process	
5e. 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?	
5f. What were the **most important influences shaping the development** of the model policy? ○ Research and evidence-base practice ○ State legislative requirements ○ State model policies and guidelines from other states ○ State school boards' association guidelines ○ Other sources	
6. What were some of the most significant challenges in formulating the state model policy? [PROBES] • What specifically **made these challenges difficult**? • To what extent was there **disagreement** on any specific components of the policy? If so, what were the areas of contention? • How were **disagreements resolved**? • In what ways, if any, do **provisions in the state model policy differ from the provisions in state legislation** (e.g., expands on minimum requirements, adopts different definitions, incorporate new components). What was the rationale for these differences?	

Development of District/School Site Policy

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
7. Tell me about the development and review of school district policies.	

Development of District/School Site Policy

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
7a. How was the **state model policy disseminated to school districts** (e.g., memorandums to superintendents, posted on departmental websites)?	
7b. Did the state offer **any additional support to districts to assist with policy development,** such as on-site training or technical support**?** ○ On-site training or technical support ○ Technical support provided by telephone or e-mail ○ Other: _____	
7c. To what extent did districts **utilize the technical support** that was available?	
7d. What were the **most frequent questions or issues raised by districts** that were seeking assistance with their local policies? How were requests for technical assistance documented?	
7e. Were there **established deadlines** for completing school district policies? If so, what was the required date for completion?	
7f. Were districts required to **submit policies for review** by the state to ensure compliance with the law? ○ Yes ○ No	
7g. What is the **process for policy review**? What criteria are applied?	
7h. How frequently are policies reviewed? ○ Upon completion only ○ Annually ○ Other: _____	
7i. Are there any **sanctions imposed on districts** that are not in compliance with state policy requirements? If so, what is the nature of the sanctions and how are they used?	

School Personnel Training

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
8. **Tell me about any additional program resources or supports that the state provides to districts to facilitate policy implementation.**	

School Personnel Training

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
8a. Does the state law require districts **to provide training to school personnel on bullying issues**? ○ State law requires districts to implement school personnel training. ○ State law encourages districts to implement school personnel. ○ State law does not contain expectations regarding personnel training.	
8b. Describe any **resources provided by the state to support training** of school personnel? ○ Technical support for training development ○ In-person training-of-trainers ○ Model training curriculum, materials ○ Web-based tutorials ○ Presentations ○ Links to other training resources ○ Other: _____	
8c. What was the content of the training materials?	
8d. Does the law require districts **to implement school programs or approaches to address bullying** (prevention, intervention, and whole-school approaches to promote school climate)? How do they assist with selection?	

Prevention

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
9. Describe any resources **provided by the state to support the implementation of school programs or approaches to address bullying** (prevention, intervention, and whole-school approaches to promote school climate)? ○ Technical support for prevention program development ○ In-person training-of-trainers ○ Model training curriculum, materials ○ Web-based tutorials ○ Presentations ○ Links to other prevention resources ○ Other: _____	

Transparency & Monitoring

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
10. Tell me about the state department's role in **collecting and compiling incident data**. [REFER TO STATE DATA ON INCIDENT REPORTING GATHERED THROUGH INITIAL SITE CONTACT]	

10a. What are the **expectations for districts to record and report** information on bullying incidents to the state?
[PROBES]
• Are districts required by law to compile and report bullying incidents?
   ○ Districts are required by law to compile and report bullying incidents.
   ○ Districts are not required to compile and report bullying incidents.	

10b. [If district reporting is mandated] Describe the **method that is used for data reporting**. Specifically, are districts **required to report data using a standardized reporting form**?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No	

10c. [If district reporting is mandated] What types of incidents are required to be reported **bullying incident be reported** (*e.g., incidents resulting in suspension or expulsion, or incidents referred to law enforcement*)?
   ○ All bullying incidents reported to the school administration are recorded in incident reports submitted to the state
   ○ Only bullying incidents resulting in a suspension or expulsion for bullying behavior are reported (please define what types of suspension or expulsion, e.g., in-school or out, with or without services)
   ○ Only bullying incidents that constitute criminal offenses are reported to the state
   ○ Other: _____	

10d. Does the department **provide guidance to districts on how specific bullying offenses should be defined** for the purposes of data reporting? If so, what are those guidelines?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No	

10e. How **frequently are districts required to report data to the state**?
   ○ Monthly
   ○ Quarterly
   ○ Twice annually
   ○ Annually
   ○ Other: _____	

Transparency & Monitoring

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
10f. How **frequently is data reviewed** by the department? ○ Monthly ○ Quarterly ○ Twice annually ○ Annually ○ Other: _____	
10g. Are summaries of compiled **incident data disseminated to the public** (e.g., posted on departmental websites)? If so, how is data presented? ○ Yes ○ No	
10h. How is the incident reporting used by the state (e.g., to support planning and program development, to determine how resources should be allocated)? ○ Used to support policy development ○ Used to support program development ○ Used to support decisions regarding resource allocations ○ Used to monitor school district compliance with bullying policies ○ Other: _____	
10i. Are there **sanctions imposed on districts that are not in compliance** with state data reporting requirements? If so, how are sanctions used?	
10j. Are there any actions **taken to address bullying** in districts with more severe and persistent bullying problems?	
10k. What are the **legal concerns for schools related to liability** for bullying behavior?	

Costs to Implement

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
11. **Tell me about the costs of implementing bullying policy for districts.**	
11a. Does state legislation **authorize funding to support implementation of bullying policy requirements**? If yes, what are the sources of funding?	
11b. Is **funding contingent upon compliance** with policy development or data reporting requirements? If so, describe how these determinations are made.	

Costs to Implement

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
11c. To what extent has **funding been an issue for local districts** in implementing anti-bullying policy?	
11d. What have been the **most costly aspects** of implementing anti-bullying policy (e.g., training, information dissemination, infrastructure development, investigation, liability concerns and protection)?	

Policy Application and Effectiveness

Interview Questions	Open-Ended Elaboration
12. What have been the biggest **challenges for districts in addressing traditional bullying behavior** on their school campuses (both direct and indirect forms of aggression)?	
13. Are you aware of any **innovative strategies** that are being used by school districts in your state to combat bullying on their school campuses?	
14. What have been the biggest **challenges for districts in addressing cyberbullying behavior** on their school campuses?	
15. Are you aware of any **innovative strategies** that are being used by school districts in your state to combat cyberbullying on their school campuses?	
16. What have been the **biggest challenges for districts in developing, implementing, and enforcing bullying policies?**	
17. Has your agency **encountered any other challenges related to implementing other legislative requirements**? What are some of these challenges? How have you attempted to resolve them?	