

## Your Question:

You asked for information on how other states have addressed bullying and best practices for prevention.

## Our Response:

According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), at least [20% of students](#) experienced some type of bullying at school in the 2014-2015 school year. There is a growing awareness around bullying and cyberbullying, as well as a growing interest in improving prevention efforts. Several states across the nation have introduced legislation aimed at reducing bullying in schools and so far, in 2018, at least 8 bills have passed directly related to bullying. For further information on laws across the 50-states, this [Compendium of School Discipline Laws](#), provides statutory information related to school discipline, including information on [anti-bullying provisions](#).

The United States Department of Health and Human Services [StopBullying](#) website identifies [key components](#) of state anti-bullying laws and provides information on [each state's policies](#).

These policies typically attempt to:

- establish definitions of bullying and cyberbullying
- create procedures for reporting and responding to bullying
- record and report instances of bullying
- create sanctions for bullying
- provide resources for those involved.

Below is a sampling of recent state legislation related to this topic as well as further resources on best practices for bullying prevention and related topics for your review.

## State Policy Examples

ECS tracks education-related legislation across the 50-states and provides summaries of enacted and vetoed legislation in the [state policy database](#). Below is a sampling of state policies that have been enacted in 2018. For a more comprehensive list for this year and previous years, please visit the portion of our tracking system dedicated to [school safety and bullying](#).

- [Alabama HB 366](#) expands the Student Harassment Prevention Act to include instances of bullying and cyberbullying. This bill requires schools to address bullying and student violence with faculty and students at the beginning of each school year and requires publication of a harassment or bullying complaint form on the website, in a student handbook and in other specified locations.
- [California AB 2291](#) requires local education agencies to adopt procedures for prevention acts of bullying, including cyberbullying. The State Department of Education must post and annually update lists of online training modules related to bullying and prevention and schools must make those trainings available to school employees on an annual basis.
- [Colorado SB 18-151](#) requires the Department of Education to research approaches, policies and practices related to bullying prevention and education. The Department must develop a model policy by July 2019 as guidance for districts and charter schools in implementation.
- [Indiana HB 1230](#) requires the Department of Education to maintain a link on its website to provide parents and school officials with resources or best practices on the prevention and reporting of bullying and cyberbullying. [HB 1356](#) provides that a school is not required to report the number of bullying incidents in its

annual school performance report and prohibits information reported related to incidents of bullying from being used in the calculation of a school's performance grade. The Department of Education must send annual notifications to schools explaining the school's obligation to submit a report detailing the number of bullying incidents that occurred and explaining that the Department may conduct an audit of the school to ensure accurate reporting.

- [Maryland HB 1600](#) changes the composition of the Baltimore County Anti-Bullying Task Force to include more principals and school counselors. [SB 725](#) alters the model policy to address bullying, harassment or intimidation to include procedures for providing notice to a parent or guardian of the alleged victim within 3 business days and to the alleged perpetrator within 5 business days.

### **Further Resources**

The conversation around bullying is often tied to suicide prevention efforts in schools. For further information on this topic, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has published a 50 state scan of [state statutes for suicide prevention in schools](#). Additionally, the Heard Alliance (Health Care Alliance for Response to Adolescent Depression) has compiled a [Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention](#), which includes sections on student, staff and community education as well as school climate.

**Best Practices in Bullying Prevention**: This list—published by the West Virginia Department of Education—synthesizes information from the federal StopBullying initiative as well as an academic article on bullying prevention.

**How to Prevent Bullying**: Several resources outlined on [stopbullying.gov](#), including information on prevention at school, parent and student engagement, and policies and rules.

**Data Highlights on School Climate and Safety in our Nation's Public Schools** – Office of Civil Rights (2018): This survey of all schools in the United States provides information on allegations harassment or bullying on the basis of sex, race, disability status, sexual orientation and religion.