

Bullying Data Collection- Annual Report

This report is submitted pursuant to Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 which amended G.L. c.71, §37O, the anti-bullying statute, and was signed into law on April 24, 2014. It includes information from school years 2014-2015 through 2017-2018.

June 2019

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Commissioner

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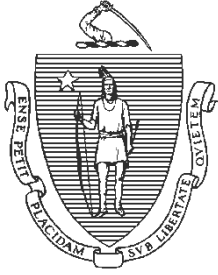
Inquiries regarding the Department's compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the Human Resources Director, 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA 02148-4906. Phone: 781-338-6105.

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Jeffrey C. Riley
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June 14, 2019

Dear Members of the General Court and Attorney General Healey:

I am pleased to submit this Report to the Legislature: *Bullying Data - Annual Report* for school year 2014-2015 (SY15), SY16, SY17, and SY18. The bullying data provided in this report was compiled from information submitted by school districts to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) via the [School Safety Discipline Report](#) (SSDR). Data for each school district can be found on the Department's [Student Discipline Data Report](#) available on the [School and District Profiles](#) web pages.

Prepared in consultation with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, this report provides information about data collected via the SSDR since the inception of the requirement, including SY15, SY16, SY17, and SY18.

If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact Anne Gilligan, Safe and Healthy Schools Coordinator, in the Office of Student and Family Support via agilligan@doe.mass.edu or 781-338-6309.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) respectfully submits this Report to the Legislature: *Bullying Data - Annual Report* pursuant to Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014. This report was prepared in consultation with the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office.

“Each school district, charter school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall annually report bullying incident data to the department. The data shall include, but not be limited to: (i) the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation; (ii) the number and nature of substantiated incidents of bullying or retaliation; (iii) the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying or retaliation; and (iv) any other information required by the department. Said incident data shall be reported in the form and manner established by the department, in consultation with the attorney general; provided, that the department shall minimize the costs and resources needed to comply with said reporting requirements; and provided further, that the department may use existing data collection and reporting mechanisms to collect the information from school districts. The department shall analyze the bullying incident data and shall publish an annual report containing aggregate statewide information on the frequency and nature of bullying in schools. The department shall file the annual report with the attorney general and with the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives who shall forward the same to the chairs of the joint committee on education, the joint committee on the judiciary and the house and senate committees on ways and means.”

Number of Substantiated Incidents of Bullying

The bullying data compiled from the Department’s School Safety Discipline Report (SSDR) data collection is provided in the tables below. Bullying data for each school district can be found on the Department’s website on the [Student Discipline Data Report](#) under the topic “Bullying” in the drop down menu.

Data has been available on the Department’s website since school year 2012-2013 (SY13). This report encompasses data collected via the SSDR since the inception of the requirement for SY15, SY16, SY17, and SY18. The SSDR currently collects data on the number of substantiated incidents of bullying, and the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying. To further ensure that districts are reporting incidents of bullying consistently and accurately, the Department plans to provide training and technical assistance on all required data collection elements enumerated in the legislation. More consistent and uniform reporting will also allow for data analysis to more accurately determine reductions or other changes in bullying related behaviors.

Table 1: Massachusetts Public School Bullying Totals, School Year 2014-2015 (SY15)-SY18

School Year	Number of Substantiated Bullying Incidents Reported	Unduplicated Count of Students with a Removal Discipline for Bullying*	Number of Districts Reporting Incidents
2014-2015 (SY15)	2,245	1,020	197
2015-2016 (SY16)	2,014	948	217
2016-2017 (SY17)	1,971	936	205
2017-2018 (SY18)	1,935	915	267

*Removals include In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions, Emergency Removals, and Removals to an Alternative Setting.

Table 2: Distribution of MA Public School Students with Bullying Disciplines by Grade, School Year 2014-2015 (SY15)-SY18

GRADE	SY15		SY16		SY17		SY18	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Pre-K	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Kindergarten	4	0.4	1	0.1	3	0.3	2	0.2
1	3	0.3	6	0.6	8	0.9	8	0.9
2	23	2.3	20	2.1	18	1.9	13	1.4
3	29	2.8	28	3.0	20	2.1	27	3.0
4	72	7.1	59	6.2	42	4.5	49	5.4
5	92	9.0	93	9.8	72	7.7	96	10.5
6	137	13.4	169	17.8	136	14.5	122	13.3
7	159	15.6	155	16.4	167	17.8	133	14.5
8	186	18.2	143	15.1	182	19.4	178	19.5
9	150	14.7	122	12.9	111	11.9	121	13.2
10	80	7.8	84	8.9	78	8.3	85	9.3
11	50	4.9	40	4.2	57	6.1	52	5.7
12	34	3.3	27	2.8	42	4.5	29	3.2
SP*	0	0.0	1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Student Totals	1,020	100	948	100	936	100	915	100
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*Beyond grade 12 special education student

Table 3: Distribution of MA Public School Students with Bullying Disciplines by Student Group, School Year 2014-2015 (SY15)-SY18

STUDENT GROUP	SY15		SY16		SY17		SY18	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Female	307	30.1	295	31.1	286	30.6	279	30.5
Male	713	69.9	653	68.9	650	69.4	636	69.5
African American/Black	193	18.9	198	20.9	153	16.3	137	15.0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	5	0.5	1	0.1	2	0.2	2	0.2
Asian	14	1.4	18	1.9	30	3.2	19	2.1
Hispanic or Latino	367	36.0	323	34.1	345	36.9	291	31.8
Multi-race, Non-Hispanic or Latino	23	2.3	34	3.6	34	3.6	38	4.2
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0.1	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.1
White	417	40.9	373	39.3	372	39.7	427	46.7
Economically Disadvantaged	586	57.5	555	58.5	581	62.1	554	60.5
English Learner	91	8.9	105	11.1	119	12.7	105	11.5
High Needs	756	74.1	697	73.5	702	75.0	698	76.3
Students with Disabilities	381	37.4	339	35.8	323	34.5	347	37.9
Student Totals	1,020	100	948	100	936	100	915	100

Number of Alleged Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation and Nature of Substantiated Incidents of Bullying or Retaliation

While some elements of the statute can be incorporated into current data collection systems, developing a uniform definition for alleged incidents of bullying and collecting information on the nature of bullying incidents presents a more complex challenge.

The Department has engaged stakeholders to contribute to the process of developing a uniform protocol to assist school districts in accurately collecting and reporting alleged incidents of bullying or retaliation data. Data collection for the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation will begin during SY20.

Additionally, as it may present significant challenges for districts to uniformly categorize and report information on the nature of substantiated bullying and retaliation incidents, the Department has engaged stakeholders to contribute to the process of developing a uniform protocol to assist school districts in accurately collecting and reporting data to meet this requirement as well. Confirming a process to collect and report on information about the nature of incidents will take place during SY20. Associated data collection will begin during SY21, and information will be included in subsequent annual reports.