Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation in Maryland Public Schools

A Report to the Maryland General Assembly on Incidents Reported under the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005

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BULLYING, HARASSMENT, OR INTIMIDATION IN MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

The Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 became effective on July 1, 2005. Pursuant to Section 7-424 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is to require all county boards of education and the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners to report incidents of harassment or intimidation against students in public schools within jurisdiction to the Maryland General Assembly. Additionally, the MSDE was required to create and distribute a *Standard Victim of Harassment or Intimidation Report Form*, and submit a report to the Maryland General Assembly consisting of a summary of information included in victim of harassment and intimidation forms filed with local boards during the previous school year.

To ensure the law was implemented according to reporting requirements, the first reporting period of the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 encompassed the first semester of the 2005-2006 school year. The information contained in the first report to the General Assembly represented this time period. Reports submitted after the 2005-2006 school year included data from both the first and second semesters.

On July 1, 2008, the General Assembly amended the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005. Education Article Chapter 687 removed the sunset requirement of the original Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005. Thus, the requirements of that law remain in effect unless changed by future legislation. Education Article Chapter 683 added a provision to the original law, which permitted school staff members to use the same incident reporting form previously available to only students, parents, or close adult relatives of a student.

On July 7, 2008, a memorandum was sent by the State Superintendent of Schools to local superintendents of the twenty-four local education agencies (LEAs) describing changes to the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 now required by Chapter 683 and Chapter 687. On August 13, 2008, information about changes to the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 and copies of the updated forms were provided electronically to school system personnel responsible for fulfilling the requirements of the Safe Schools Reporting Act in the twenty-four LEAs. This same information and forms were shared with the Directors of Student Services from LEAs at an administrative meeting on October 15, 2008 and has been shared annually every October since that time.

Lastly, Education Article Chapter 489 required the Maryland State Board of Education to develop a model anti-bullying policy (Model Policy) in collaboration with school system representatives by March 31, 2009. The Model Policy was developed according to the requirements of Section 7-424.1 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland and was formally adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education on February 24, 2009. The Model Policy was forwarded to the twenty-four LEAs in the State and used as a basis for developing their own anti-bullying policies as required by law. All twenty-four LEAs submitted copies of their anti-bullying policies to the State Superintendent of Schools on or before July 1, 2009. The

amendments to the law retained all requirements of the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005, expanded the definition of bullying, harassment, or intimidation, and added a definition for electronic communication.

Pursuant to legislation passed during the 2016 session of the Maryland General Assembly (Chapter 262) and in consultation with LEAs, the Model Policy was updated to expand the language of electronic communication to include photographs, audio recording, video recording, and/or text messages sent by way of the internet. The updated Model Policy introduced the term cyberbullying, which means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including the use of social media sites. Local education agencies were required to update their bullying policies to reflect the changes in Maryland's Model Policy. The reporting and investigative forms have been updated in order to keep up with technology and to track more data fields, which include bullying, harassment, and intimidation behaviors.

This report describes the process used by the MSDE to carry out the mandates of this law. The reporting period for this report encompasses the 2016-2017 school year, including both the first and second semesters. The findings from LEA reports are detailed, including incident rates, location of the incidents, descriptions of the incidents, ages of victims, ages of perpetrators, alleged motives of offender's, investigative methods used, corrective actions taken by schools, number of days missed by victims and perpetrators, and the number of false allegations reported.

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, OR INTIMIDATION REPORTING FORM

To comply with the law, the MSDE was tasked with developing forms that included the elements required. In July 2005, the MSDE assembled a group of stakeholders that included representatives from several LEAs and representatives from the mental health profession. With guidance from the Office of the Attorney General, the group worked to reach consensus on forms and procedures that would fulfill the intent of the legislation. As a result of meetings with stakeholders, a spreadsheet was developed to ensure accurate and consistent collection of data from all LEAs.

The *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form* is a standard form to be used by all public schools and cannot be modified. Similarly, the investigation form entitled the *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident School Investigation Form* is a standard form to be used by all public schools and cannot be modified. The school system reporting instrument is titled the *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident Reporting Instrument*. Draft forms were sent to Directors of Student Services, school counseling supervisors, and supervisors of safe and drug-free schools for comment. The 2016-2017 *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form* was modified to include discrete data points under the heading "Alleged Motives." Those data points are: (1) determined not to be bullying, (2) determined not to be harassment, and (3) determined not to be intimidation. Additionally, under "Corrective Actions," the following data points were added: (1) determined not to be bullying, (2) determined not to be harassment, (3) determined not to be intimidation, (4) determined as a conflict and not bullying, harassment or intimidation, (5) none, no bullying occurred, (6) none, no harassment occurred, and (7) none, no intimidation occurred. These data points were added to further distinguish between substantiated and unsubstantiated reports of bullying, harassment and/or intimidation (See Appendix B). Finalized forms were sent to local superintendents for review and comment.

Where possible, and in keeping with the decision to include only elements mandated by law, comments and suggestions were incorporated into the forms.

A major concern not addressed in the law was the retention of the processed forms. An Advice of Council letter dated December 20, 2005 stated that the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) defines student records as records that are directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution. The Maryland Student Records System Manual, authorized by COMAR 13A.08.02, mirrors FERPA's definition and states that, "Records are information recorded in any way, including but not limited to handwriting, print, computer media, video or audiotape, film, microfilm, or microfiche." Therefore, given the information contained in the harassment and intimidation forms, the Advice of Council concluded that Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation forms are student records for both the victim and the perpetrator. Due to school staff concerns regarding this issue, an amendment to Section 7-424 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland was submitted during the 2007 General Assembly session. Chapter 398 amends Education Article §7-424 to preclude these forms from becoming part of a student's record. It was deemed that the inclusion of these forms in a student's record might be detrimental to a victim or unfair to an alleged offender if a harassment/intimidation accusation was determined to be false or to contain incorrect information. Chapter 398 was passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor. Therefore, Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation forms are no longer required to be part of a student's record.

FINDINGS

Implementation of the Law by Local Education Agencies

In June 2017, copies of all updated forms and directions pertaining to the Safe Schools Reporting Act were sent electronically to LEA personnel responsible for fulfilling requirements of the Safe Schools Reporting Act. In July 2017, a memorandum was sent by the State Superintendent of Schools to local superintendents as a reminder of the requirements of the Safe Schools Reporting Act. The 24 LEAs and the SEED School of Maryland reported data for the 2016-2017 school year. This report provides a comparison of the reported information for three complete school years. On each graph, 2014-2015 school year information is presented in gray, 2015-2016 school year information is presented in light blue, and 2016-2017 school year information is presented in purple.

Incident Rates

A total of 6,091 bullying incidents were reported for the 2016-2017 school year. This represents a statewide increase of 1,386 (32.75%) reported incidents from the 2015-2016 school year. The number of reported incidents in each LEA is presented in Figure 1; the rate of reported bullying incidents per 1,000 students enrolled during the 2016-2017 school year is shown in Table 1. Six LEAs indicated a decrease in the number of reported incidents while 17 LEAs and the Seed School of Maryland indicated an increase. Baltimore City Public Schools' total (490) remained the same as last year. Information is based on 23 LEAs, Baltimore City Public Schools, and the SEED School of Maryland.

Baltimore County Public Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools, Prince George's County Public Schools, and Anne Arundel County Public Schools had the most reports of incidents filed. Baltimore County reported the most incidents with a total of 901 and a rate of 8.0 incidents per 1,000 enrolled students. Following Baltimore County was Montgomery County with 870 incidents and 5.5 incidents per 1,000 students, and Prince George's County with 738 incidents with 5.6 incidents per 1,000 students. Montgomery County's rate of incidents increased approximately 43 percent from last year's reported total. Baltimore City, Kent County Public Schools, Dorchester County Public Schools, and Wicomico County Public Schools reported the most incidents relative to enrollment (See Table 1).

Four school systems (Dorchester, Kent, Somerset, and Wicomico) and the SEED School of Maryland presented with a higher number of reported incidents relative to enrollment (Table 1) are school systems with a smaller overall student enrollment. Dorchester County reported incidents of bullying, harassment, and intimidation declined for the 2016-2017 school year, going from 71 total incidents and 15.0 incidents per 1,000 students to 48 total incidents and 10.0 incidents per 1000 students. Similarly, Kent County declined in the 2016-2017 school year, going from 33 total incidents and 16.3 incidents per 1,000 students to 19 total incidents and 9.5 incidents per 1,000 students.

The 2016-2017 school year marked the seventh year during which bullying prevention programming was required to be presented by the LEAs to students, staff, and volunteers.

Bullying prevention models and frameworks such as Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), Olweus, Character Counts, Restorative Practices, and Two Way Texting are used throughout the LEAs. Anti-bullying programming has heightened awareness of the issue among school communities. Increased community understanding may be a contributing factor to the overall increase in reported incidents.

The variation in reported incidents across school systems may reflect differences among levels of awareness of parents and students. School staff have an understanding of bullying and the importance of reporting and investigating incidents. Parents and students who are more aware of the need to report bullying incidents and the assistance that school staff can provide are more likely to report such incidents.

All twenty-four LEAs have implemented system-wide and school-wide bullying awareness and prevention programs. All twenty-four LEAs have a Bullying and Harassment form online. Forms can now be filled out and submitted electronically.

Figure 1: Number of Reported Incidents by Local School System and the SEED School

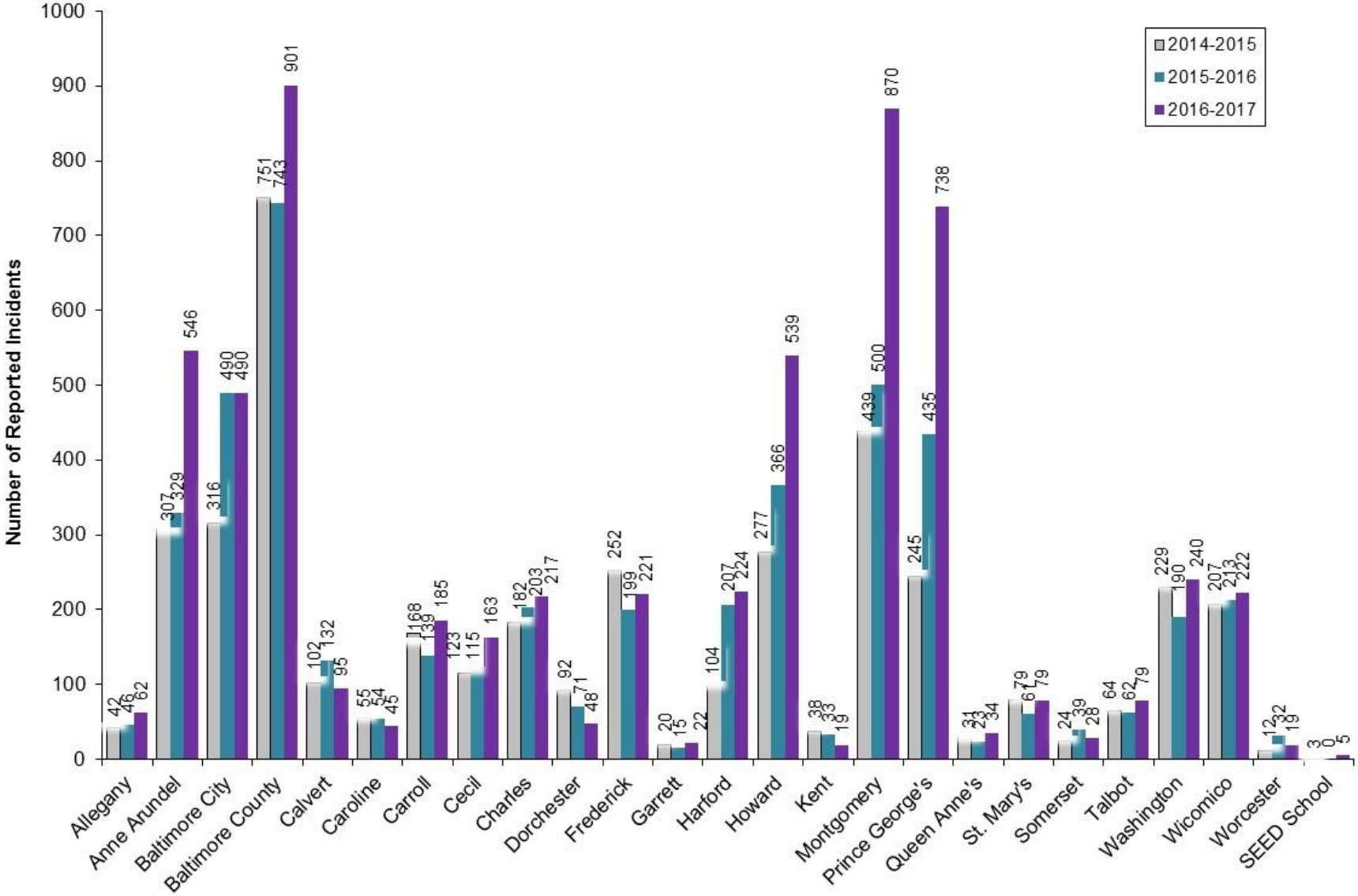


Table 1: Number of Reported Incidents Relative to Enrollment by Local School System

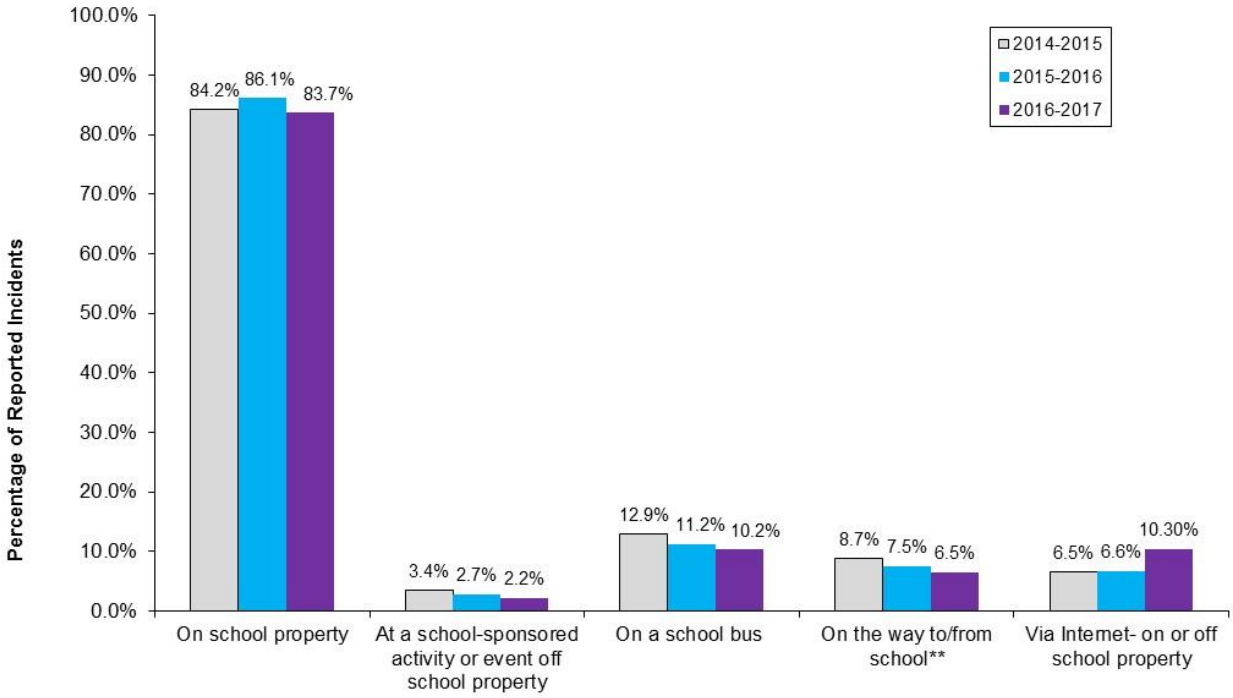
Number of Reported Incidents Per 1000 Enrolled Students			
	School Year		
Local Education Agency	**2014-2015**	**2015-2016**	**2016-2017**
Allegany	4.7	5.2	7.1
Anne Arundel	3.9	4.1	6.7
Baltimore City	3.7	4.4	5.9
Baltimore County	6.8	9.0	8.0
Calvert	6.4	8.2	6.0
Caroline	9.8	9.6	7.9
Carroll	6.5	5.4	7.3
Cecil	7.3	7.8	10.4
Charles	6.9	7.7	8.2
Dorchester	19.2	15.0	10.0
Frederick	6.2	4.9	5.3
Garrett	5.2	3.9	5.7
Harford	2.8	5.5	6.0
Howard	5.2	6.7	9.7
Kent	18.0	16.3	9.5
Montgomery	2.8	3.2	5.5
Prince George's	1.9	3.4	5.6
Queen Anne's	4.0	3.0	4.4
St. Mary's	4.4	3.4	4.4
Somerset	8.2	13.4	9.5
Talbot	13.8	13.4	17.2
Washington	10.3	8.5	10.6
Wicomico	14.2	14.4	14.9
Worcester	1.8	4.8	2.8

Note: The SEED school is not included on this table because it is only one school with a relatively small enrollment. Data cannot be expressed in terms of incidents per 1000.

Locations of Incidents

The majority of incidents occurred on school property (83.7%). The second largest number of incidents occurred remotely via internet (10.3%), followed by incidents on the school buses (10.2%). It should be noted that each incident report could identify more than one location therefore, the percentages do not total 100 percent.

Figure 2: Statewide Locations of Reported Incidents

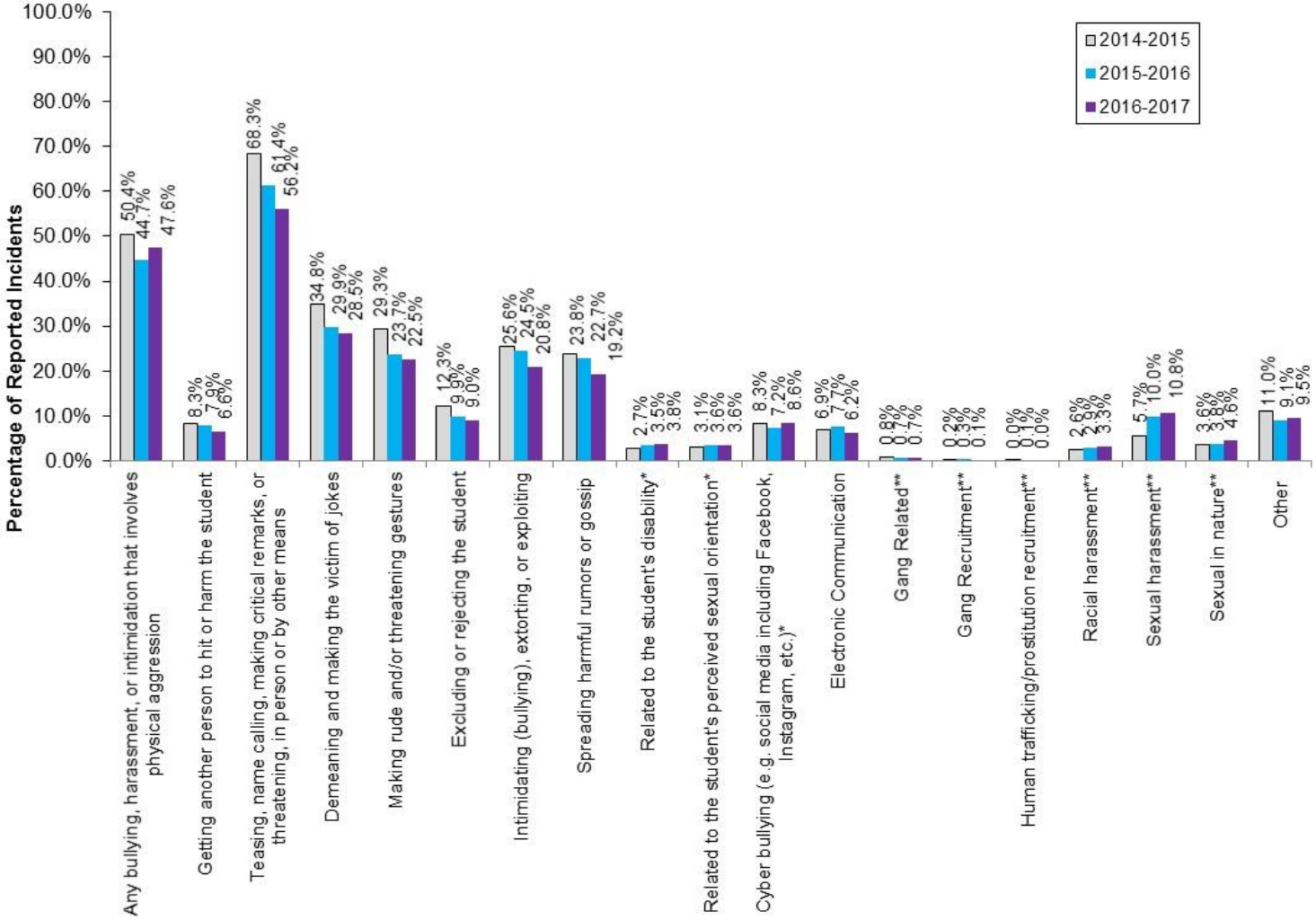


***** Note: The "Via internet" was is a new category added in SY 2014-2015.
Note: In 2016-2017, the MSDE began to break out category of Internet by "On School Property" and "Off School Property" but collapsed this category for reporting due to some LEAs having difficulty capturing data as two separate categories.

Descriptions of Incidents

In order to describe the incident, individuals completing the reporting form were asked to choose from a list of descriptions. The list was compiled from research of the most prevalent forms of bullying (see *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form*). The largest number of incidents involved the category of "teasing, name-calling, making critical remarks, or threatening in person or by other means" (56.2%). Direct verbal bullying/harassment was reported as being experienced more than other forms, such as physical bullying, exclusion, gestures, extorting, or spreading rumors. Over 47 percent of incidents was reported to involve some form of physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair-pulling or throwing an object (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Statewide Descriptions of Reported Incidents

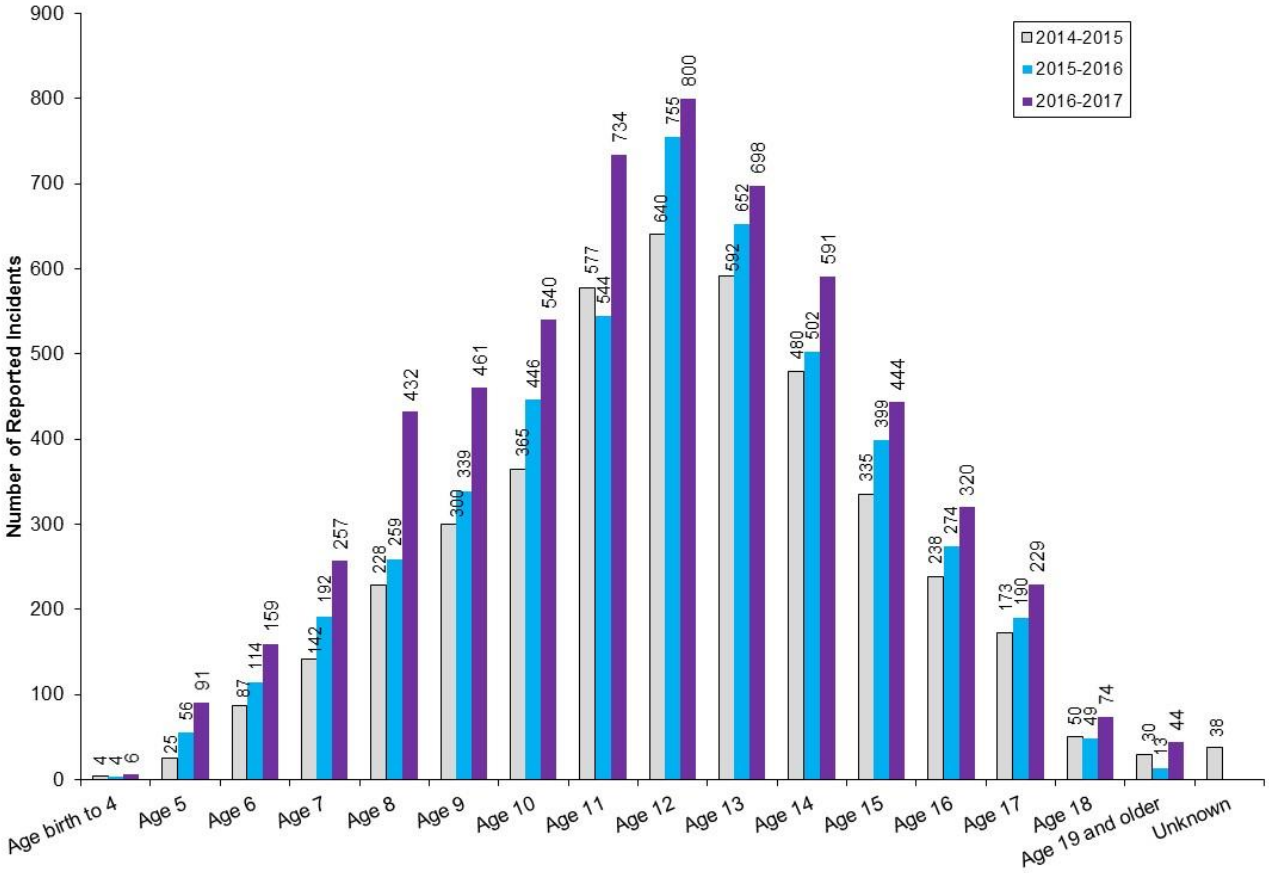


*Description category added in SY 2013-2014
** Description category added in SY 2014-2015
Note: Each incident report could identify more than one description; therefore, the percentages do not total 100%.

Ages of Victims

The ages of victims involved in bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation incidents ranged from 4 years of age to 19 years of age or older. The majority of the victims were between 9 years of age and 15 years of age. There was an increase in incidents for all ages. However according to submitted reports, students 12 years of age were frequent victims (800 incidents). This is similar to the 2017 data, which indicated that 12-year olds were the most frequent victims of bullying, harassment, and intimidation. There was a 26 percent increase in the number of 11-year-old victims (734). This remains consistent with research that indicates that more bullying and harassment occurs in middle school rather than in elementary or high schools.

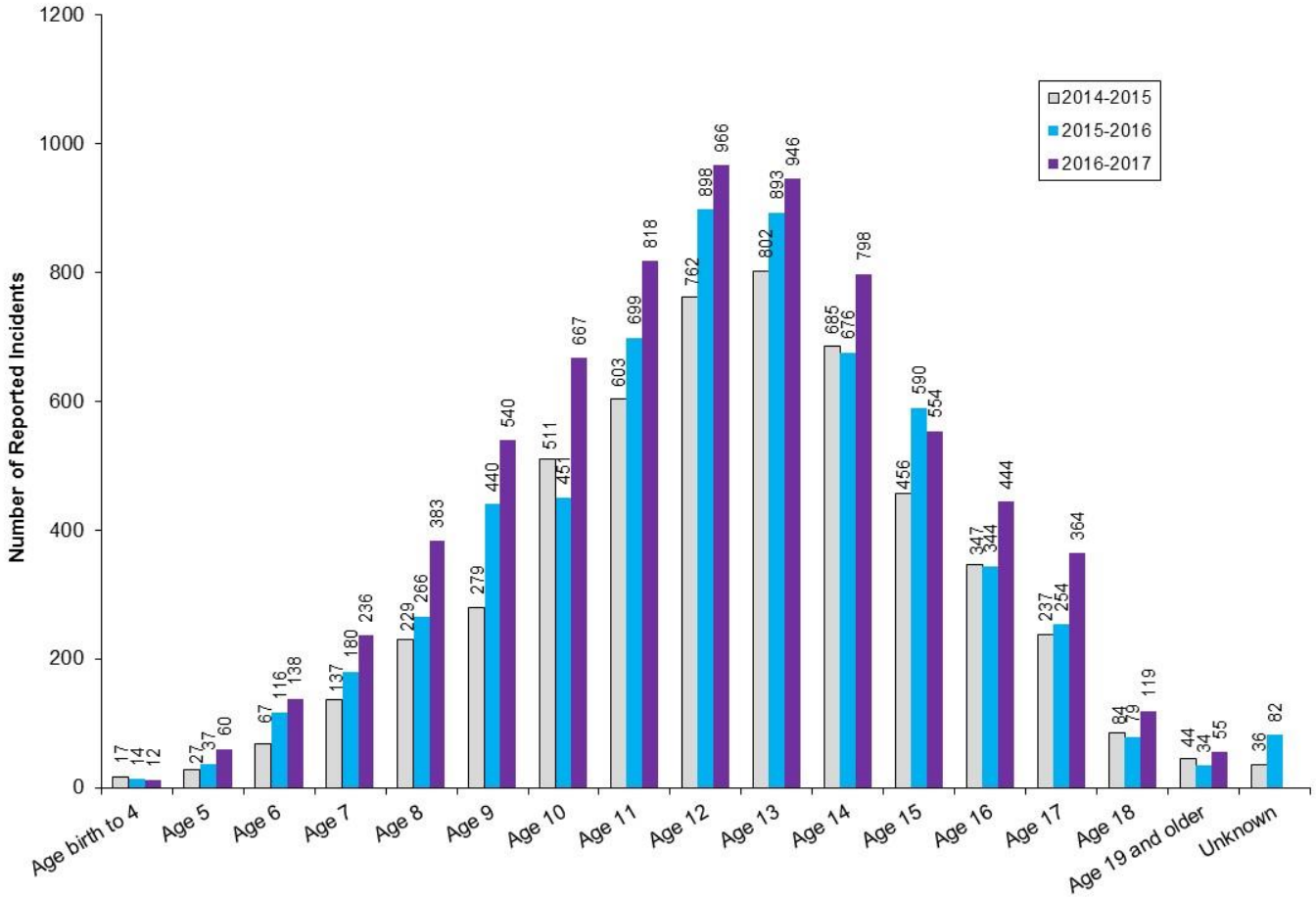
Figure 4: Statewide Ages of Victims



Ages of Alleged Offenders

The ages of all offenders ranged from 4 years to age 19 years of age or older. The majority of offenders were between the ages of 10 years of age and 15 years of age. The greatest number of incidents were committed by 12-year-olds (966 incidents) (see Figure 5). This pattern has been consistent for the eight previous reports. This indicates that the majority of alleged offenders are middle school age students.

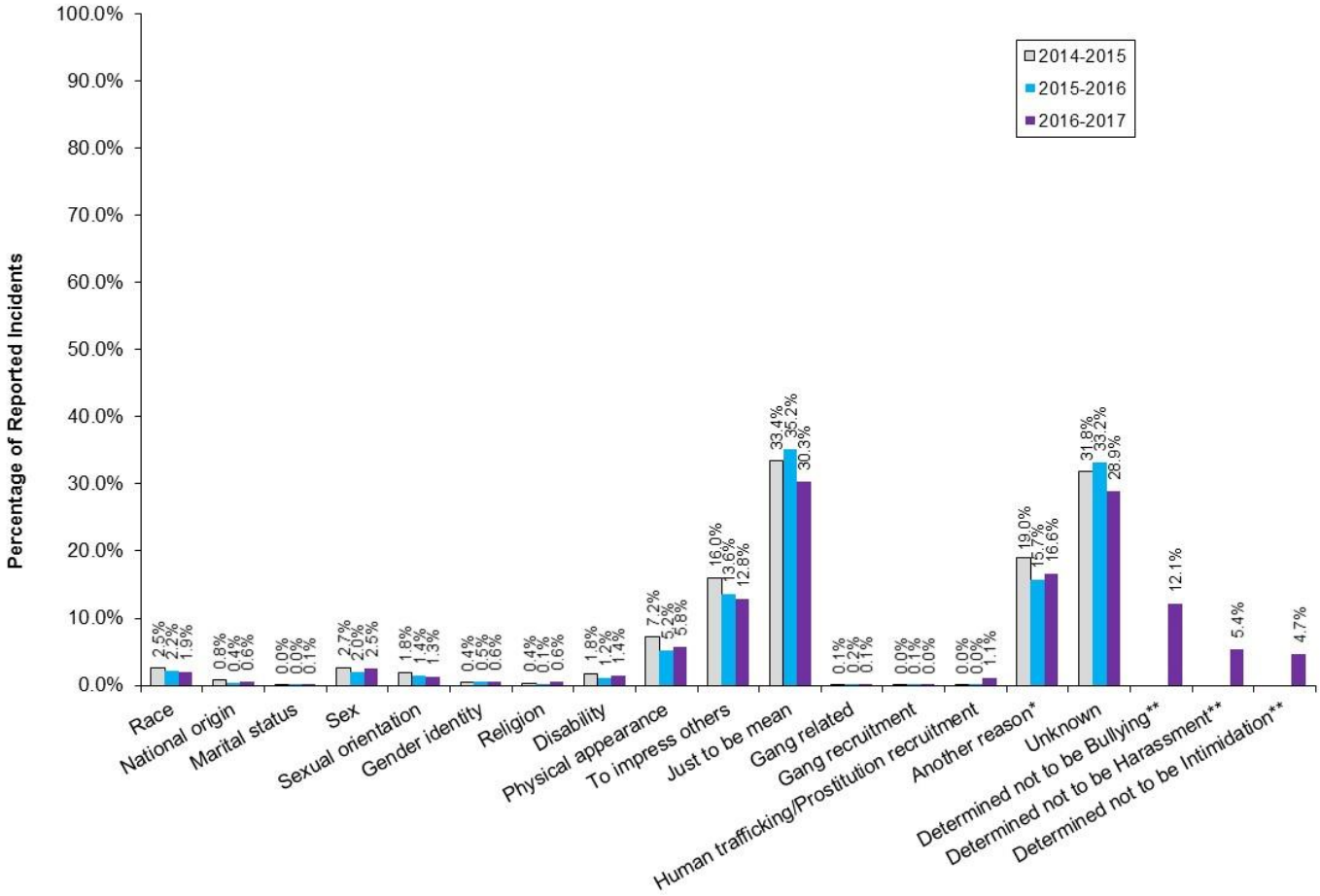
Figure 5: Statewide Ages of Alleged Offenders



Alleged Offender's Motives

The *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form* listed motives that were specified in the law and others that were gathered from research as to reasons why students bully other students. The motives reported are presented in Figure 6. The motive most frequently cited was "just to be mean" (30.3%). Nearly 29 percent of the incidents were allegedly perpetrated for unknown reasons, followed by "another reason" (16.6%), "to impress others" (12.8%), "physical appearance" (5.8%), "race" (1.9%), and "sex" (2.5%). The remaining incidents were allegedly perpetrated due to "national origin", "gender identity", "disability", and "religion" and collectively made up slightly more than three percent of motives for bullying.

Figure 6: Statewide Description of Alleged Motives as Reported by Investigator

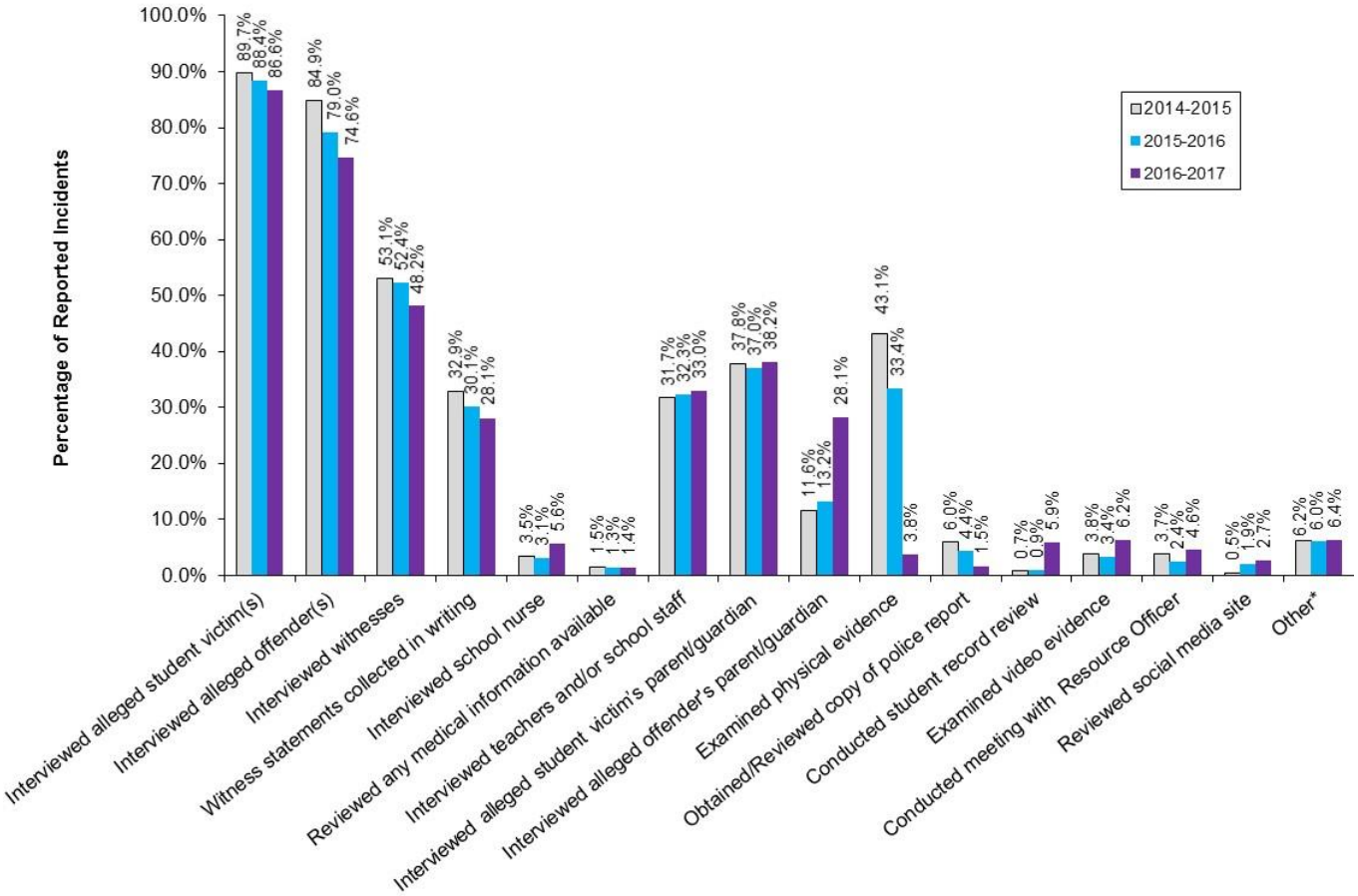


*Category added in SY 2014-2015.
**New category added in SY 2016-2017.
Note: Each school investigation form could identify more than one alleged motive; therefore, the percentages do not total 100%.

Description of the Investigations

A variety of investigative methods were developed and utilized by school staff investigating bullying incidents. The most frequent investigative methods included interviews of student victims (86.6%), interviews of alleged offenders (74.6%), interviews of witnesses (48.2%), interviews of alleged offender's parent/guardian (28.1%), interviews of teachers or school staff (33.0%), and witness statements collected in writing (28.1%) (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Statewide Methods Used to Investigate Incident as Reported by Investigator

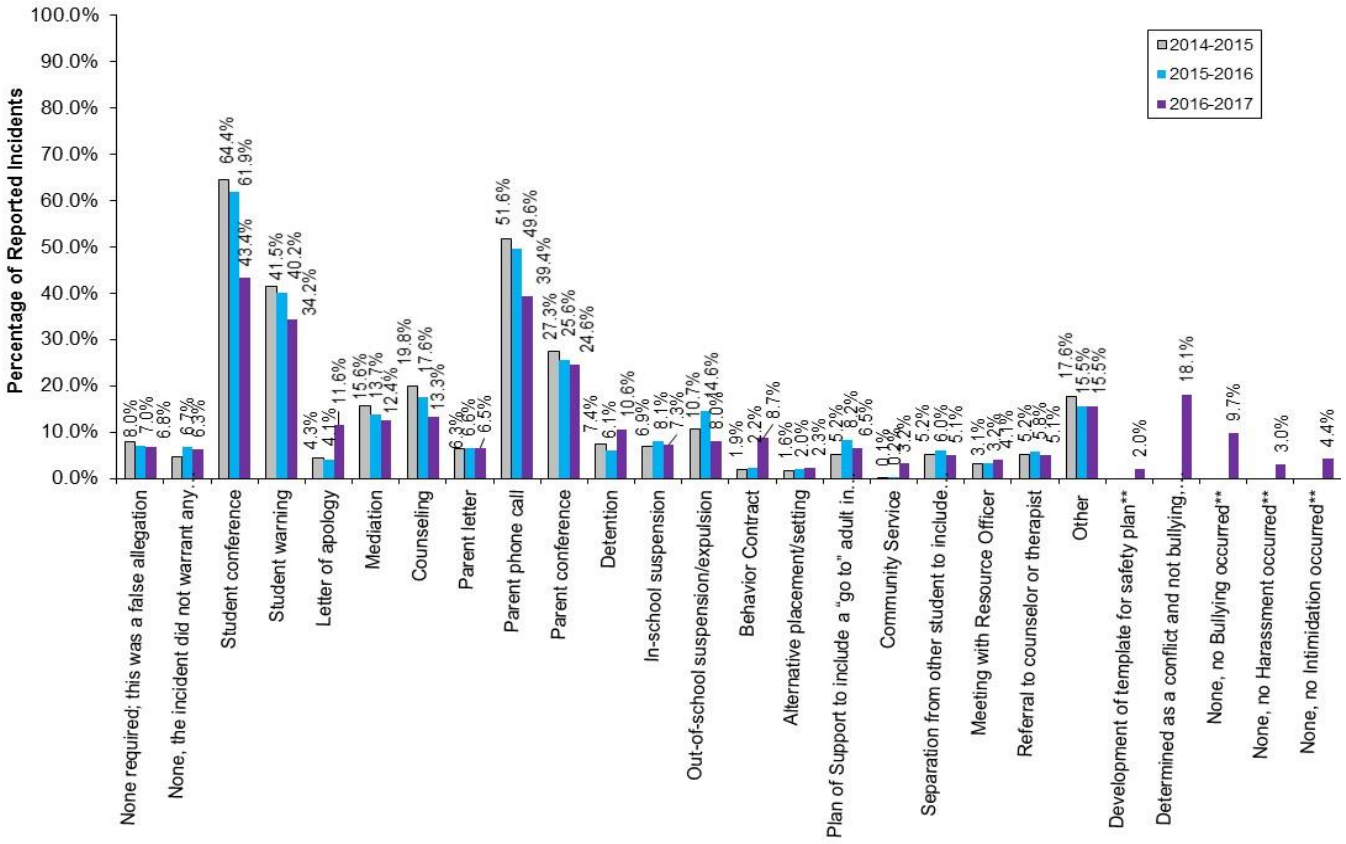


*Categories added in SY 2014-2015. The names of some of the categories were updated.
Note: Each school investigation form could identify more than one alleged motive; therefore, the percentages do not total 100%.

Corrective Actions Taken

Corrective action was taken in reported incidents that were not false allegations. Four data points were added in order to distinguish between substantiated and unsubstantiated reports of bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation. Those categories, and the percent of incidents that fell into those categories, were as follows: (1) determined as a conflict and not bullying and harassment or intimidation (18.1%); (2) none, no bullying occurred (9.7%); (3) none, no harassment occurred (3%); and (4) none, no intimidation occurred (4.4%). The most frequently used corrective action was student conferences at 43.4 percent, which is an 18.5 percent decrease from 2015-2016. Parent phone calls at 39.4 percent was the second most used corrective action, which was a decline of nearly 10 percent from 2015-2016. Other corrective actions included student warnings (34.2%) and out- of-school suspensions or expulsions (8%). Out-of-school suspensions and expulsions experienced a 6.6 percent decrease from 2015-2016. Counseling was offered in 13.3 percent of the incidents; a 4.5 percent decrease from 2015-2016. As schools work toward reducing suspension and providing positive interventions, student and parent engagement are considered effective ways to change behaviors.

Figure 8: Statewide Corrective Actions Taken as Reported by Investigator

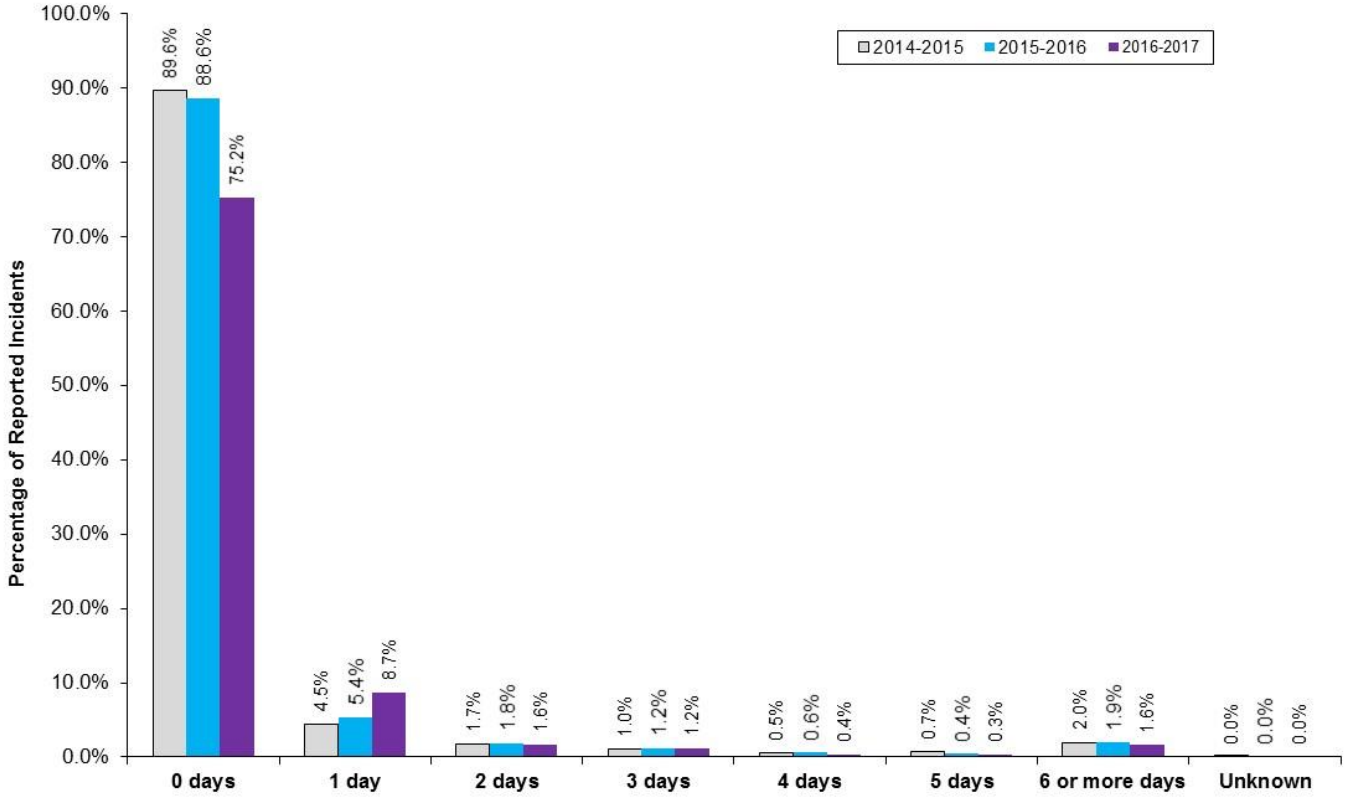


*Category added in SY 2014-2015. **New Category added in SY 2016-2017
Note: Each school investigation form could identify more than one alleged motive; therefore, the percentages do not total 100%

Number of Days Missed from School by Victims

As a group, victims missed few school days due to incidents of bullying, harassment, and intimidation. In 2016-2017, victims of bullying, harassment, and intimidation missed school in 13.8 percent of cases. This represents an increase of 2.5 percent compared to the 2015-2016 report of 11.3 percent (see Figure 9). A majority of students victimized by bullying, harassment, and, intimidation missed at least one day of school (8.7%). It is noted that 75.2 percent of bullying, harassment, and, intimidation incidents resulted in zero missed days of school. This represents a 13.4 percent decrease from last year's total of 88.6 percent. It is unknown from the data whether victims missed school due to injury, fear of attending, or other reasons.

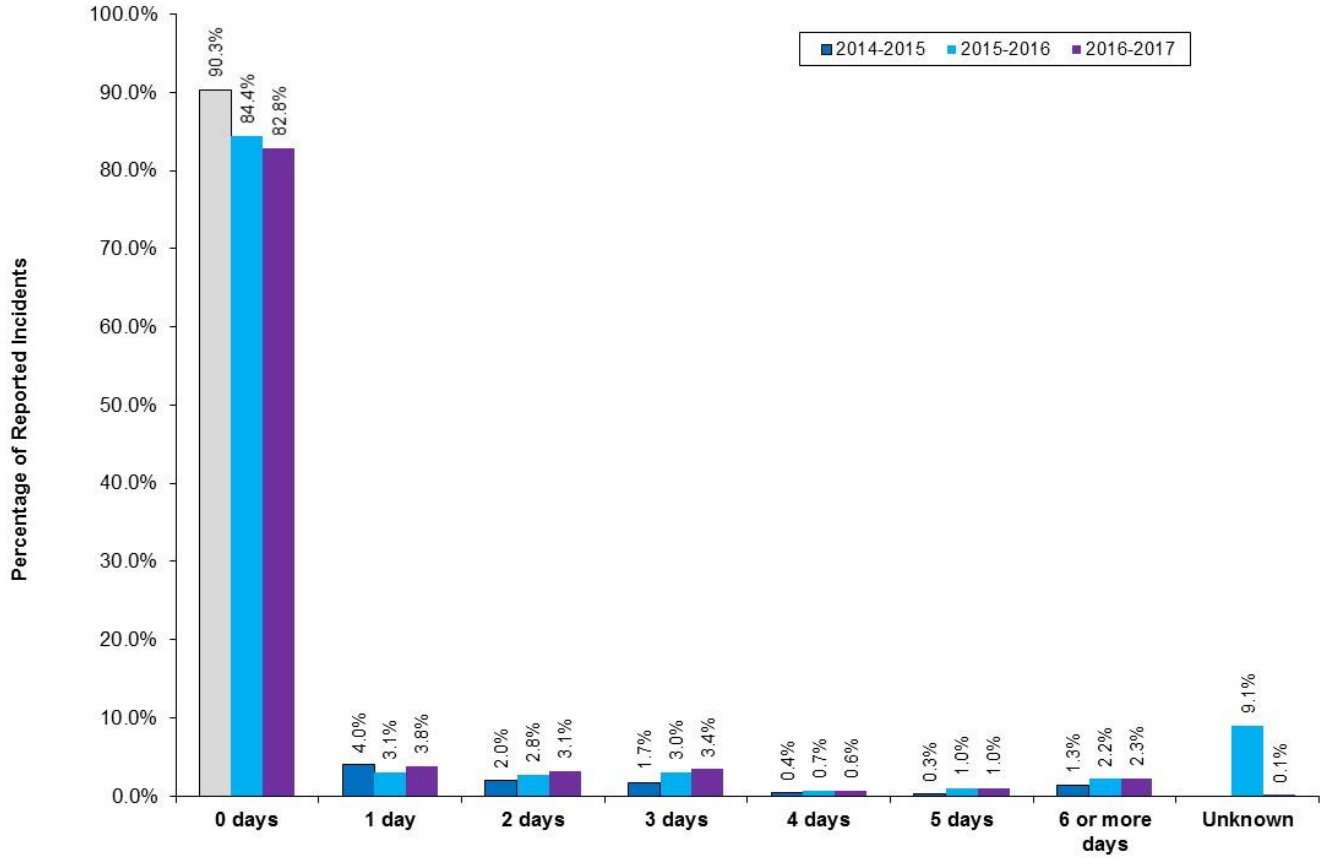
Figure 9: Statewide Absences as a Result of Incidents for Victims



Number of Days Missed from School by Alleged Offenders

In the majority of cases, alleged offenders missed more school days than victims. Offenders were absent in 14.2 percent of the cases (see Figure 10). It is unknown from the data whether the offenders missed school due to suspensions, injury, or other reasons. This was an increase of 1.4 percent when compared to data in the 2015-2016 report.

Figure 10: Statewide Absences as a Result of Incidents for Alleged Offender



Number of False Allegations Reported

Investigations into some reported bullying incidents resulted in the conclusion that the incident was a false allegation (see Table 2). A total of 414 false allegations were reported in the twenty-four LEAs and the SEED school. This number represented 6.8 percent of the total number of incidents (6,091) reported statewide. The largest number of false allegations per reported incidents occurred in Howard County (34.5%). This was followed by Kent County (26.3%) which reported a significant increase in false allegations compared to the 2015-2016 report of (12.1%). Dorchester County reported the third highest reported rate of false allegations at (14.6%). Caroline County, Frederick, Garrett County, Talbot County and The SEED School did not report any false allegations.

Table 2: Percentage of Incident Reports That Were False Allegations, by Local Education Agency

Percentage of Incident Reports that were False Allegations by Local Education Agency			
Local Education Agency	**Year**		
	2014-2015	**2015-2016**	**2016-2017**
Allegany	9.5%	0.0%	1.6%
Anne Arundel	5.2%	4.0%	2.7%
Baltimore City	2.2%	5.1%	5.1%
Baltimore County	3.3%	4.4%	1.7%
Calvert	4.9%	3.8%	3.2%
Caroline	1.8%	1.9%	0.0%
Carroll	9.5%	2.2%	3.8%
Cecil	4.3%	6.5%	10.4%
Charles	7.1%	7.4%	4.6%
Dorchester	7.6%	2.8%	14.6%
Frederick	0.4%	11.6%	0.0%
Garrett	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Harford	3.8%	3.4%	2.2%
Howard	42.6%	34.7%	34.5%
Kent	21.1%	12.1%	26.3%
Montgomery	6.2%	4.8%	7.7%
Prince George's	13.9%	4.4%	1.6%
Queen Anne's	12.9%	0.0%	2.9%
St. Mary's	3.8%	4.9%	5.1%
Somerset	8.3%	10.3%	3.6%
Talbot	7.8%	1.6%	0.0%
Washington	7.0%	2.6%	1.7%
Wicomico	4.8%	2.3%	12.2%
Worcester	0.0%	3.1%	10.5%
SEED School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Summary

During the 2016-2017 school year, 6,091 incidents of bullying, harassment, or intimidation were reported in Maryland's public schools using the reporting system mandated by the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005. All school systems, and the SEED School of Maryland, reported bullying incidents. Consistent with previous reports, most victims and perpetrators were middle-school age. The majority of victims, 56.2 percent, reported being teased, called names, or threatened, while 47.6 percent of the reported incidents involved a physical attack. The most frequently reported motives included, "just to be mean" (30.3%), "to impress others" (12.8%), and physical appearance (5.8%). There was a considerable amount of alleged motives captured under the categories titled "unknown" (28.9%) and "another reason" (16.6%). The MSDE is consistently improving its methods to better identify number of bullying incidents, location and corrective action(s).

Bullying acts were most likely to occur on school property (83.7%), and investigation of incidents primarily involved interviewing the victim, offender, witnesses, victim's parent/guardian, or teachers and/or other school staff. The data demonstrates that 8.0 percent of incidents resulted in an out-of-school suspension or expulsion, while 7.3 percent of incidents resulted in in-school suspensions, which is an overall increase of 1.9 percent from last year. Nearly 14 percent of victims (13.8%), reportedly missed school as a result of the bullying incident compared to 14.2 percent of alleged offenders.

Considerations

There are several areas where improvements in the prevention of bullying, harassment, and intimidation can be made.

- State policy calls for immediate notification of parents for students involved in bullying, harassment or intimidation. The data from 2016-2017 suggests that parent notification efforts have decreased as evidenced by an overall decrease of 11.2 percent.

- School suspensions, both in and out of school, decreased a total of 7.4 percent from 2015-2016. In light of this trend, a consideration for schools and school systems might be a continued emphasis on improvement of school-level and system-level efforts to explore other strategic efforts in the areas of counseling, mediation, and behavior contract(s).

- During the 2016-2017 school year, 83.7 percent of bullying incidents occurred on school property. The data represent a decrease from the previous two reports (84.2 percent during the 2015-2016 school year and 86.1 percent during the 2014-2015 school year). Training and technical assistance to staff on signs and symptoms, processes, and procedures for reporting should be explored.

The MSDE is submitting this report in order to provide the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly with the information required by Education Articles §7-424 and §7-424.1, Annotated Code of Maryland. Incidents for the entire 2017-2018 school year will be reported in the next

report, to be submitted on March 31, 2019. The MSDE will continue to assist LEAs as they develop and implement system-wide and school-wide programs of prevention and intervention to address bullying, harassment, or intimidation. It is important that school systems continue to educate staff, students, and parents about bullying, harassment, and intimidation and provide resources for bullying prevention, encourage victims to report incidents when they occur, notify parents immediately when incidents occur, and follow up with investigations.

Appendix A – 2016-2017 Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form

BULLYING, HARASSMENT OR INTIMIDATION REPORTING FORM

Directions: Bullying, harassment, and intimidation are serious and will not be tolerated. This is a form to report alleged bullying harassment, or intimidation that occurred during the current school year on school property, at a school-sponsored activity or event off school property, on a school bus, on the way to and/or from school*, or on the internet-sent on or off school property; or that substantially disrupted the orderly operation of the school. Bullying, harassment and intimidation includes any intentional conduct, including verbal, physical or written conduct, or an intentional electronic communication, that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being. (Definitions are Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, and Intimidation are provided below.)

1. ***Bullying*** – A pattern or behavior when a person repeatedly uses power in an intentional manner, including verbal, physical, or written conduct or intentional electronic communication against one or more students. 2. ***Cyberbullying*** – The use of electronic communication to harm or harass others in a deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner. 3. ***Harassment*** –Includes actual or perceived negative actions that offend, ridicule, or demean another individual with regard to race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, physical or mental ability, or disability. 4. ***Intimidation*** – subjecting an individual to intentional action that seriously threatens and induces a sense of fear and/or inferiority.

Conduct that is of a sexual nature is generally thought to mean actions, language or visual materials which specifically refer to, portray or involve sexual activity or language. Conduct of a sexual nature may include overt sexual solicitations, inappropriate touching, sexual jokes, and inquiries about a person's sex life. Sexual harassment is the broader term that encompasses conduct of a sexual nature such as unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment also includes acts that are not overtly sexual but rather are directed at individuals based on their gender such as profanity or rude behavior that is gender-specific.

If you are a student, the parent/guardian of a student, a close adult relative of a student, or a school staff member and wish to report an incident of alleged bullying harassment, or intimidation, complete this form and return it to the principal at the student victim's school. You may contact the school for additional information or assistance at any time.

(**PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION**)

Today's date: _____ / _____ / _____ School: _____
Month Day Year

School System: _____

PERSON REPORTING INCIDENT Name: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Place an **X** in the appropriate box: ❑ Student ❑ Parent/guardian of a student ❑ Close adult relative of a student ❑ School Staff ❑ Bystander

1. Name of alleged student victim(s): _____ Age: _____ School _____
_____ Age: _____ School _____
_____ Age: _____ School _____

2. Name of alleged witness(es) (if known):
_____ Age: _____ School _____
_____ Age: _____ School _____
_____ Age: _____ School _____

3. Name(s) of alleged offender(s) (if known): Age School Is he/she a student?

_____ _____ _____ ❑ Yes ❑ No

_____ _____ _____ ❑ Yes ❑ No
_____ _____ _____ ❑ Yes ❑ No

4. On what date(s) did the incident happen?

_____ / _____/ _____ _____ / _____ / _____ _____ / _____/ _____
Month Day Year Month Day Year Month Day Year

5. Place an **X** next to the statement(s) that best describes what happened (choose all that apply):

- ❑ Any bullying, harassment, or intimidation that involves physical aggression (specify)_____
- ❑ Getting another person to hit or harm the student
- ❑ Teasing, name-calling, making critical remarks, or threatening, in person or by other means
- ❑ Demeaning and making the victim of jokes
- ❑ Making rude and/or threatening gestures
- ❑ Excluding or rejecting the student
- ❑ Intimidating, extorting, or exploiting
- ❑ Spreading harmful rumors or gossip
- ❑ Related to the student's disability
- ❑ Related to the student's perceived sexual orientation
- ❑ Cyber bullying (e.g. social media including Facebook, Twitter, Vine, Snapchat, Periscope, kik, Instagram, etc.)
- ❑ Electronic communication (e.g. email, text, sexting, etc.)
- ❑ Gang related
- ❑ Gang recruitment
- ❑ Human trafficking/Prostitution recruitment
- ❑ Racial Harassment
- ❑ Sexual Harassment
- ❑ Sexual in nature
- ❑ Other (specify) _____

6. Where did the incident happen (choose all that apply)?

❑ On school property ❑ At a school-sponsored activity or event off school property ❑ Via Internet- sent off school property
❑ On a school bus ❑ On the way to/from school* ❑ Via Internet- sent on school property

*Will be collected unless specifically excluded by local board policy

7. Describe the incident(s), including what the alleged offender(s) said or did. _____
_____
_____
(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

8. Why did the bullying, harassment or intimidation occur? _____
_____
(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

9. Did a physical injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:

❑ No ❑ Yes, but it did not require medical attention ❑ Yes, and it required medical attention

10. If there was a physical injury, do you think there will be permanent effects? ❑ Yes ❑ No

11. Was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? ❑ Yes ❑ No
If yes, how many days was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? _____

12. Did a psychological injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:
❑ No ❑ Yes, but psychological services have not been sought ❑ Yes, and psychological services have been sought

13. Is there any additional information you would like to provide? _____
_____
_____
(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

9. Did a physical injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:

❑ No ❑ Yes, but it did not require medical attention ❑ Yes, and it required medical attention

10. If there was a physical injury, do you think there will be permanent effects? ❑ Yes ❑ No

11. Was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? ❑ Yes ❑ No
If yes, how many days was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? _____

12. Did a psychological injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:
❑ No ❑ Yes, but psychological services have not been sought ❑ Yes, and psychological services have been sought

13. Is there any additional information you would like to provide? _____
_____
_____
_____
(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, OR INTIMIDATION INCIDENT SCHOOL INVESTIGATION FORM

School Personnel Completing Form: _____ Position: _____

Today's date: _____ / _____ / _____ School: _____
Month Day Year

School System: _____

Person Reporting Incident (From reporting form) Name: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Place an **X** in the appropriate box: ❑ Student ❑ Parent/guardian ❑ Close adult relative
❑ School Staff ❑ Bystander

1. Name of student victim(s): _____Age: _____ Days absent as a result of the incident: _____
_____Age: _____ Days absent as a result of the incident: _____

_____Age: _____ Days absent as a result of the incident: _____

2. Name(s) of alleged witness(s) (If known): Age School

_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____

3. Name(s) of alleged offender(s) (If known): Age School Is he/she a student? Days absent due to incident

_____ _____ _____ ❑ Yes ❑ No _____
_____ _____ _____ ❑ Yes ❑ No _____
_____ _____ _____ ❑ Yes ❑ No _____
(Please print)

Total number of alleged offenders: _____

INVESTIGATION

4. What actions were taken to investigate this incident? (choose all that apply)

- ❑ Interviewed alleged student victim
- ❑ Interviewed alleged offender(s)
- ❑ Interviewed alleged witnesses
- ❑ Witness statements collected in writing
- ❑ Interviewed school nurse
- ❑ Reviewed any medical information available
- ❑ Interviewed teachers and/or school staff
- ❑ Interviewed student victim's parent/guardian
- ❑ Interviewed alleged offender's parent/guardian
- ❑ Examined physical evidence
- ❑ Reviewed/Obtained copy of police report
- ❑ Conducted student record review
- ❑ Examined video evidence
- ❑ Conducted meeting with Resource Officer
- ❑ Reviewed social media site
- ❑ Other (specify) _____

5. Why did the harassment, intimidation, or bullying occur (alleged motives)? (choose all that apply)

- ❑ Because of race
- ❑ Because of national origin
- ❑ Because of marital status
- ❑ Because of sex
- ❑ Because of sexual orientation
- ❑ Because of gender identity
- ❑ Because of religion
- ❑ Because of disability
- ❑ Because of physical appearance
- ❑ To impress others
- ❑ Just to be mean
- ❑ Gang related
- ❑ Gang recruitment
- ❑ Human trafficking/Prostitution recruitment
- ❑ Because of another reason (specify) _____

- ❑ The reason is unknown
- ❑ Determined not to be Bullying
- ❑ Determined not to be Harassment
- ❑ Determined not to be Intimidation

6. Where was the incident reported to have happened (choose all that apply)?

❑ On school property ❑ At a school-sponsored activity or event off school property
❑ On a school bus ❑ On the way to/from school* ❑ Via Internet- sent on school property
❑ Via Internet- sent off school property

*Will be collected unless specifically excluded by local board policy

7. What corrective actions were taken in this case (choose all that apply)?

- ❑ None were required, this was a false allegation
- ❑ None, the incident did not warrant any corrective action
- ❑ None, no Bullying occurred
- ❑ None, no harassment occurred
- ❑ None, no intimidation occurred
- ❑ None, the alleged incident could not be verified
- ❑ Determined as a conflict and not bullying, harassment or intimidation
- ❑ Student conference
- ❑ Student warning
- ❑ Letter of apology
- ❑ Mediation
- ❑ Counseling
- ❑ Parent letter
- ❑ Parent phone call
- ❑ Parent conference
- ❑ Detention
- ❑ In-school suspension
- ❑ Out-of-school suspension/expulsion
- ❑ Behavior contract
- ❑ Alternative placement/setting
- ❑ Plan of Support to include a “go to” adult in the school
- ❑ Community Service
- ❑ Separation from other student to include transfer or change in schedule
- ❑ Meeting with Resource Officer
- ❑ Referral to Counselor or Therapist
- ❑ Developed template for safety plan
- ❑ Other (specify) _____

8. Did a physical injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:

❑ None observed ❑ Injury observed ❑ Medical documentation provided

9. Was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? ❑ Yes ❑ No
If yes, how many days was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? _____

10. Additional pertinent information gained during the interview:

_____

_____

_____

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

11. Investigator notes:

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Signature: _____ Date**:**

Division of Student, Family, and School Support
Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201