

What anti-bullying laws and policies are in place at the state and federal level?

Wisconsin Statute 118.13

This law states that no person may be denied admission to any public school or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational or other program or activity because of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, or sexual orientation, among other things. It also covers physical, mental, emotional, and learning disabilities.

There are currently no federal laws that directly address bullying. However, bullying can sometimes overlap with harassment, and discriminatory harassment laws must be enforced in federally-funded schools. Discriminatory harassment is conduct that is severe, pervasive, or persistent in nature. Every school district is required to handle complaints of harassment.

Wisconsin Statute 118.46

This statute specifically targets bullying and ensures that there are policies and procedures that define bullying, prohibit it, and ensure proper reporting and disciplinary measures. It requires that schools investigate reports of bullying, file a bullying report, and notify the parent or guardian of each student involved in a bullying incident. Schools are also required to develop a model education and awareness program on bullying.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

This is the federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Under FERPA, schools are generally required to ask for written consent before disclosing a student's personally identifiable information to individuals other than his or her parents. Schools cannot share the school records of a bully. In an emergency situation, FERPA permits school officials to disclose educational records without parental consent to appropriate parties such as law enforcement officials, public health officials, and trained medical personnel.