

BILL SUMMARY
1st Session of the 54th Legislature

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| Bill No.: | HB 1661 |
| Version: | Com. Sub. |
| Request Number: | N/A |
| Author: | Rep. Denney |
| Date: | 3/12/2013 |
| Impact: | \$0 |

Research Analysis

The committee substitute to House Bill 1661 expands the definition of harassment, intimidation and bullying to include any direct or indirect continual pattern of physical, verbal or psychological intimidation, harassment or abuse manifested by any gesture, written or verbal expression, electronic communication or physical act directed toward a student or group of students or about a student or group of students that results in or is reasonably perceived as being done with the intent to cause negative educational, physical, mental, emotional, social or economic results for the targeted individual or group.

It also expands the definition of electronic communication to include email, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, social media, online games and websites whether or not the conduct originated at school, with school equipment or during school hours.

It also requires that school districts' policies prohibit threatening behavior, harassment and bullying off school grounds if the behavior will disrupt or interfere with the educational mission of the school or education of any student. The policy must contain a procedure for reporting acts including a procedure for reporting anonymously but no formal action may be taken based solely on an anonymous report. Employees must be required to report suspected harassment and the policy also must state how the policy will be publicized. Districts must immediately notify parents after an incident and the policy must have a procedure for reporting to law enforcement all behavior which may constitute criminal activity or that has a potential to endanger school safety. Districts must provide consequences and remedial action for those who commit acts of harassment or those who falsely accuse another and provide counseling or referral for perpetrators and victims. The State Department of Education also must maintain a central repository for collection and analysis of information regarding harassment, intimidation and bullying and publish a report annually. The measure also removes the exemption for career technology center school districts from establishing safe school committees.

Prepared By: Dawn Marks

Fiscal Analysis

Committee Sub. provides for the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act and expands bullying behavior. The measure expands some definitions, requires district board policies to include or establish certain procedures or requirements, modifies and adds duties pertaining to the State Board of Education, allows for modification of membership of Safe School Committees and adds to recommendations, and adds requirements to the State Department of Education. The measure has no fiscal impact for the State Department of Education, but may have a potential impact to school districts.

Prepared By: Andrea Kearney

Other Considerations

None at this time.

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