

BILL SUMMARY
1st Session of the 54th Legislature

Bill No.:	HB1661
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Author:	Rep. Denney
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Research Analysis

The proposed committee substitute to House Bill 1661 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.

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Fiscal Analysis

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Other Considerations

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