

STATE OF NEW YORK

2086

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 12, 2017

Introduced by Sens. COMRIE, ADDABBO -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to harassment prevention policies

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 313-b
2 to read as follows:

3 § 313-b. Harassment prevention policies. 1. The commissioner shall
4 promulgate rules and regulations that prohibit the harassment, intimid-
5 ation or bullying of any student. It shall be the responsibility of
6 each school district to make available copies of such policies to
7 parents, guardians, students, volunteers and school employees.

8 2. As used in this section:

9 (a) "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" shall mean any intentional
10 electronic, written, verbal or physical act, including but not limited
11 to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic in section 240.25,
12 240.26, 240.30 or 240.31 of the penal law, or other distinguishing char-
13 acteristics, when the intentional electronic, written, verbal or phys-
14 ical act:

15 (1) physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or

16 (2) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's
17 education; or

18 (3) is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intim-
19 idating educational environment; or

20 (4) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation
21 of the school.

22 (b) "Electronic" or "electronic means" shall mean any communication
23 where there is the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical
24 cable, electromagnetic or other similar means. Such terms shall include,

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 but not be limited to, communication via electronic mail, internet-based
2 communications, pager service, cell phones and electronic messaging.

3 3. The commissioner, in promulgating such rules and regulations, shall
4 consult with parents, school personnel and other interested parties. The
5 commissioner shall provide to school districts a model harassment,
6 intimidation and bullying prevention policy as well as training materi-
7 als for use in implementing such policy. The commissioner shall post the
8 model policy, recommended training materials and instructional materials
9 on the department's website.

10 4. The commissioner, by August first, two thousand eighteen, shall
11 update the harassment, intimidation and bullying policy to include a
12 section addressing acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying that are
13 conducted via electronic means. The policy shall include a requirement
14 that materials meant to educate parents and students about the serious-
15 ness of cyberbullying be disseminated to parents or made available on a
16 school district's website. The material shall include information on
17 responsible and safe internet use as well as what options are available
18 if a student is being bullied via electronic means including, but not
19 limited to, reporting threats to local police and when to involve school
20 officials, the internet service provider or phone service provider. If a
21 school district has internet use policies, the act of harassing, intimid-
22 ating or bullying another student via online means shall be included
23 as a prohibited act and be subject to disciplinary action.

24 § 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after
25 it shall have become a law; provided, however, that effective immediate-
26 ly, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation
27 necessary for the timely implementation of this act on its effective
28 date are authorized and directed to be made and completed on or before
29 such effective date.