



Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536



BILL ANALYSIS

Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986

Senate Bill 74 (Substitute S-2 as reported by the Committee of the Whole)
Sponsor: Senator Glenn S. Anderson
Committee: Judiciary

CONTENT

The bill would amend Matt's Safe School Law within the Revised School Code to do the following:

- Require a school district, intermediate school district (ISD), or public school academy (PSA), within six months after the bill's effective date, to modify its policy prohibiting bullying at school as necessary to comply with the bill's amendments, including the inclusion of cyberbullying as a form of bullying.
- Require a school district's, ISD's or PSA's bullying policy to include an assurance of confidentiality for an individual who reported an act of bullying, as well as procedures to safeguard that confidentiality.
- Require a school district, ISD, or PSA to submit a copy of a modified bullying policy to the Department of Education within 30 days after adopting the modification.
- Require the Department to report to the Senate and House standing committees on education, within one year after the deadline for modification of a bullying policy, summarizing the status of the implementation of the modifications.

The bill also would require the Department of Education to establish a form and procedure for school districts and PSAs to report incidents of bullying to the Department on an annual basis. A school district or academy would have to report to the Department according to its established form and procedure. The Department would have to make the information in the reports readily available to the public, but would have to ensure that the information collected and made available did not include personally identifiable information about any individual who reported or was involved in a specific incident of bullying.

The bill would define "cyberbullying" as any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils.
- Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school's or district's educational programs or activities by placing him or her in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health.
- Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

The bill would rename the law the "Matt Epling Safe School Law".

MCL 380.1310b

Legislative Analyst: Patrick Affholter

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have a minimal fiscal impact on the Department of Education. The costs would result from the requirement to establish a form and procedure for schools to report incidents of bullying annually to the Department, and the requirement to make this information readily available to the public.

The bill also would have a fiscal impact on school districts and public school academies. The costs associated with tallying the number of bullying incidents within a district and reporting the data to the Department would be minimal: a maximum of \$375,000 statewide. There would be additional costs to districts associated with reviewing and verifying incidents of bullying reported within the districts, but the extent of the fiscal impact as a result is unclear at this time.

Date Completed: 12-8-14

Fiscal Analyst: Cory Savino