

Introduced by

Representatives R. Kelsch, Vigesaa, Gruchalla

Senators Flakoll, Wardner, Warner

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact six new sections to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the prevention of bullying in public schools.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is
5 created and enacted as follows:

6 **Bullying - Definition.**

7 As used in this Act:

8 1. "Bullying" means:

9 a. Conduct that occurs in a public school, on school district premises, in a district
10 owned or leased schoolbus or school vehicle, or at any public school or school
11 district sanctioned or sponsored activity or event and which:

12 (1) Is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it substantially
13 interferes with the student's educational opportunities;

14 (2) Places the student in actual and reasonable fear of harm;

15 (3) Places the student in actual and reasonable fear of damage to property of
16 the student; or

17 (4) Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the public school; or

18 b. Conduct that is received by a student while the student is in a public school, on
19 school district premises, in a district owned or leased schoolbus or school
20 vehicle, or at any public school or school district sanctioned or sponsored activity
21 or event and which:

22 (1) Is so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it substantially
23 interferes with the student's educational opportunities;

24 (2) Places the student in actual and reasonable fear of harm;

1 (3) Places the student in actual and reasonable fear of damage to property of
2 the student; or

3 (4) Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the public school.

4 2. "Conduct" includes the use of technology or other electronic media.

5 **SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
6 and enacted as follows:

7 **Bullying - Prohibition by policy.**

8 1. Before July 1, 2012, each school district shall adopt a policy providing that while at a
9 public school, on school district premises, in a district owned or leased schoolbus or
10 school vehicle, or at any public school or school district sanctioned or sponsored
11 activity or event, a student may not:

12 a. Engage in bullying; or

13 b. Engage in reprisal or retaliation against:

14 (1) A victim of bullying;

15 (2) An individual who witnesses an alleged act of bullying;

16 (3) An individual who reports an alleged act of bullying; or

17 (4) An individual who provides information about an alleged act of bullying.

18 2. The policy required by this section must:

19 a. Include a definition of bullying that at least encompasses the conduct described
20 in section 1 of this Act;

21 b. Establish procedures for reporting and documenting alleged acts of bullying,
22 reprisal, or retaliation, and include procedures for anonymous reporting of such
23 acts;

24 c. Establish procedures, including timelines, for school district personnel to follow in
25 investigating reports of alleged bullying, reprisal, or retaliation;

26 d. Establish a schedule for the retention of any documents generated while
27 investigating reports of alleged bullying, reprisal, or retaliation;

28 e. Set forth the disciplinary measures applicable to an individual who engaged in
29 bullying or who engaged in reprisal or retaliation, as set forth in subsection 1;

- 1 f. Require the notification of law enforcement personnel if an investigation by
2 school district personnel results in a reasonable suspicion that a crime might
3 have occurred;
- 4 g. Establish strategies to protect a victim of bullying, reprisal, or retaliation; and
- 5 h. Establish disciplinary measures to be imposed upon an individual who makes a
6 false accusation, report, or complaint pertaining to bullying, reprisal, or retaliation.
- 7 3. In developing the bullying policy required by this section, a school district shall involve
8 parents, school district employees, volunteers, students, school district administrators,
9 law enforcement personnel, domestic violence sexual assault organizations as defined
10 by subsection 3 of section 14-07.1-01, and community representatives.
- 11 4. Upon completion of the policy required by this section, a school district shall:
 - 12 a. Ensure that the policy is explained to and discussed with its students;
 - 13 b. File a copy of the policy with the superintendent of public instruction; and
 - 14 c. Make the policy available in student and personnel handbooks.
- 15 5. Each school district shall review and revise its policy as it determines necessary and
16 shall file a copy of the revised policy with the superintendent of public instruction.

17 **SECTION 3.** A new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
18 and enacted as follows:

19 **Professional development activities.**

20 Each school district shall include, in professional development activities, information
21 regarding the prevention of bullying and shall provide information regarding the prevention of
22 bullying to all volunteers and nonlicensed personnel who have contact with students.

23 **SECTION 4.** A new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
24 and enacted as follows:

25 **Bullying prevention programs.**

26 Each school district shall provide bullying prevention programs to all students from
27 kindergarten through grade twelve.

28 **SECTION 5.** A new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
29 and enacted as follows:

1 **Causes of action - Immunity - School districts.**

- 2 1. This Act does not prevent a victim from seeking redress pursuant to any other
3 applicable civil or criminal law. This Act does not create or alter any civil cause of
4 action for monetary damages against any person or school district, nor does this Act
5 constitute grounds for any claim or motion raised by either the state or a defendant in
6 any proceedings.
- 7 2. Any individual who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of
8 bullying, reprisal, or retaliation to the school district employee or official designated in
9 the school district bullying policy is immune from civil or criminal liability resulting from
10 or relating to the report or to the individual's participation in any administrative or
11 judicial proceeding stemming from the report.
- 12 3. A school district and its employees are immune from any liability that might otherwise
13 be incurred as a result of a student having been the recipient of bullying, if the school
14 district implemented a bullying policy, as required by section 2 of this Act and
15 substantially complied with that policy.

16 **SECTION 6.** A new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
17 and enacted as follows:

18 **Causes of action - Immunity - Nonpublic schools.**

- 19 1. This Act does not prevent a victim from seeking redress pursuant to any other
20 applicable civil or criminal law. This Act does not create or alter any civil cause of
21 action for monetary damages against any person or nonpublic school, nor does this
22 Act constitute grounds for any claim or motion raised by either the state or a defendant
23 in any proceedings.
- 24 2. Any individual who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of
25 bullying, reprisal, or retaliation to the nonpublic school employee or official designated
26 in the school's bullying policy is immune from civil or criminal liability resulting from or
27 relating to the report or to the individual's participation in any administrative or judicial
28 proceeding stemming from the report.
- 29 3. A nonpublic school and its employees are immune from any liability that might
30 otherwise be incurred as a result of a student having been the recipient of bullying, if

- 1 the school implemented a bullying policy, similar to that required by section 2 of this
- 2 Act and substantially complied with that policy.