

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5577

By Delegate Crouse

[Introduced February 16, 2026; referred to the
Committee on Education]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18-2C-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
 2 to strengthening county board laws prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying;
 3 providing that a county board shall reevaluate the success of the existing policy prohibiting
 4 harassment, intimidation or bullying, and if necessary, modify the policy based upon the
 5 success or failure of the policy; providing that parents or guardians of students enrolled
 6 within a county, as well as students within the county, shall be provided the opportunity to
 7 provide feedback to the county board relating to issues the parent, guardian, or student
 8 has had with the policy; providing that any action taken by the county board to modify the
 9 policy shall be open to parents, guardians, and students; and providing that a county board
 10 shall report to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability
 11 ("LOCEA"), at the discretion of LOCEA, relating to the effectiveness of the county board's
 12 policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2C. HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING PROHIBITION.

§18-2C-3. Policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying.

1 (a) Each county board shall establish a policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation or
 2 bullying. Each county board has control over the content of its policy as long as the policy contains,
 3 at a minimum, the requirements of subdivision (b) of this section. The policy shall be adopted
 4 through a process that includes representation of parents or guardians, school employees, school
 5 volunteers, students and community members.

6 (b) Each county board policy shall, at a minimum, include the following components:

7 (1) A statement prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying of any student on school
 8 property, a school bus, at a school bus stop or at school sponsored events;

9 (2) A definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying no less inclusive than that in section
 10 two of this article;

11 (3) A procedure for reporting prohibited incidents;

12 (4) A requirement that school personnel report prohibited incidents of which they are
13 aware;

14 (5) A requirement that parents or guardians of any student involved in an incident
15 prohibited pursuant to this article be notified;

16 (6) A procedure for documenting any prohibited incident that is reported;

17 (7) A procedure for responding to and investigating any reported incident;

18 (8) A strategy for protecting a victim from additional harassment, intimidation or bullying,
19 and from retaliation following a report;

20 (9) A disciplinary procedure for any student guilty of harassment, intimidation or bullying;

21 (10) A requirement that any information relating to a reported incident is confidential, and
22 exempt from disclosure under the provisions of chapter twenty-nine-b of this code; and

23 (11) A requirement that each county board shall input into the uniform integrated regional
24 computer information system (commonly known as the West Virginia Education Information
25 System) described in section twenty-six, article two of this chapter, and compile an annual report
26 regarding the means of harassment, intimidation or bullying that have been reported to them, and
27 the reasons therefor, if known. The West Virginia Department of Education shall compile the
28 information and report it annually beginning July 1, 2012, to the Legislative Oversight Committee
29 on Education Accountability.

30 (c) Each county board shall adopt the policy and submit a copy to the State Superintendent
31 of Schools by December 1, 2011.

32 (d) To assist county boards in developing their policies, the West Virginia Department of
33 Education shall develop a model policy applicable to grades kindergarten through twelfth. The
34 model policy shall be issued by September 1, 2011.

35 (e) Notice of the county board's policy shall appear in any student handbook, and in any
36 county board publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of
37 conduct for the school.

38 (f) Each county board shall reevaluate the success of the existing policy prohibiting
39 harassment, intimidation or bullying, and if necessary, modify the policy based upon the success
40 or failure of the policy: *Provided*, That parents or guardians of students enrolled within a county, as
41 well as students within the county, shall be provided the opportunity to provide feedback to the
42 county board relating to issues the parent, guardian, or student has had with the policy: *Provided*,
43 *however*, That any action taken by the county board to modify the policy shall be open to parents,
44 guardians, and students.

45 (g) A county board shall report to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education
46 Accountability ("LOCEA"), at the discretion of LOCEA, relating to the effectiveness of the county
47 board's policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying.

48 (h) The amendments to this section passed during the 2026 regular session of the
49 Legislature shall be effective immediately upon passage.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to strengthen county board laws prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.