

HOUSE BILL 2590

By Russell

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 37;  
Title 38; Title 39 and Title 49, relative to  
harassment.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-17-308(e), is amended by adding the following new subdivisions:

( ) "Bullying" means an act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance; and:

(A) If the act takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation or at any official school bus stop, the act has the effect of:

(i) Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;

(ii) Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;

(iii) Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or

(iv) Creating a hostile educational environment; or

(B) If the act takes place off school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity, it is directed specifically at a student or students and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption to the education environment or learning process;

( ) "Cyber-bullying" means bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices;

( ) "Official report" means a written report made by a law enforcement officer in the course of the law enforcement officer's official duties that the parent of a minor child who is identified as a victim in the report may obtain from the law enforcement officer's employing law enforcement agency;

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-17-308(a), is amended by deleting the word "or" at the end of subdivision (a)(3), replacing the period at the end of subdivision (a)(4)(B) with the language "; or", and adding the following new subdivision:

(5) Engages in bullying or cyber-bullying.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-17-308, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

( ) A law enforcement officer who has knowledge that a minor is the victim of an incident of bullying or cyber-bullying shall:

(1) Make an official report of the incident; and

(2) Provide the minor's parent, legal guardian, or legal custodian with notice of the bullying or cyber-bullying and instructions concerning how to obtain a copy of the report made pursuant to subdivision ( ) (1).

SECTION 4. This act takes effect July 1, 2024, the public welfare requiring it.