



## Legislation Text

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Int. No. 547

By Council Member Levine

A Local Law in relation to establishing a bullying prevention task force

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Bullying prevention task force. a. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Bullying. The term “bullying” means the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, whether verbal or nonverbal, including cyberbullying, that include, but are not limited to, conduct or threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex, and that:

1. Has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being;
2. Reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for such student’s physical safety;
3. Reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or
4. Creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, even if it occurs off school property, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property.

Cyberbullying. The term “cyberbullying” means bullying or harassment that occurs through any form of

electronic communication.

Department. The term “department” means the department of education.

School. The term “school” means a school of the city school district of the city of New York that contains any combination of grades from and including pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

b. There shall be a bullying prevention task force consisting of at least 13 members as follows:

1. The chancellor of the city school district of the city of New York, or the chancellor’s designee, who shall serve as chair;

2. The chairperson of the city commission on human rights, or the chairperson’s designee;

3. The commissioner of health and mental hygiene, or the commissioner’s designee;

4. The commissioner of the police department, or the commissioner’s designee;

5. At least five members appointed by the mayor, including school administrators, teachers, guidance counselors or other appropriate department employees, and experts in conflict resolution, bullying prevention, mental health, school safety or education; and

6. At least four members appointed by the speaker of the council, including school administrators, teachers, guidance counselors or other appropriate department employees, and experts in conflict resolution, bullying prevention, mental health, school safety or education.

c. Each member of the task force shall serve without compensation for a term of 12 months, to commence after the final member of the task force is appointed. All members shall be appointed within 60 days after the effective date of this local law.

d. No appointed member of the task force shall be removed except for cause by the appointing authority. In the event of a vacancy on the task force during the term of an appointed member, a successor shall be selected in the same manner as the original appointment to serve the balance of the unexpired term.

e. The ex officio members of the task force may designate a representative who shall be counted as a member for the purpose of determining the existence of a quorum and who may vote on behalf of such

member, provided that such representative is an officer or employee from the same agency as the delegating member. The designation of a representative shall be made by a written notice of the ex officio member served upon the chairperson of the task force prior to the designee participating in any meeting of the task force, but such designation may be rescinded or revised by the member at any time. The ex officio members are the chancellor of the city school district of the city of New York, the chairperson of the city commission on human rights, the commissioner of health and mental hygiene and the commissioner of the police department.

f. The task force shall meet at least quarterly and shall hold at least two public meetings prior to submission of the plan required pursuant to subdivision h of this section to solicit public comment on preventing bullying in schools.

g. The mayor may designate one or more agencies to provide staffing and other administrative support to the task force.

h. No later than 12 months after the final member of the task force is appointed, the task force shall submit to the mayor and the speaker of the council a plan to prevent and address bullying in schools. In developing such plan, the task force shall consider the following:

1. Data and reports of the department related to bullying in schools, including any trends in the types of reported incidents of bullying;
2. Existing department policies, guidelines and resources related to bullying prevention;
3. Existing department methods and procedures for reporting and responding to bullying;
4. Existing department training programs to prevent bullying and to help school employees identify and respond to bullying; and
5. The level of coordination among appropriate city, state and federal agencies and other relevant organizations with regards to efforts to prevent and address bullying in schools.

i. The bullying prevention task force shall dissolve upon submission of the plan required pursuant to subdivision h of this section.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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