



## **District of Columbia Bullying and Intimidation Prevention Act of 2011 (B19-11)**

**Bullying, Harassment, and Cyberbullying Create Significant Adverse Academic and Other Consequences for Students.** These harmful behaviors directly interfere with student learning and achievement and threaten the safety and well being of DC's students every day.

- Nationwide, two-thirds of secondary school students (65%) report that they have been verbally or physically harassed or assaulted in the past year at school. More than a third (38%) of public school students and half (53%) of teachers report that bullying and harassment are serious problems in their schools.
- More than half of students (57%) never report harassment or violence to school authorities, often because they do not believe effective action will be taken. Nearly two-thirds of students reported that faculty and other school staff rarely or never intervened when homophobic, racist, or sexist remarks were made in their presence.
- Marginalized students, such as LGBT students, experience bullying and harassment at an even more alarming rate. Nearly 9 out of 10 LGBT students nationwide report that they have been harassed in the past year due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Bullying and harassment increase absenteeism. GLB high school students in DC are five times more likely to report missing four or more days of school in the past 30 days compared to heterosexual students (9% versus 1.8%.)
- Because they feel unsafe, victimized youth are pushed out of schools and into high-risk behavior. These students are also at an increased risk for substance abuse, dropping out of school, homelessness, and suicide.

### **This Critical Bill Will Help Educators and Institutions Effectively Address these Problems.**

This anti-bullying measure will emphasize preventative education and will require DC Public Schools and other District agencies that work with youth to pass comprehensive anti-bullying policies. The bill will help provide teachers with the tools they need to prevent bullying, harassment and cyberbullying and encourage these agencies to establish bullying prevention programs.

- DC Public Schools, DC Public Charter Schools, the Department of Parks and Recreation, DC Public Libraries, and the University of District of Columbia are the entities required under this bill to adopt anti-bullying policies and encouraged to establish prevention programs.
- This bill provides protection for ALL students while specifically identifying those characteristics that are frequent targets of bullying and harassment. Listing these enumerated categories is critical to ensure protection for all students. Research has shown that students who attend schools with policies that enumerate categories report less bullying and harassment than students who do not.

If you would like more information regarding this bill, please contact Alison Gill, GLSEN Public Policy Manager, at [agill@glsen.org](mailto:agill@glsen.org).