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House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Ed Neilson

DATE: June 21, 2012

SUBJECT: Co-Sponsorship Request – Public School Code Bullying Policies

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation addressing school bullying policies, by amending Section 1303.1-A of the Public School Code of 1949 (Act 14 of 1949).

Heinous acts of bullying have a destructive impact on the ability of our schools to provide a positive educational atmosphere to the future generations of Pennsylvania. The National Education Association estimates that 160,000 children miss school each day in fear of being bullied, and it has been reported that one out of ten students drop out of school due to being a victim of bullying. The inexcusable act of bullying children with special needs and disabilities is even more alarming. The Journal of Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology reported that children with disabilities are ten times more likely to be bullied than those without. As members of the General Assembly, it is our duty to protect the people of this Commonwealth, which is why I am introducing legislation to further shield children from bullying.

My legislation expands bullying protection to all students by requiring the enactment of a bullying policy by all nonpublic schools no later than January 1, 2013. This bill further requires schools to enforce the bullying policy on school property, at school-sponsored functions, and during the transportation to or from the school or school-sponsored functions. Finally, the bill requires all school entities and nonpublic schools to establish additional disciplinary consequences for any individual that bullies a student with a disability.

If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation to further deter students from being bullied, please contact Carla Walker at 717-772-2297 or cwalker@pahouse.net.