

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 785 Session of 2021

INTRODUCED BY SCHWANK, KANE, STREET, HUGHES, FONTANA, SAVAL,
COMITTA, MUTH, HAYWOOD, KEARNEY, CAPPELLETTI, COSTA,
YUDICHAK, MENSCH AND TARTAGLIONE, JULY 1, 2021

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, JULY 1, 2021

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in terms and courses of study,
6 further providing for dating violence education.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Section 1553(a)(1), (b), (c) and (d)(1) and (2)
10 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the
11 Public School Code of 1949, are amended to read:

12 Section 1553. Dating Violence Education.--(a) The
13 department, through its Office for Safe Schools, and in
14 consultation with the State Board of Education, shall:

15 (1) [Develop] Update, within six (6) months of the effective
16 date of this section, a model dating violence policy to assist
17 school districts in developing policies for dating violence
18 reporting and response.

19 * * *

(b) (1) Each school district [may] shall establish a specific policy to address incidents of dating violence involving students at school.

(2) The policy [may] shall include, but need not be limited to: a statement that dating violence will not be tolerated; violence reporting procedures; discipline procedures for students that commit violence at school; and contact information for and resources available through domestic violence programs and rape crisis programs.

(3) A school district [that establishes the policy] shall:

(i) Publish the policy in any school district policy or handbook that specifies the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for students at school.

(ii) Make the policy available on its publicly available Internet website.

(iii) Provide parents and guardians with a copy of the policy.

[(4) The State Board of Education shall conduct a study of the benefits and detriments of mandatory dating violence education and shall submit a report of its recommendations to the chairman and minority chairman of the Education Committee of the Senate and the chairman and minority chairman of the Education Committee of the House of Representatives within three (3) years of the effective date of this section.]

(c) (1) A school district [may] shall provide dating violence training to guidance counselors, nurses and mental health staff [at the high school level] serving students in grades seven (7) through twelve (12). Upon the recommendation of the district superintendent, other staff may be included or may attend the training on a voluntary basis. The school district

1 may also provide dating violence training to parents.

2 (2) The dating violence training [may] shall include, but
3 need not be limited to: basic principles of dating violence;
4 warning signs of dating violence; the intersections of dating
5 violence and other issues, such as sexual assault and harassment
6 that may affect students' safety and well-being; the school
7 district's dating violence policy; appropriate responses to
8 incidents of dating violence at school; and services and
9 resources available through domestic violence programs and rape
10 crisis programs.

11 (d) (1) A school district [may] shall incorporate dating
12 violence education that is age appropriate into the annual
13 health curriculum framework for students in grades [nine (9)]
14 seven (7) through twelve (12). In developing such a policy, the
15 school district shall consult with at least one (1) domestic
16 violence program or rape crisis program that serves the region
17 where the school district is located.

18 (2) Dating violence education [may] shall include, but need
19 not be limited to: defining dating violence and recognizing
20 dating violence warning signs; characteristics of healthy
21 relationships; information regarding peer support and the role
22 friends and peers have in addressing dating violence; and
23 contact information for and the services and resources available
24 through domestic violence centers and rape crisis centers,
25 including detailed information concerning safety planning,
26 availability and enforcement of protection from abuse orders and
27 the availability of other services and assistance for students
28 and their families.

29 * * *

30 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 180 days.