

House Bill 131 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Dickerson of the 113th, Drenner of the 85th, Waites of the 60th, Thomas of the 56th, and Jones of the 53rd

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 20-2-751.4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 policies in public schools prohibiting bullying, so as to prohibit cyberbullying; to provide for
3 related matters; to provide for a short title; to provide for an effective date and for
4 applicability; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 This Act shall be known and may be cited as "The End to Cyberbullying Act."

8 **SECTION 2.**

9 Code Section 20-2-751.4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to policies in
10 public schools prohibiting bullying, is amended by revising subsection (a) as follows:

11 ~~"(a) As used in this Code section, the term 'bullying' means an act which occurs on school~~
12 ~~property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions~~
13 ~~or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer~~
14 ~~system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:~~

15 (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied
16 by an apparent present ability to do so;

17 (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or
18 expect immediate bodily harm; or

19 (3) Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act which a reasonable person would
20 perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:

21 (A) Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code
22 Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section
23 16-5-23.1;

24 (B) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;

25 (C) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening
26 educational environment; or

27 (D) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

28 The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated
29 school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software
30 that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other
31 electronic technology of a local school system. The term also applies to acts of
32 cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, including but not
33 limited to telephones, cellular telephones, wireless communication devices, pagers,
34 computers, e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, through websites, or any similar
35 means of communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property
36 or with school equipment, if the electronic act (1) is directed specifically at students or
37 school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of
38 those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3)
39 creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property
40 or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose."

41 **SECTION 3.**

42 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
43 without such approval. This Act shall apply to conduct on or after that date, and conduct
44 prior to that date shall continue to be governed by prior law.

45 **SECTION 4.**

46 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.