



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Senate Passes Bill to Prevent Cyberbullying

ANDREW J LANZA June 28, 2012

The New York State Senate recently passed legislation, cosponsored by Senator Andrew Lanza, that would provide further protections and procedures for students who are bullied or cyberbullied. The legislation clarifies and expands the Dignity for All Students Act, an anti-cyberbullying law enacted in 2010 and creates guidelines for local school districts to develop policies and procedures to address the problem.

“This legislation provides schools with the tools they need to address bullying and cyberbullying to help ensure that the school environment is safe for all students,” Senator Lanza said. “With this new law, when cyberbullying impedes a student’s ability to learn, victims and their parents will now have the ability to report the incidents to schools to investigate. This is a critically needed step toward ensuring a safe school environment.”

This comprehensive measure includes within the definitions of bullying and cyberbullying verbal and non-verbal actions, whether on or off school property, which create a risk of substantial disruption of the school environment.

Reports indicate that more than 7 million students from ages 12-18 were bullied at school and with the onslaught of technological advances in recent decades, more than 1.5 million students say they were cyberbullied on or off school property.

The bill (

[S7740](#)) will clarify the legal definitions of all forms of threats, intimidation and abuse (verbal and nonverbal); create new, clear definitions of cyberbullying; apply to all students, without limiting the law to students singled out because of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, disability sexual orientation or gender; and recognizes that cyberbullying that takes place off school grounds still has a negative effect on the school environment and falls within the authority of the school to address.

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