

Federal Legislation

Educational institutions have a responsibility to ensure equal educational opportunity for all students. Bullying and harassment can turn schools into hostile and unwelcoming places where students are not free to learn. AAPD supports legislation that to combat and prevent bullying and harassment in schools.

Safe Schools Improvement Act

The **Safe Schools Improvement Act** (S.506, H.R. 1648) is a bill to fight harassment and bullying of students because of their actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.

State Laws

States have recognized bullying as a major problem that can make schools hostile places for students, prevent students from receiving the education that is their civil right and even lead to desperate acts. All but three states (Michigan, Montana and South Dakota) have some form of anti-bullying law, though the laws vary in coverage and approach.

[Click here for more information on state anti-bullying laws](#)

On December 6th 2011, the U.S. Department of Education released a new report summarizing current approaches in the 46 states with anti-bullying laws and the 41 states that have created anti-bullying policies as models for schools.

[Click here to read the report](#)

Current Issues

With advances in technology and ever-increasing means of communication bullying has expanded beyond classrooms and into the cyber realm of texting, internet and social media. Increasing pressures on bullied students has led to drastic measures including suicides.

[New Jersey](#), in response to public outcry over the suicide of a Rutgers University freshman after a cyberbullying incident, recently passed the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, which is considered the toughest anti-bullying legislation in the country. The law places strict requirements on schools regarding the appointment of anti-bullying specialists and safety teams and the investigation of complaints, including incidents beyond the classroom and cyberbullying.

[Michigan](#), one of the three states that currently have no anti-bullying legislation on the books, has recently proposed anti-bullying legislation in response to the suicide of two Michigan students after they were bullied.

Bullying from adults is also emerging as an issue that needs to be addressed. Recently, [a teacher from New Jersey was caught](#) on video hurling verbal assaults at a special needs student.

Resources

Stopbullying.gov: <http://www.stopbullying.gov/index.html>

GLSEN: www.glsen.org

National Center for Bullying Prevention: <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP):
<http://www.naesp.org/bullying-prevention-resources>

National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP):
<http://www.nassp.org/KnowledgeCenter/TopicsofInterest/BullyingPrevention.aspx>

Stomp Out Bullying: www.stompoutbullying.org

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program: <http://olweus.org/public/index.page>

Bully Police USA: <http://www.bullypolice.org/>

Cyberbullying Research Center: www.cyberbullying.us