



SPONSOR: Sen. Marshall & Rep. Mitchell
Sen. Sokola; Rep. Jaques

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 83

ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE ISSUES RELATED TO SCHOOL SAFETY AND TO MAKE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE SAFETY FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AND AROUND DELAWARE SCHOOLS.

1 WHEREAS, violence and bullying in and around Delaware's schools continue to present major concerns for the
2 safety of our children; and

3 WHEREAS, recent incidents of violence and bullying highlight the seriousness of this problem as well as the
4 difficulty of adequately ensuring public safety in and around our schools; and

5 WHEREAS, incidents of violence and bullying are a concern at schools throughout the State of Delaware; and

6 WHEREAS, incidents of violence and bullying appear to have been exacerbated in recent years by the growth of
7 social media, so that problems that were once largely confined to schools during school hours have now become something
8 that may occur around the clock, seven days a week; and

9 WHEREAS, during a recent meeting on this subject, one representative of Delaware law enforcement made the
10 point, in relation to social media, that texting and other forms of electronic communication occurring after school and away
11 from school property can create problems that the schools must deal with first thing in the morning when students arrive at
12 school the following day; and

13 WHEREAS, while Delaware educators and law enforcement personnel are doing their best to deal with the
14 problems of school violence and bullying, it has grown increasingly clear that the difficulties now faced by all those
15 involved in the effort to maintain adequate levels of safety in and around our schools, most especially in relation to our
16 school children, require greater study and corrective action; and

17 WHEREAS, greater attention should be given to the social media environment in which our school children must
18 now live their lives, both at school and elsewhere; and

19 WHEREAS, suicide is the second leading cause of death for students who are 10-18 years of age; and

20 WHEREAS, student safety also requires a careful study and concrete recommendations to address the mental
21 health problems faced by Delaware's school students; and

22 WHEREAS, it has become clear that there is a need for those involved in various capacities in public education,
23 law enforcement, and in the General Assembly to take a careful look at the issues of school safety and school-related
24 violence, and the difficulties students face in coping with mental health problems, to see what is being done, and can be
25 done, in response to these matters, to assess the effectiveness of current measure now in place, and to make specific,
26 concrete recommendations for improvements;

27 NOW, THEREFORE:

28 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 148th General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of
29 Representatives concurring therein, that a special committee be established to examine issues related to school safety,
30 including violence and bullying in Delaware schools, and the mental health problems faced by Delaware school students
31 and to make findings and recommendations to enhance and improve safety for students, and access to treatment for mental
32 health conditions in our schools.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Special Committee shall be composed of the following members:

- 34 • A member of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, with the appointment to be
35 made on or before July 18, 2016;
- 36 • A member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, with the appointment to be
37 made on or before July 18, 2016;
- 38 • The Chairs of the Senate and House Committees on Education;
- 39 • The Superintendents of the Indian River, Red Clay, Christina, Dover, and New Castle County Vo-Tech
40 School Districts;
- 41 • The Secretary of the Department of Education or designee;
- 42 • A representative from the Delaware Charter Schools Network to be designated on or before July 18, 2016;
- 43 • A representative from the Delaware State Education Association to be designated on or before July 18, 2016;
- 44 • The Attorney General of the State of Delaware or designee;
- 45 • The Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security or designee;
- 46 • The Chief of the Wilmington Police Department or designee;
- 47 • The Superintendent of the Delaware State Police or designee;
- 48 • Three experienced teachers, one from each county, who currently teach in Delaware's public schools, to be
49 appointed by the Delaware State Education Association on or before July 18, 2016;

- 50 • Two individuals with experience in mental health issues facing students, one being appointed by the President
51 Pro Tempore of the Senate, and one being appointed by the Speaker of the House, with the appointments to be
52 made on or before July 18, 2016;
- 53 • An experienced teacher from one of Delaware’s Charter Schools to be appointed by the Delaware Charter
54 Schools Network on or before July 18, 2016;
- 55 • A School Resource Officer to be appointed by the Superintendent of the Delaware State Police on or before
56 July 18, 2016.

57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee shall select a Chair and a Vice-Chair from among its
58 members.

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee shall, to the extent feasible, survey, interview, and receive
60 comment from teachers, students, administrators, recognized experts in relevant fields, and other interested persons about
61 the subjects of the Committee’s work in order to learn more about issues related to violence, bullying, and mental health
62 challenges facing Delaware students, and arrive at recommendations.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee shall take such other actions as it deems advisable to carry out
64 its objectives.

65 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, among its other tasks, the Committee shall consider and make
66 recommendations concerning the following: a) Making meaningful recommendations about social media and its effect upon
67 and relationship to school safety; b) Mental Health problems facing students and recommendations for treatment.

68 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and all state and local agencies shall provide
69 access to information and resources that may be useful to the work of the Committee, as requested by the Committee.

70 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee shall reports it findings and recommendations to the Governor
71 and the General Assembly on or before October 17, 2016.

SYNOPSIS

This resolution establishes a special committee to study and made recommendations about school safety issues, with the committee to provide its report and recommendations on or before October 17, 2016.

Author: Senator Marshall