

**SENATE . . . . . No. 281**

---

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**In the Year Two Thousand Nine**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act to promote tolerance and reduce violence in schools.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 71, Section 37H of the General Laws is hereby amended by  
2 inserting after the second paragraph thereof the following paragraphs: -

3 “The Department of Education shall develop guidelines for the development of policies  
4 regarding acts by students motivated by hatred or intolerance in such cases where these acts  
5 violate the provisions of law and in those cases where they do not violate the provisions of any  
6 particular law but nonetheless have the potential to negatively impact the learning environment.  
7 Said guidelines shall be developed in consultation with the Massachusetts Commission Against  
8 Discrimination, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, the Massachusetts  
9 Principal’s Association, the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, the Attorney  
10 General of the Commonwealth and the Massachusetts Association of Chiefs of Police. Said  
11 guidelines shall provide the basis for preventing and eliminating any such acts of hatred or  
12 intolerance and for appropriate action in response to any such acts by a particular school. Such  
13 guidelines shall be promulgated to all school districts in the Commonwealth not later than 18  
14 months following the passage of this Act.

15           Each school district shall adopt a policy based on the guidelines prescribed above for the  
16 prevention of and response to acts of hatred or intolerance. Said policy shall be in writing,  
17 formally adopted and updated as necessary as a school district policy, may be varied according to  
18 grade level or grade level groupings, and shall be included in the student handbook required by  
19 the following paragraph”.