

BILL

No. 612

An Act to provide for the Respect for Diversity and the Rights of Students

(Assented to _____)

Preamble

WHEREAS parents want the best quality of education for their children and Saskatchewan should aim to have the best schools in Canada;

WHEREAS teachers, educational support workers, and school divisions strive to deliver the best quality of education to all students and need effective leadership and support from the provincial government;

WHEREAS students are entitled to welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environments that embrace diversity and nurture a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self; and

WHEREAS the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* set out the immutable and persistent rights of all Saskatchewan people;

THEREFORE HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows:

Short title

1 *The Respect for Diversity – Student Bill of Rights Act, 2015.*

Interpretation

2 In this Act:

- (a) “**activities and groups**” means student-led, teacher-supported events and organizations that do not infringe on time set aside for learning, including with the name “gay-straight alliance” or “gender sexuality alliance” or any other name which is consistent with the promotion of a positive school environment that is inclusive and accepting of all students;
- (b) “**bullying**” means repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other students, including psychological harm or harm to a student’s reputation;
- (c) “**cyberbullying**” means bullying which takes place on the Internet or by mobile phone;

(d) **“disability”** means any degree of physical or intellectual disability, impairment or infirmity including, but not limited to:

- (i) blindness or visual impairment;
- (ii) deafness or hearing impediment;
- (iii) muteness or speech impediment;
- (iv) epilepsy;
- (v) any degree of paralysis;
- (vi) amputation;
- (vii) lack of physical co-ordination;
- (viii) physical reliance on a service animal, wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- (ix) a learning disability or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in the comprehension or use of symbols or spoken language; or
- (x) a mental disorder, including a disorder of thought, perception, feelings or behaviour;

(e) **“student”** means a person who is enrolled in a school that receives public funding.

Bill of Rights

3 Every student in Saskatchewan has the following rights:

1. The right to have any disability reasonably accommodated;
2. The right to a positive and safe school environment, free of bullying and intimidation;
3. The right to have any concerns about bullying and intimidation, including cyberbullying and other harmful actions dealt with by the school principal;
4. The right to freedom of conscience, opinion and belief, freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly and association;
5. The right to establish and lead activities and groups that promote a safe and inclusive learning environment, and acceptance of and respect for others, including activities and groups that promote:
 - (i) gender equity;
 - (ii) anti-racism;

- (iii) respect for First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures and peoples;
- (iv) respect for people with disabilities; and
- (v) respect for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions.

Bill of Rights must be respected and promoted

4 School administrators shall ensure that the Student Bill of Rights is respected and promoted in each school and that the Student Bill of Rights is posted in standard Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) print [Arial 14 font] in a location that is prominent and easily accessible by students.

Regulations

5 The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations:

- (a) defining any term or word used in this Act that is not defined in this Act;
- (b) respecting anti-bullying strategies;
- (c) respecting the parameters for student-led activities and groups;
- (d) respecting any other matter or thing that will allow for the proper administration of this Act and the regulations.

Coming into force

6 This Act comes into force on proclamation.

FOURTH SESSION

Twenty-seventh Legislature

SASKATCHEWAN

B I L L

No. 612

An Act to provide for the Respect for Diversity and the Rights of Students

Received and read the

First time

Second time

Third time

And Passed

Mr. David Forbes

REGINA SASKATCHEWAN
Printed under the authority of
The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
of Saskatchewan
2015