

Education Committee

HB 2055

Brief Description: *Providing students with increased opportunities to learn in schools where people are treated with respect and civility.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Talcott, Haigh, Bush, D. Schmidt, Cox, Anderson and Skinner.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Encourages districts to develop and implement a program of character education aimed at teaching the importance of civility and respect in speech and conduct*

Hearing Date: *2/21/01*

Staff: *Sydney Forrester (786-7120).*

Background:

The law on compulsory course work in the common school curriculum includes cultivating the importance of manners and the fundamental principles of honesty and honor. Related programs may include conflict-resolution training and violence-prevention training.

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the school setting can impair learning opportunities for students who observe and are the targets of these behaviors. Promoting a safe and civil school environment supports the state's goals for student academic achievement by creating increased opportunities for learning.

Summary of Bill:

Local districts are encouraged to work in partnership with parents and the community to develop a program emphasizing character education and the importance of respectful speech and conduct. Faculty, staff, and volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate appropriate behavior and to refuse to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

To the extent funds are appropriated, districts that develop and implement character

education plans are provided an equal amount per full-time equivalent student for the biennium ending June 31, 2003. The minimum allocation to a district is two hundred dollars for each school operated by the district. Any funds appropriated are administered by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 20, 2001.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.