

Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Kwame R. Brown
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer 

DATE: April 20, 2012

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement – “Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012”

REFERENCE: Bill 19-11, Draft Committee Print shared with the Office of Revenue Analysis on April 11, 2012

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2012 budget but not sufficient in the proposed FY 2013 through FY 2016 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. The estimated cost of implementation is \$98,000 over the proposed budget and financial plan period.

Background

The bill requires educational institutions and agencies¹ that work with youth² to adopt bullying prevention policies within a year of its effective date. Bullying prevention policies must include:

- a statement defining and prohibiting bullying;
- a procedure for reporting an incident of bullying, including anonymous reports;
- a procedure for investigating reports of bullying;
- appropriate consequences and responses to a verified incident of bullying; and
- an appeals process for any party not satisfied with the outcome of the initial investigation.

¹ “Educational institution” means any local education agency that receives funds from the District of Columbia, and “Agency” means a District government entity, including grantees and contractors of such an entity that provides services, activities, or privileges to youth including the: District of Columbia Public Schools, Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Department of Parks and Recreation, District of Columbia Public Library, University of the District of Columbia Community College, University of the District of Columbia, and Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation. Public Charter Schools are included in the definition of educational institution.

² The legislation defines youth as individuals of 21 years of age or younger.

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The bill also encourages, but does not require, agencies and schools to implement bullying prevention programs.

The bill establishes a bullying prevention taskforce responsible for developing and publicizing a model bullying prevention policy, assisting the relevant agencies with developing their own policies that meet the requirements of this legislation, and develop a list of free or low-cost bullying prevention programs.

Finally, the legislation requires educational institutions to submit an annual report to the Mayor that includes the aggregate incidents of bullying and any other information the Mayor deems relevant.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2012 budget but are not sufficient in the proposed FY 2013 through FY 2016 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. The estimated cost of implementation is \$98,000 over the proposed budget and financial plan period.

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is the largest entity that would be subject to the requirements of the bill. In FY 2014, DCPS would require approximately \$36,000 in additional resources to train employees on the bullying prevention policy and to establish a system for accepting anonymous reports of bullying. Each year thereafter, the total annual cost is expected to be approximately \$31,000. This is because DCPS expects to put more resources into publicizing the anonymous reporting system in the first year to ensure community awareness; fewer resources are needed in subsequent years once the community is aware of the system. All other agencies identified in the legislation do not require additional resource to adopt the bullying prevention policy.

The bill encourages, but does not require the implementation of bullying prevention programs. Because this is not a requirement, the fiscal impact analysis omits the estimated cost—agencies and schools have the option of implementing such programs, only if adequate funds are available in their budgets. However, it is important to note that, the majority of agencies affected by this bill would need additional resources in order to establish such programs. DCPS, for example, estimates the cost of establishing an effective school system-wide prevention program to be approximately \$120,000 per year. The estimated cost of each prevention program varies by agency but most agencies stated some level of funding is necessary to establish a prevention program.³

The establishment of a bullying prevention task force does not have a negative impact on the budget and financial plan. The Office of Human Rights (OHR) is in the process of convening a task force responsible for addressing bullying prevention, including the development of model policy. The OHR is able to carry out the role of convening and supporting the task force using its existing resources.⁴

³ No agency or educational institution said they could establish a bullying prevention program with existing resources. The majority of agencies, but not all, provided a cost estimates for implementing a prevention program.

⁴ Personal communication with Gustavo Velasquez, Director, Office of Human Rights, on April 10, 2012.

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The table below outlines the costs for the FY 2013 through FY 2016 budget and financial plan period.

Estimated Fiscal Impact for Bill 19-11, Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012, FY 2013-2016					
	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	Four-Year Total
DCPS Costs training and reporting	\$0	\$36,000	\$31,000	\$31,000	\$98,000