

SENATE No. 281

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Bruce E. Tarr

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act to promote tolerance and reduce violence in schools

PETITION OF:

NAME:

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Bruce E. Tarr

First Essex and Middlesex

Linda Dean Campbell

15th Essex

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. S00373 OF .]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and 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 inserting
2 after the second paragraph thereof the following paragraphs: -

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

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