



"Leadership in Public School Governance"

JOHN H. ASHLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

122 W. WASHINGTON AVENUE, MADISON, WI 53703
PHONE: 608-257-2622 FAX: 608-257-8386

TO: Members, Senate Committee on Education
FROM: Dan Rossmiller, Legislative Services Director
DATE: August 23, 2007
RE: **Senate Bill 42**, relating to school policies on bullying

Wisconsin school boards take bullying and its consequences seriously. A March 2007 Department of Public Instruction (DPI) publication indicates that over 400 public school districts have bullying policies in place. Local school boards have been responsive in adopting bullying policies and will continue to be responsive in addressing bullying issues.

The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) strongly supports local control and accountability resting with locally elected school boards. The WASB believes school district policies generally should be based on local community needs and values and should be established on a district-by-district basis. The WASB appreciates that Senate Bill 42 recognizes and maintains ultimate policy-making authority with locally-elected school boards.

The WASB's policy services staff regularly provides policy guidance to local school boards and advises that districts adopt a comprehensive strategy for dealing with bullying that emphasizes bullying prevention and includes: communicating the policy regularly to students, parents, teachers and others; staff training on dealing with bullying and bullying prevention; education for students about bullying as well as protective behaviors; and a strong commitment to anti-bullying efforts by administrators with fair and consistent implementation. The WASB will continue working to strengthen local bullying policies.

The WASB and Wisconsin school boards are committed to addressing the serious challenges bullying presents. Please feel free to contact Dan Rossmiller (257-2622 or drossmiller@wasb.org) if you have any questions or if you need additional information.