

Senate Bill 577

Sponsored by Senator GELSER BLOUIN; Senator DEMBROW (Presession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Modifies when use of force upon minor child or student is justifiable and not criminal.
Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to the use of force; creating new provisions; amending ORS 161.205 and 339.250; and de-
3 claring an emergency.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1.** ORS 161.205 is amended to read:

6 161.205. The use of physical force upon another person that would otherwise constitute an of-
7 fense is justifiable and not criminal under any of the following circumstances:

8 *[(1)(a) A parent, guardian or other person entrusted with the care and supervision of a minor or*
9 *an incompetent person may use reasonable physical force upon such minor or incompetent person when*
10 *and to the extent the person reasonably believes it necessary to maintain discipline or to promote the*
11 *welfare of the minor or incompetent person.]*

12 **(1)(a) A parent or legal guardian of a minor child may use physical force consisting of**
13 **reasonable and age-appropriate discipline upon the minor child unless the physical force**
14 **constitutes abuse as defined in ORS 418.257 or 419B.005.**

15 (b) Personnel of a public education program, as that term is defined in ORS 339.285, may use
16 reasonable physical force upon a student [*when and*] **only** to the extent **that** the application of force
17 is consistent with ORS 339.285 to 339.303 **and is not corporal punishment as defined in ORS**
18 **339.250 (9).**

19 (2) Subject to ORS 161.237 and 421.107, an authorized official of a jail, prison or correctional
20 facility may use physical force when and to the extent that the official reasonably believes it nec-
21 essary to maintain order and discipline or as is authorized by law.

22 (3) A person responsible for the maintenance of order in a common carrier of passengers, or a
23 person acting under the direction of the person, may use physical force when and to the extent that
24 the person reasonably believes it necessary to maintain order, but the person may use deadly phys-
25 ical force only when the person reasonably believes it necessary to prevent death or serious physical
26 injury.

27 (4) A person acting under a reasonable belief that another person is about to commit suicide
28 or to inflict serious physical self-injury may use physical force upon that person to the extent that
29 the person reasonably believes it necessary to thwart the result.

30 (5) A person may use physical force upon another person in self-defense or in defending a third
31 person, in defending property, in making an arrest or in preventing an escape, as hereafter pre-

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted.
New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 scribed in chapter 743, Oregon Laws 1971.

2 **SECTION 2.** ORS 339.250 is amended to read:

3 339.250. (1) Public school students shall comply with rules for the government of such schools,
4 pursue the prescribed course of study, use the prescribed textbooks and submit to the teachers' au-
5 thority.

6 (2) Each district school board shall adopt written policies for the discipline, suspension or ex-
7 pulsion of any refractory student. The policies:

8 (a) May allow discipline, suspension or expulsion for conduct that includes, but is not limited
9 to:

10 (A) Willful disobedience;

11 (B) Open defiance of the authority of a school employee;

12 (C) Possession or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, drugs or other controlled substances;

13 (D) Use or display of profane or obscene language;

14 (E) Willful damage or injury to school property;

15 (F) Use of threats, intimidation, harassment or coercion against a student or a school employee;

16 (G) Assault of a school employee or another student; or

17 (H) Intentional attempts, by word or conduct, to place a school employee or another student in
18 fear of imminent serious physical injury.

19 (b) Must require consideration of the age of a student and the past pattern of behavior of a
20 student prior to imposing the suspension or expulsion of a student.

21 (c) Must limit the use of expulsion to the following circumstances:

22 (A) For conduct that poses a threat to the health or safety of students or school employees;

23 (B) When other strategies to change student conduct have been ineffective, except that expul-
24 sion may not be used to address truancy; or

25 (C) When the expulsion is required by law.

26 (d) In addition to any limitations imposed by paragraph (c) of this subsection, for a student who
27 is in fifth grade or lower, must limit the use of out-of-school suspension or of expulsion to the fol-
28 lowing circumstances:

29 (A) For nonaccidental conduct causing serious physical harm to a student or school employee;

30 (B) When a school administrator determines, based upon the administrator's observation or upon
31 a report from a school employee, that the student's conduct poses a direct threat to the health or
32 safety of students or school employees; or

33 (C) When the suspension or expulsion is required by law.

34 (e) When an out-of-school suspension is imposed as provided under paragraph (d) of this sub-
35 section, must require the school district to take steps to prevent the recurrence of the behavior that
36 led to the out-of-school suspension and return the student to a classroom setting so that the dis-
37 ruption of the student's academic instruction is minimized.

38 (f) Must be limited so that:

39 (A) The duration of an expulsion may not be more than one calendar year.

40 (B) The duration of a suspension may not be more than 10 school days.

41 (g) Notwithstanding ORS 336.010, may require a student to attend school during nonschool hours
42 as an alternative to suspension if the total number of hours does not exceed the equivalent of 10
43 school days.

44 (3) Pursuant to the policies adopted as provided by subsection (2) of this section, each school
45 district shall develop a student handbook, code of conduct or other document that:

- 1 (a) Defines and helps create a learning environment that students respect;
- 2 (b) Defines acceptable norms of behavior for students and the types of behavior that are subject
3 to discipline;
- 4 (c) Establishes procedures to address behavior or circumstances that pose a threat to the safety
5 of students or employees of the school;
- 6 (d) Establishes a system of consequences that are designed to correct student misconduct and
7 promote behavior within acceptable norms; and
- 8 (e) Makes the system of consequences known to the school community through the dissemination
9 of information to students, parents, legal guardians and school district employees.
- 10 (4) Each district school board shall adopt written policies on managing students who threaten
11 violence or harm in public schools. The policies adopted by a district school board under this section
12 shall include all of the following:
- 13 (a) Staff reporting methods.
- 14 (b) Provisions that allow an administrator to consider and implement any of the following
15 options:
- 16 (A) Immediately removing from the classroom setting any student who has threatened to injure
17 another person or to severely damage school property.
- 18 (B) Placing the student in a setting where the behavior will receive immediate attention, in-
19 cluding, but not limited to, the office of the school principal, vice principal, assistant principal,
20 counselor or a school psychologist licensed by the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission or
21 the office of any licensed mental health professional.
- 22 (C) Requiring that a school obtain an evaluation of a student by a licensed mental health pro-
23 fessional before allowing the student to return to the classroom setting. A student who is removed
24 from the classroom setting for an evaluation may not be removed for more than 10 school days un-
25 less the administrator is able to show good cause that an evaluation could not be completed in that
26 time period. The policy must describe the circumstances under which the district school board may
27 enter into contracts with licensed mental health professionals to perform any evaluations required
28 under this subparagraph.
- 29 (c) The requirement that an administrator provide to the parent or legal guardian of the student
30 notification that describes the student's behavior and the school's response.
- 31 (d) A provision for the allocation of any funds necessary for the school district to implement the
32 policies described in this subsection.
- 33 (5) In establishing and enforcing discipline, suspension and expulsion policies, a district school
34 board shall ensure that the policy is designed to:
- 35 (a) Protect students and school employees from harm;
- 36 (b) Provide opportunities for students to learn from their mistakes;
- 37 (c) Foster positive learning communities;
- 38 (d) Keep students in school and attending class;
- 39 (e) Impose disciplinary sanctions without bias against students from a protected class, as defined
40 in ORS 339.351;
- 41 (f) Implement a graduated set of age-appropriate responses to misconduct that are fair,
42 nondiscriminatory and proportionate in relation to each student's individual conduct;
- 43 (g) Employ a range of strategies for prevention, intervention and discipline that take into ac-
44 count a student's developmental capacities and that are proportionate to the degree and severity
45 of the student's misbehavior;

1 (h) Propose, prior to a student's expulsion or leaving school, alternative programs of instruction
2 or instruction combined with counseling for the student that are appropriate and accessible to the
3 student in the following circumstances:

4 (A) Following a second or subsequent occurrence within any three-year period of a severe dis-
5 ciplinary problem with the student; or

6 (B) When a parent or legal guardian applies for the student's exemption from compulsory at-
7 tendance on a semiannual basis as provided in ORS 339.030 (2);

8 (i) To the extent practicable, use approaches that are shown through research to be effective in
9 reducing student misbehavior and promoting safe and productive social behavior; and

10 (j) Ensure that school conduct and discipline codes comply with all state and federal laws con-
11 cerning the education of students with disabilities.

12 (6) Except for policies adopted under subsection (7) of this section, any policies adopted under
13 this section must provide for the dissemination of information about alternative programs of in-
14 struction or instruction combined with counseling, as described in subsection (5)(h) of this section,
15 in writing to the student and the parent, legal guardian or person in parental relationship with the
16 student at least once every six months, unless the information has changed because of the avail-
17 ability of new programs.

18 (7) Each district school board shall adopt a written policy involving firearms, as defined in 18
19 U.S.C. 921. The policy shall:

20 (a) Require expulsion from school for a period of not less than one year of any student who is
21 determined to have:

22 (A) Brought a firearm to a school, to school property under the jurisdiction of the school district
23 or to an activity under the jurisdiction of the school district;

24 (B) Possessed, concealed or used a firearm in a school, on school property under the jurisdiction
25 of the school district or at an activity under the jurisdiction of the school district; or

26 (C) Brought to or possessed, concealed or used a firearm at an interscholastic activity adminis-
27 tered by a voluntary organization.

28 (b) Allow exceptions:

29 (A) For courses, programs and activities approved by the school district that are conducted on
30 school property, including, but not limited to, hunter safety courses, Reserve Officer Training Corps
31 programs, firearm-related sports or firearm-related vocational courses; and

32 (B) Identified by and adopted by the State Board of Education by rule.

33 (c) Allow a superintendent of a school district to:

34 (A) Modify the expulsion requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis.

35 (B) Propose alternative programs of instruction or instruction combined with counseling for a
36 student that are appropriate and accessible to the student. If alternative programs are appropriate
37 for a student, the superintendent shall ensure that information about programs of instruction or in-
38 struction combined with counseling is provided in writing to the student and the parent, legal
39 guardian or person in parental relationship with the student at least once every six months, or at
40 any time the information changes because of the availability of new programs.

41 (d) Require a referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency of any student who is expelled
42 under this subsection.

43 (e) Require an annual reporting to the Department of Education of the name of each school that
44 had an expulsion under this subsection and the number of students expelled from each school.

45 (8) Each district school board shall adopt and disseminate written policies for the use of physical

1 force upon a student. The policies must allow an individual who is a teacher, administrator, school
2 employee or school volunteer to use reasonable physical force upon a student when and to the ex-
3 tent the application of force is consistent with ORS 339.285 to 339.303.

4 (9)(a) The authority to discipline a student does not authorize the infliction of corporal punish-
5 ment. Every resolution, bylaw, rule, ordinance or other act of a district school board, a public
6 charter school or the Department of Education that permits or authorizes the infliction of corporal
7 punishment upon a student is void and unenforceable.

8 (b) As used in this subsection:

9 (A) "Corporal punishment" means the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of,
10 physical pain on a student.

11 (B) "Corporal punishment" does not include:

12 (i) The use of physical force authorized by ORS 161.205 (4) or (5) for the reasons specified
13 therein; or

14 (ii) Physical pain or discomfort resulting from or caused by participation in athletic competition
15 or other such recreational activity, voluntarily engaged in by a student.

16 (10) For purposes of this section, calculations of the number of school days that a student is
17 removed from a classroom setting shall be as follows:

18 (a) As a half day if the student is out of school for half, or less than half, of the scheduled school
19 day; and

20 (b) As a full day if the student is out of school for more than half of the scheduled school day.

21 **SECTION 3. The amendments to ORS 161.205 and 339.250 by sections 1 and 2 of this 2023**
22 **Act apply to conduct occurring on or after the effective date of this 2023 Act.**

23 **SECTION 4. This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public**
24 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect**
25 **on its passage.**

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