



HR0043

LRB097 06499 NHT 46582 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex  
3 developmental disability that causes problems with social  
4 interaction and communication; symptoms usually start before  
5 age 3 and can cause delays or problems in many different skills  
6 that develop from infancy to adulthood; and

7           WHEREAS, One of the primary characteristics of ASD is its  
8 interference with a person's ability to communicate, interact  
9 socially with others, or develop peer relationships; and

10           WHEREAS, Parents and teachers of children with  
11 disabilities recognize the social isolation these children  
12 face, isolation that is well-documented by researchers; and

13           WHEREAS, While the severity of the disorder and social  
14 impairment varies widely, in some cases, certain symptoms of  
15 the disorder may be relieved by pairing a public school student  
16 with ASD with a student "peer buddy" whom the school staff has  
17 identified as a good match and a positive role model for other  
18 students; and

19           WHEREAS, Peer buddy programs have been successful in many  
20 school districts in this State, and their use should be  
21 encouraged throughout this State; and

1           WHEREAS, Pairing a student with ASD with a student partner  
2 whose role is to facilitate interactions with school staff and  
3 new peer groups may promote academic and social inclusion; and

4           WHEREAS, At the same time that researchers are proving the  
5 need children with disabilities have for more and better social  
6 contacts, they are also finding that interaction with peers  
7 with disabilities has positive impacts on those who do not have  
8 disabilities; and

9           WHEREAS, It is appropriate to urge the State Board of  
10 Education to encourage the establishment of peer buddy programs  
11 in school districts to pair students with ASD and other  
12 developmental disabilities with appropriate student partners;  
13 therefore, be it

14           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
15 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
16 we urge the State Board of Education, in consultation with the  
17 Executive Director of the Illinois Council on Developmental  
18 Disabilities and representatives of entities that promote  
19 awareness about autism and provide programs and services to  
20 people with autism, to encourage the establishment of a peer  
21 buddy program in each school district for children with autism  
22 spectrum disorder enrolled in elementary, middle, and high

1 school, including training for students and staff affiliated  
2 with the program; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
4 delivered to the State Board of Education, the Autism Society  
5 of Illinois, Giant Steps, Little Friends Center for  
6 Autism-Naperville, and the Illinois Council on Developmental  
7 Disabilities.