



SR0031

LRB104 07368 ECR 17408 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Millions of neurodivergent individuals in the U.S., an estimated 15 to 20% of the overall population according to an American Enterprise Institute (AEI) Report, are bullied in primary education school settings; and

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WHEREAS, Individuals with autism are up to four times more likely to experience loneliness than non-autistic people, and children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are nearly twice as likely to be physically and emotionally bullied than their neurotypical peers, according to information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2021; and

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WHEREAS, Children with autism or other neurodivergent conditions are particularly sensitive to their early social environments, and positive early interactions, such as inclusive and supportive peer relationships, can significantly enhance their emotional well-being and overall development; and

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WHEREAS, A school having an action plan for neurotypical students provides a simple way to demonstrate kindness, respect, and accommodation directed towards neurodivergent peers; and

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1 WHEREAS, If nothing is done in K-8 education for
2 vulnerable Illinoisans, countless neurodivergent individuals
3 will continue being silently oppressed by peers unaware of the
4 condition that affects their peers; and

5 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has a responsibility to
6 provide its neurodivergent students with a positive social
7 environment in primary K-8 education; in doing so, it is
8 imperative that neurotypical peers receive educational
9 guidance, in the form of assemblies, workbooks, handbooks,
10 Social Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons, in-classroom
11 conversations, and other methods, on neurodivergence so they
12 can become cognizant of the various neurodivergent conditions;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Within schools that encompass a K-8 district,
15 presentations on topics of neurodivergence can be delivered to
16 students in an interpersonal format, including, but not
17 limited to, assemblies and/or presentations; and

18 WHEREAS, Special needs instructors and/or professionals
19 should be involved in this process, whether through providing
20 information or through the development of the assembly itself,
21 in order to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of the
22 educational materials; and

1 WHEREAS, Additional input and content development can be
2 provided by local groups dedicated to neurodivergence
3 advocacy, including the Lincolnshire Autism Awareness Project,
4 which has previously developed presentations used in school
5 districts, including Illinois' District 102, District 103, and
6 others; and

7 WHEREAS, Autism Awareness Month, recognized annually in
8 the month of April, has been utilized as a time to spread
9 awareness, understanding, and acceptance of autism spectrum
10 disorders; and

11 WHEREAS, Schools that implement autism awareness programs
12 during awareness months like April often see a reduction in
13 bullying incidents as students and staff educated on autism
14 and neurodivergence as a whole are more likely to intervene
15 and support students with autism, reducing instances of
16 oppression in schooling; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
18 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we encourage the
19 implementation of a program in K-8 schools to mandate student
20 education on topics of neurodivergence to reinforce Illinois'
21 commitment to providing access to an inclusive future for all
22 students and a safe space for all families in education,

1 cognizant of all neurological backgrounds.