

Senate Education Committee

Trevor Currier 271-4151

SB 575, establishing a study committee to study the issue of school bullying.

Hearing Date: February 17, 2026

Time Opened: 10:27 a.m.

Time Closed: 10:33 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Ward, Sullivan, Abbas, Prentiss and Altschiller

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill creates a study committee to study the issue of school bullying.

Sponsors:

Sen. Fenton

Sen. Sullivan

Sen. Altschiller

Sen. Prentiss

Rep. N. Murphy

Who supports the bill: 11 People signed in support of SB 575. To see the full list of sign-ins, please email the committee aide (trevor.currier@gc.nh.gov).

Who opposes the bill: 29 People signed in opposition to SB 575. To see the full list of sign-ins, please email the committee aide (trevor.currier@gc.nh.gov).

Who is neutral on the bill: No one.

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Senator Donovan Fenton, *Senate District 10*

- Senator Fenton introduced and testified in support of Senate Bill 575.
- Senator Fenton explained that the purpose of this legislation is to establish a study committee that will research the potential ways the state can combat bullying in schools.
- Sen. Fenton stated that bullying can harm students' well-being, academic success, and their sense of safety at school.

- Sen. Fenton stated that recent issues in his district are the cause of the legislation.
- He established that the committee would identify best practices for prevention and consider whether additional legislative action is necessary.
- He added that this isn't about assigning blame but about making sure that the State of New Hampshire is taking a proactive approach to the issue and doing everything it can to guarantee a safe school environment for all students.
- Senator Sullivan asked whether Senate Bill 575 would help determine if existing laws are being properly implemented and followed at the local level. Senator Fenton responded that the bill would investigate the current enforcement of existing laws and identify any loopholes that may need to be addressed. He also expressed that educators might need more tools to properly handle instances of bullying online or outside of schools.
- Senator Ward stated that bullying is partially addressed in Senate Bill 658 and asked Senator Fenton if he believed it would address the concerns laid out in Senate Bill 575. Senator Fenton responded that a standalone bill to address bullying would be more appropriate, but he expressed a willingness to work with Senator Ward to combine the two.
- Senator Prentiss noted that there have been cases where adults have bullied children and asked if this issue could be addressed within the bill's stakeholder group. Senator Fenton responded that many parties are included in the legislation, and the more the better.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None.

Neutral Information Presented: None.