**New law seeks to stop bullying in schools**

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MANILA, Philippines – President Benigno Aquino III has signed into law a bill requiring anti-bullying policies in all elementary and secondary schools in the country.

Republic Act no. 10627 or the “[Anti-Bullying Act of 2013](http://www.gov.ph/2013/09/12/republic-act-no-10627/),” signed by Aquino last September 12, prohibits and defines bullying as “any severe or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property.”

Schools must come up with their own policies and sanctions against such prohibited acts committed within their campuses or during school-related activities.

Cyber-bullying or bullying done through use of technology and electronic means, as well as bullying inside school buses, will also be prohibited.

“The law prohibits bullying at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related…if the act or acts in question create a hostile environment at school,” the statement said.

Those who violate school policies on bullying will face disciplinary sanctions and will undergo a rehabilitation program administered by the school.

Schools must include in their policy clear procedures on how to report and respond to acts of bullying or retaliation.

RA 10627 also requires schools to maintain a public record of relevant information and statistics on bullying incidents, without revealing the names of students.

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* Articles are written by experts in the field for other experts in the field.