

SENATE, No. 4234

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 6, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO

District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “Parents Bill of Rights Act”; prohibits school district from interfering with fundamental right of parent or guardian to engage in and direct student’s education; and permits opt-out of school district curriculum.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning a parent's right to engage in and direct a
2 student's education, and supplementing chapter 36 of Title 18A
3 of the New Jersey Statutes.

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5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Parents
9 Bill of Rights Act."

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11 2. The Legislature finds and declares that:

12 a. Parents and guardians have a First Amendment right to
13 express their opinions of decisions made by State and local
14 education leaders.

15 b. Parents and guardians have a fundamental right to engage in
16 and direct their child's education.

17 c. States and local educational agencies should empower
18 parents and guardians to communicate regularly with federal, State,
19 and local policymakers and educators regarding the education and
20 well-being of their children.

21 d. Transparent and cooperative relationships between parents
22 and guardians and school districts have significant and long-lasting
23 positive effects on the development of children.

24 e. Parents' and guardians' concerns over content and pedagogy
25 deserve to be heard and fully considered by school district
26 professionals.

27 f. Parent, guardian, and other community input about schools
28 that is presented in a lawful and appropriate manner should always
29 be encouraged.

30 g. Educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders should
31 never seek to criminalize the lawfully expressed concerns of parents
32 and guardians about their children's education.

33 h. The Legislature believes that the First Amendment
34 guarantees parents and other stakeholders the right to assemble and
35 express their opinions of decisions affecting their children and
36 communities, and that educators and policymakers should welcome
37 and encourage engagement and consider feedback when making
38 decisions.

39
40 3. a. A parent or guardian of a student enrolled in a school in
41 the State has a fundamental right to engage in and direct their
42 child's education that shall include, but not be limited to, the right
43 to:

44 (1) a summary of the curriculum to be taught to their child in the
45 current school year;

46 (2) review the curriculum to be taught to their child in the
47 current school year;

1 (3) review a list of the media services, textbooks, and books that
2 are used in the classroom and that are available to a student through
3 the school district; and

4 (4) opt their child out of any curriculum that the parent or
5 guardian believes is in conflict with their conscience or sincerely
6 held moral or religious beliefs. No penalties as to credit or
7 graduation shall result from a parent or guardian's decision to opt a
8 student out of any curriculum pursuant to this subsection.

9 b. No school or school district shall interfere with a parent or
10 guardian's fundamental right to engage in and direct their child's
11 education or deny a request by a parent or guardian for information
12 made pursuant to the provisions of this section.

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14 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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19 This bill establishes the "Parents Bill of Rights Act." The bill
20 provides that a parent or guardian of a student enrolled in a school
21 in the State has a fundamental right to engage in and direct their
22 child's education. Under the bill, the parent or guardian's
23 fundamental right to engage in and direct their child's education
24 includes, but is not limited to, the right to (1) a summary of the
25 curriculum to be taught to their child in the current school year; (2)
26 review the curriculum to be taught to their child in the current
27 school year; (3) review a list of the media services, textbooks, and
28 books that are used in the classroom and that are available to a
29 student through the school district; and (4) opt their child out of any
30 curriculum that the parent or guardian believes is in conflict with
31 their conscience or sincerely held moral or religious beliefs. No
32 penalties as to credit or graduation are permitted as a result of a
33 parent or guardian's decision to opt their child out of the curriculum
34 under the provisions of the bill. The bill prohibits a school or
35 school district from interfering with a parent or guardian's
36 fundamental right to engage in and direct their child's education or
37 denying a request by a parent or guardian for information made
38 pursuant to the provisions of the bill.