

[First Reprint]

**ASSEMBLY, No. 4977**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**220th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED DECEMBER 12, 2022

**Sponsored by:**

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**District 6 (Burlington and Camden)**

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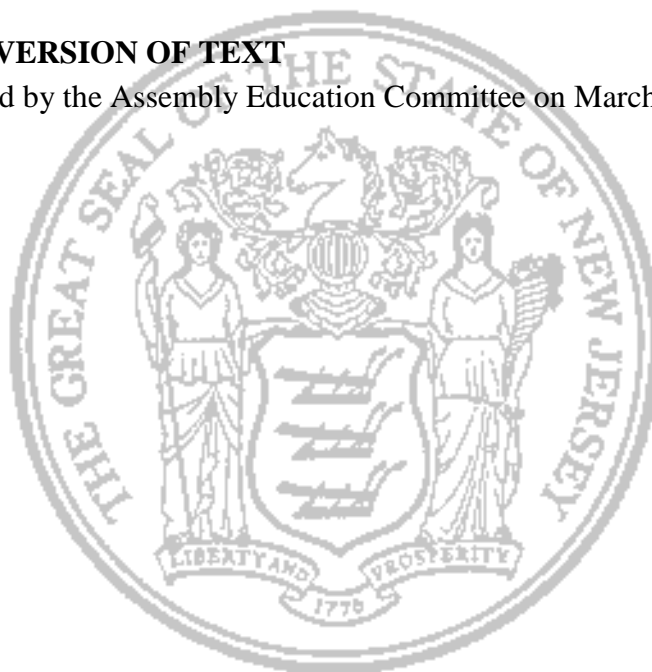
**Assemblymen Simonsen, McClellan, Karabinchak, Assemblywomen Jasey, Murphy, DeFuccio, Lopez and Assemblyman Moen**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes School Safety and Security Task Force.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Assembly Education Committee on March 16, 2023, with amendments.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/7/2023)**

1 AN ACT establishing the School Safety and Security Task Force.

2

3 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
4 of New Jersey:

5

6 1. a. There is established the School Safety and Security Task  
7 Force. The purpose of the task force shall be to study and develop  
8 recommendations to improve school safety and security, and to ensure  
9 a safe learning environment for students and employees.

10 b. The task force shall consist of <sup>1</sup>**[11]** 17<sup>1</sup> members as follows:

11 (1) the Commissioner of Education, or a designee;

12 (2) the Director of the Office of Homeland Security, or a designee;

13 (3) the Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Schools  
14 Development Authority, or a designee;

15 (4) <sup>1</sup>**[four]** the Chief School Administrator of a nonpublic school;

16 (5) eight<sup>1</sup> members appointed by the Governor including one each  
17 from the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials, the  
18 New Jersey Education Association, the New Jersey School Boards  
19 Association, <sup>1</sup>the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities,  
20 the New Jersey Public Charter Schools Association, the New Jersey  
21 Association of School Administrators, the New Jersey College and  
22 University Public Safety Association,<sup>1</sup> and the New Jersey Principals  
23 and Supervisors Association; and

24 <sup>1</sup>**[(5) four]** (6) five<sup>1</sup> members of the public, <sup>1</sup>**[two]** three<sup>1</sup> of  
25 <sup>1</sup>**[which]** whom<sup>1</sup> have demonstrated expertise in the development or  
26 implementation of school security standards or technology, one of  
27 <sup>1</sup>**[which]** whom<sup>1</sup> is an active or retired law enforcement officer, and  
28 one of <sup>1</sup>**[which]** whom<sup>1</sup> is an active or retired mental health  
29 professional. <sup>1</sup>**[Two]** The<sup>1</sup> members of the public pursuant to this  
30 subsection shall be appointed by the Governor, <sup>1</sup>**[one shall be**  
31 **appointed by the President of the Senate, and one shall be appointed**  
32 **by the Speaker of the General Assembly]** upon consideration of the  
33 recommendations of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the  
34 General Assembly<sup>1</sup>.

35

36 2. Appointments to the task force shall be made within 30 days  
37 of the effective date of this act. Vacancies in the membership of the  
38 task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original  
39 appointments were made. Members of the task force shall serve  
40 without compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for  
41 expenses actually incurred in the performance of their duties within  
42 the limits of funds made available to the task force for its purposes.

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

<sup>1</sup>Assembly AED committee amendments adopted March 16, 2023.

1       3. <sup>1</sup>a.<sup>1</sup> The task force shall organize within 30 days after the  
2 appointment of its members and shall select a chairperson and a vice-  
3 chairperson from among its members and a secretary who need not be  
4 a member of the task force.

5       <sup>1</sup>b. The presence of five members appointed to the task force shall  
6 constitute a quorum to conduct official task force business. Any  
7 recommendations of the task force shall be approved by a majority of  
8 the members present.<sup>1</sup>

9  
10       4. Staff and related support services shall be provided to the task  
11 force by the Department of Education. The task force shall also be  
12 entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the service of the  
13 employees of any State, county, or municipal department, board,  
14 bureau, commission or agency as it may require and as may be  
15 available to it for its purposes.

16  
17       5. a. It shall be the duty of the task force to identify potential  
18 breaches of security in the public schools, and make recommendations  
19 to improve school safety and security. The issues studied by the task  
20 force shall include, but are not limited to:

21       (1) placing screening systems at school entrances;

22       (2) stationing school resource officers in each school building;

23       (3) improving response times to emergency situations, including  
24 lockdowns, active shooter, and bomb threats;

25       (4) requiring advanced student and visitor identification cards;

26       (5) using biometric, retina, or other advanced recognition systems  
27 for authorized entrance into school buildings;

28       (6) the effectiveness of installing panic alarms in school buildings  
29 to alert local law enforcement authorities to emergency situations,  
30 required under “Alyssa’s Law,” P.L.2019, c.33;

31       (7) scheduling periodic patrols of school buildings and grounds by  
32 local law enforcement officers; <sup>1</sup>**[and]**<sup>1</sup>

33       (8) hardening the school perimeter and building entryways<sup>1</sup>; and

34       (9) considering strategies to ensure the needs of students with  
35 disabilities are reflected in all areas of emergency planning and  
36 response measures<sup>1</sup>.

37       b. The task force shall review and develop recommendations on  
38 building security and assessment standards for existing school  
39 facilities and new construction, including, but not limited to, standards  
40 for:

41       (1) architectural design for new construction;

42       (2) assessing and abating security risks in existing school facilities;

43       (3) emergency communication plans;

44       (4) staff training; and

45       (5) addressing elevated risk factors, including proximity to a  
46 chemical facility or nuclear power plant.

1 c. In developing its recommendations, the task force shall  
2 research effective strategies that have been employed in other states,  
3 and refer to and incorporate existing State research, data,  
4 recommendations, and standards, including the July 2015 report and  
5 recommendations of the New Jersey School Security Task Force.

6 d. The task force is authorized, within the limits of funds  
7 appropriated or otherwise made available to it for its purpose, to  
8 commission professional engineering firms and certified information  
9 systems professionals in identifying, interviewing, researching, and  
10 documenting best security practices.

11  
12 6. The task force shall issue a final report of its findings and  
13 recommendations, including any recommended legislation, to the  
14 Governor, to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991,  
15 c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), and to the State Board of Education no later  
16 than six months after its organizational meeting.

17  
18 7. This act shall take effect immediately and the task force shall  
19 expire upon the issuance of the final report.