

**ASSEMBLY, No. 5199**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**220th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 16, 2023

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman YVONNE LOPEZ**

**District 19 (Middlesex)**

**Assemblyman BENJIE E. WIMBERLY**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Assemblyman STERLEY S. STANLEY**

**District 18 (Middlesex)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman Quijano**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes Office of Learning Loss Czar.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/9/2023)**

1 AN ACT establishing the Office of the Learning Loss Czar and  
2 supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

6  
7 1. There is created in the Executive Branch of the State  
8 Government the Office of the Learning Loss Czar. For the purposes  
9 of complying with the provisions of Article V, Section IV,  
10 paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution, the Office of the  
11 Learning Loss Czar is allocated to the Department of Education, but  
12 notwithstanding this allocation, the office shall be independent of  
13 any supervision or control by the department, or by any board or  
14 officer thereof, in the performance of its duties. The office shall  
15 have the duty to collaborate with the Commissioner of Education to  
16 analyze and address learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic  
17 by:

18 a. identifying educational products, strategies, and services that  
19 have demonstrated effectiveness in identifying and reversing  
20 student learning loss, including those products, strategies, and  
21 services that are specifically designed to address learning loss  
22 experienced by students of color, low-income students, and students  
23 with disabilities;

24 b. creating and maintaining a resource bank of examples of these  
25 products, explanations of and instructions for implementing these  
26 strategies and services, and models of professional development  
27 programs related to using the products and implementing the  
28 strategies and services. School districts may submit to the office  
29 for inclusion in the resource bank, descriptions and explanations of  
30 strategies, services, and programs that they have implemented, with  
31 evidence demonstrating the positive effects achieved through  
32 implementing the strategies, services, and programs;

33 c. identifying public and private entities that may partner with  
34 school districts to provide personnel or other resources to assist in  
35 implementing strategies to overcome learning loss;

36 d. providing technical assistance to school districts, upon  
37 request, to assist in identifying and implementing strategies to  
38 address student learning loss;

39 e. supporting grant application processes related to learning loss  
40 for school districts and the Department of Education by monitoring  
41 available grants, recommending grant applications, and assisting  
42 with the grant application process; and

43 f. cooperating with institutions of higher education in  
44 researching and analyzing data on student learning loss to better  
45 understand the issue and identify the most effective means to  
46 address it.

1       2. The administrator and chief executive officer of the office is  
2 the Learning Loss Czar, who shall be a person qualified by training  
3 and experience to perform the duties of the office. The Learning  
4 Loss Czar shall be appointed by the Governor and shall serve at the  
5 pleasure of the Governor during the Governor's term of office and  
6 until the appointment and qualification of the Learning Loss Czar's  
7 successor. The Learning Loss Czar's time shall be devoted entirely  
8 to the duties of the position and shall receive a salary as determined  
9 by law. Any vacancy occurring in the position of the Learning Loss  
10 Czar shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment;  
11 except that if the Learning Loss Czar dies, resigns, becomes  
12 ineligible to serve for any reason, or is removed from office, the  
13 Governor shall appoint an acting Learning Loss Czar, who shall  
14 serve until the appointment and qualification of the Learning Loss  
15 Czar, but in no event longer than six months from the occurrence of  
16 the vacancy, and who shall exercise during this period all the  
17 powers and duties of the Learning Loss Czar pursuant to the  
18 provisions of this act.

19  
20       3. The Learning Loss Czar, as administrator and chief executive  
21 officer of the office, shall:

22       a. administer and organize the work of the office and establish  
23 therein such administrative subdivisions as the Learning Loss Czar  
24 may deem necessary, proper, and expedient. The Learning Loss  
25 Czar may formulate and adopt rules and regulations and prescribe  
26 duties for the efficient conduct of the business, work, and general  
27 administration of the office. The Learning Loss Czar may delegate  
28 to subordinate officers or employees in the office such power as the  
29 Learning Loss Czar may deem desirable to be exercised under the  
30 Learning Loss Czar's supervision and control;

31       b. appoint and remove stenographic, clerical, and other  
32 secretarial assistants as may be required for the proper conduct of  
33 the office, subject to the provisions of Title 11A of the New Jersey  
34 Statutes, and other applicable statutes, and within the limits of  
35 funds appropriated or otherwise made available therefor. In  
36 addition, and within funding limits, the Learning Loss Czar may  
37 appoint, retain, or employ, without regard to the provisions of Title  
38 11A of the New Jersey Statutes or any other statutes, any officers,  
39 financial managers, social workers, or other professionally qualified  
40 personnel on a contract basis or otherwise as the Learning Loss  
41 Czar deems necessary;

42       c. maintain suitable headquarters for the office and such other  
43 quarters as the Learning Loss Czar shall deem necessary to the  
44 proper functioning of the office;

45       d. solicit and accept grants of funds from the federal  
46 government and from other public and any private sources for any  
47 of the purposes of this act;

1 e. serve as the liaison between the Office of the Learning Loss  
2 Czar and the Department of Education; and

3 f. perform such other functions as may be prescribed in this act  
4 or by any other law.

5  
6 4. Pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Act,” P.L.1968,  
7 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the Learning Loss Czar and the State  
8 Board of Education may adopt any rules and regulations necessary  
9 to effectuate the purposes of this act.

10  
11 5. This act shall take effect immediately.

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14 STATEMENT

15  
16 This bill establishes the Office of the Learning Loss Czar in, but  
17 not of, the Department of Education. The office will have the duty  
18 to collaborate with the Commissioner of Education to analyze and  
19 address learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic by:

20 1) identifying educational products, strategies, and services that  
21 have demonstrated effectiveness in identifying and reversing  
22 student learning loss, including those products, strategies, and  
23 services that are specifically designed to address learning loss  
24 experienced by students of color, low-income students, and students  
25 with disabilities;

26 2) creating and maintaining a resource bank of examples of  
27 these products, explanations of and instructions for implementing  
28 these strategies and services, and models of professional  
29 development programs related to using the products and  
30 implementing the strategies and services. School districts may  
31 submit to the office for inclusion in the resource bank, descriptions  
32 and explanations of strategies, services, and programs that they  
33 have implemented, with evidence demonstrating the positive effects  
34 achieved through implementing the strategies, services, and  
35 programs;

36 3) identifying public and private entities that may partner with  
37 school districts to provide personnel or other resources to assist in  
38 implementing strategies to overcome learning loss;

39 4) providing technical assistance to school districts, upon  
40 request, to assist in identifying and implementing strategies to  
41 address student learning loss;

42 5) supporting grant application processes related to learning loss  
43 for school districts and the Department of Education by monitoring  
44 available grants, recommending grant applications, and assisting  
45 with the grant application process; and

46 6) cooperating with institutions of higher education in  
47 researching and analyzing data on student learning loss to better

1 understand the issue and identify the most effective means to  
2 address it.

3 The bill provides that the administrator and chief executive  
4 officer of the office will be the Learning Loss Czar, who will be a  
5 person qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of  
6 the office. The Learning Loss Czar will be appointed by the  
7 Governor and will serve at the pleasure of the Governor during the  
8 Governor's term of office and until the appointment and  
9 qualification of the Learning Loss Czar's successor. The Learning  
10 Loss Czar will administer and organize the work of the office and  
11 serve as the liaison between the office and the Department of  
12 Education.

13 The purpose of this bill is to recognize the critical nature of  
14 student learning loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic by  
15 establishing the independent Office of the Learning Loss Czar to  
16 spearhead Statewide initiatives to address this important issue.