

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 4037

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 27, 2023

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 4037.

This bill requires the New Jersey Department of Education to develop and distribute to school districts guidelines on school discipline. The purpose of the guidelines is to assist school districts in enhancing school climate and improving school discipline policies and practices, including ensuring that discipline practices are applied in an equitable and nondiscriminatory manner. The guidelines are to be consistent with the school discipline guidance package issued in January of 2014 by the United States Department of Education, in collaboration with the United States Department of Justice.

The guidelines, at minimum, are specifically to (1) be consistent with the federal school discipline guidance package issued in January 2014 by the United States Department of Education and the United States Department of Justice, including the January 8, 2014 Dear Colleague Letter on the Nondiscriminatory Administration of School Discipline, as well as the January 2014 document entitled “Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline”; (2) address any racial disparities or disproportionate impacts associated with current discipline practices, including the impact of race on the suspension or expulsion of students in grades kindergarten through 12; and (3) include best practices regarding improving school climate and creating positive and nondiscriminatory school discipline practices.