SENATE, No. 175

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2026 SESSION

Sponsored by:
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SYNOPSIS

Establishes Anti-Bullying Youth Council to assist Anti-Bullying Task Force.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

AN ACT establishing the Anti-Bullying Youth Council.

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

1. There is established an Anti-Bullying Youth Council for the purpose of providing a forum for the youth of this State to advise the Anti-Bullying Task Force established pursuant to P.L.2019, c.179 on the unique perspectives, experiences, and needs of youth related to bullying in the public and nonpublic schools. The council shall research, analyze, discuss, and make specific recommendations to the task force on ways to prevent and respond to bullying in the schools.

The council may express its position publicly on legislation pending before the New Jersey Legislature that is directly relevant to the work of the council.

2. a. The council shall consist of 25 members, including:

(1) four members of the New Jersey Legislature, who shall serve as nonvoting members, and who shall include one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the General Assembly; and

(2) 21 public members, of whom one shall be appointed by each executive county superintendent of schools. The public members shall be students enrolled in public and nonpublic middle and high schools in the State. Each executive county superintendent shall appoint an additional student to the council, who shall serve as an alternate member, as needed.

b. (1) A public member who is less than 18 years of age shall be required to provide written permission from a parent or legal guardian to be a member of the council and participate in its activities.

(2) Legislative members shall serve on the council in an advisory capacity and shall be appointed solely for the purpose of assisting the public members of the council in coordinating its meeting and activities, and in fulfilling the council's purpose.

The legislative members shall advise the council on the legislative process, provide policy briefings, assist with the drafting of proposed recommendations of the council, and provide such guidance and information as the council deems appropriate.

c. All appointments to the council shall be made within 30 days of the effective date of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

d. Each public member of the council shall serve for a term of two years, or until the council expires, whichever occurs first. In the event that a public member graduates, or otherwise ceases

enrollment in a school located within the same county from which the student was originally appointed, the alternate shall assume the position. A vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

e. The members of the council shall serve without compensation, but they shall be entitled to reimbursement for all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

3. a. The council shall organize as soon as practicable, but no later than 30 days following the appointment of its members. The council shall choose a chairperson from among its members and shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the council.

b. The Department of Education shall provide such stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistants, and such professional staff as the council requires to carry out its work. The council shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may require and as may be available for its purposes.

4. a. The council shall submit, in writing, a series of policy recommendations to the Anti-Bullying Task Force established pursuant to P.L.2019, c.179. The council may present the recommendations to the task force at a public hearing of the task force.

The series of policy recommendations shall be made available online to the public.

b. The council shall prepare and submit an annual report containing its findings, activities, and recommendations, including any recommendations for administrative and legislative action that it deems appropriate, to the Governor and to the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1).

5. This act shall take effect immediately and the council shall expire upon the expiration of the Anti-Bullying Task Force established pursuant to P.L.2019, c.179.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes an Anti-Bullying Youth Council for the purpose of providing a forum for the youth of this State to advise the Anti-Bullying Task Force on the unique perspectives, experiences, and needs of youth related to bullying in the public and nonpublic schools. The council is to research, analyze, discuss, and make specific recommendations to the task force on ways to prevent and respond to bulling in the schools.

The bill provides that the council will consist of 25 members, including:

(1) four members of the New Jersey Legislature, who will serve as nonvoting members, and who will include one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the General Assembly; and

(2) 21 public members, of whom one is to be appointed by each executive county superintendent of schools. The public members are to be students enrolled in public and nonpublic middle and high schools in the State.

The bill provides that legislative members will serve on the council in an advisory capacity and will be appointed solely for the purpose of assisting the public members of the council in coordinating its meeting and activities, and in fulfilling the council's purpose. All appointments to the council are to be made within 30 days of the bill's effective date.

Under the bill, the council is required to organize as soon as practicable, but no later than 30 days following the appointment of its members.

The bill directs the council to submit, in writing, a series of policy recommendations to the Anti-Bullying Task Force. The council may present the recommendations to the task force at a public hearing of the task force. The series of policy recommendations are to made available online to the public.

Finally, the bill requires the council to prepare and submit an annual report containing its findings, activities, and recommendations, including any recommendations for administrative and legislative action that it deems appropriate, to the Governor and the Legislature. The council will expire upon the expiration of the Anti-Bullying Task Force.