

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
SENATE, No. 175

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
222nd LEGISLATURE

ADOPTED OCTOBER 1, 2026

Sponsored by:

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District 18 (Middlesex)

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District 31 (Hudson)

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SYNOPSIS

Establishes Anti-Bullying Commission and Anti-Bullying Youth Council in DOE.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Substitute as adopted by the Senate Education Committee.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/5/2026)

1 AN ACT establishing the Anti-Bullying Commission and the Anti-
2 Bullying Youth Council and supplementing chapter 6 of Title
3 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

7
8 1. a. There is established in, but not of, the Department of
9 Education the Anti-Bullying Commission. The purpose of the
10 commission shall be to examine, evaluate, and make
11 recommendations regarding the implementation of the “Anti-
12 Bullying Bill of Rights Act,” P.L.2002, c.83 (C.18A:37-13 et seq.).

13 b. The commission shall consist of 11 members as follows:

14 (1) the Commissioner of Education, ex officio, or a designee;

15 (2) eight public members who each have a background in, or
16 special knowledge of, the legal, policy, educational, social, or
17 psychological aspects of bullying in public schools, appointed as
18 follows:

19 (a) two appointed by the President of the Senate;

20 (b) two appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and

21 (c) four appointed by the Governor; and

22 (3) two members of the public, to be appointed by the Governor,
23 one of whom is a family member of a student who has experienced
24 bullying and one of whom is a student over 17 years of age who
25 personally has experienced bullying.

26 c. Each public member of the commission shall serve for a
27 term of three years, except that of the initial members so appointed:
28 one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member
29 appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and two
30 members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of one
31 year; one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one
32 member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and
33 two members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of
34 two years; and two members appointed by the Governor shall serve
35 for terms of three years.

36 d. Appointments to the commission shall be made within 30
37 days of the effective date of this act. Public members shall be
38 eligible for reappointment. They shall serve until their successors
39 are appointed and qualified, and the term of the successor of any
40 incumbent shall be calculated from the expiration of the term of that
41 incumbent. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term
42 shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment but
43 for the unexpired term only.

44 e. Members of the commission shall serve without
45 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenditures
46 incurred in the performance of their duties as members of the
47 commission within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise
48 made available to the commission for its purposes.

- 1 2. a. The commission shall organize as soon as practicable, but
2 no later than 30 days following the appointment of its members.
3 The commission shall choose a chairperson from among its
4 members and shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member
5 of the commission.
- 6 b. The Department of Education shall provide stenographic,
7 clerical, and other administrative assistants, and professional staff
8 as the commission requires to carry out its work. The commission
9 also shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the
10 services of the employees of any State, county, or municipal
11 department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may require
12 and as may be available for its purposes.
13
- 14 3. a. It shall be the duty of the commission to study and
15 evaluate the current implementation of the “Anti-Bullying Bill of
16 Rights Act,” P.L.2002, c.83 (C.18A:37-13 et seq.), for purposes of
17 identifying areas for improvement and making recommendations
18 regarding any appropriate changes or updates to the law or
19 regulations promulgated thereunder. The commission shall:
- 20 (1) examine and evaluate the effectiveness of the
21 implementation of the “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act” in the
22 schools of the State;
- 23 (2) examine any unintended consequences resulting from
24 implementation of the “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act” and its
25 associated regulations;
- 26 (3) provide guidance to school districts on available resources to
27 assist in the implementation of the “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights
28 Act”;
- 29 (4) review steps taken and programs established in other states
30 to reduce bullying in schools and to improve school response to
31 incidents of bullying;
- 32 (5) receive reports and testimony from individuals, State and
33 local agencies, community-based organizations, and other public
34 and private organizations on the challenges faced by school districts
35 and nonpublic schools in combating school bullying;
- 36 (6) review current instructional programs or curriculum
37 provided in New Jersey schools on issues related to school bullying
38 and school climate and identify areas in which improvements may
39 be made;
- 40 (7) make recommendations and develop guidelines for school
41 policies that are aimed at building a safe school environment,
42 reducing the incidence of school bullying, and improving school
43 response to reports of school bullying;
- 44 (8) make recommendations for professional development and
45 training on identifying and responding to school bullying for school
46 administrators and teachers; and

1 (9) present any recommendations deemed necessary and
2 appropriate to modify or update the “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights
3 Act” and regulations promulgated thereunder.

4 b. The commission shall hold at least one public hearing each
5 year in order to receive public input on the issues being studied by
6 the commission and shall invite the participation of the Anti-
7 Bullying Youth Council established pursuant to section 5 of this
8 act, and students and families who have experienced bullying in any
9 public hearings held by the commission.

10
11 4. The commission shall prepare and submit a report every five
12 years containing its findings, activities, and recommendations,
13 including any recommendations for appropriate administrative and
14 legislative action, to the Governor and to the Legislature, pursuant
15 to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1).

16
17 5. a. There is established in, but not of, the Department of
18 Education, the Anti-Bullying Youth Council. The purpose of the
19 Anti-Bullying Youth Council shall be to provide a forum for the
20 youth of this State to advise the Anti-Bullying Commission
21 established pursuant to section 1 of this act on the unique
22 perspectives, experiences, and needs of youth related to bullying in
23 the public and nonpublic schools. The council shall research,
24 analyze, discuss, and make specific recommendations to the
25 commission on ways to prevent and respond to bullying in schools.

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

29
30 6. a. The council shall consist of 25 members, including:

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

37 (2) 21 public members, of whom one shall be appointed by each
38 executive county superintendent. The public members shall be
39 public and nonpublic school students enrolled in grades six through
40 12 in the State.

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

45 (2) Legislative members shall serve on the council in an
46 advisory capacity and shall be appointed solely for the purpose of
47 assisting the public members of the council in coordinating its
48 meetings and activities, and in fulfilling the council’s purpose. The

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

5 c. Each public member of the council shall serve for a term of
6 two years, except that of the initial members so appointed: the
7 twelve public members appointed by the county superintendents of
8 Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson,
9 Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Salem, and Warren shall serve a
10 terms of one year; and the nine public members appointed by the
11 county superintendents in Burlington, Gloucester, Morris, Mercer,
12 Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union shall serve terms of six
13 months.

14 d. Appointments to the council shall be made within 30 days of
15 the effective date of this act. In the event that a public member
16 graduates, or otherwise ceases enrollment in a school located within
17 the same county from which the student was originally appointed,
18 the vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original
19 appointment. Public members shall be eligible for reappointment.

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

23
24 7. a. The council shall organize as soon as practicable, but no
25 later than 30 days following the appointment of its members. The
26 council shall choose a chairperson from among its members and
27 shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the council.

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

35
36 8. a. The council shall submit, in writing, a series of policy
37 recommendations to the Anti-Bullying Commission established
38 pursuant to section 1 of this act. The council shall also present the
39 recommendations to the commission at each public hearing of the
40 commission pursuant to subsection b. of section 3 of this act. The
41 series of policy recommendations shall also be made available
42 online to the public.

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

1 9. This act shall take effect immediately.