

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE, No. 175

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 1, 2026

The Senate Education Committee reports favorably a Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 175.

The committee substitute establishes the Anti-Bullying Commission and Anti-Bullying Youth Council the Department of Education.

Anti-Bullying Commission

This bill establishes the Anti-Bullying Commission, in but not of, the Department of Education to continually examine, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding the implementation of the “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act.”

The commission would consist of 11 members. Eight public members are required to have a background in, or special knowledge of, the legal, policy, educational, social, or psychological aspects of bullying in public schools. Two of these members would be appointed by the Senate President, two would be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and four would be appointed by the Governor. The commission is also required to include two members of the public, one of whom is a family member of a student who has experienced bullying and one of whom is a student over 17 years of age who personally has experienced bullying. The Commissioner of Education, or a designee, is to serve as an ex officio member.

Under the bill, the commission is charged with studying and evaluating the current implementation of the “Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act,” identifying areas for improvement, and making recommendations regarding any appropriate changes or updates to the law or regulations, as specified in the bill.

The commission is required to hold at least one public hearing each year in order to receive public input on the issues being studied by the commission.

The bill requires the commission to prepare and submit a report every five years containing its findings, activities, and recommendations, including any recommendations for administrative and legislative action that it deems appropriate, to the Governor and the Legislature.

Anti-Bullying Youth Council

The bill also establishes the Anti-Bullying Youth Council in, but not of, the Department of Education. The purpose of the Anti-Bullying Youth Council is to provide a forum for the youth of this State to advise the Anti-Bullying Commission on the unique perspectives, experiences, and needs of youth related to bullying in the public and nonpublic schools. The council would research, analyze, discuss, and make specific recommendations to the commission on ways to prevent and respond to bullying 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 public and nonpublic students enrolled in grades six through 12 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 meetings and activities, and in fulfilling the council's purpose.

The bill directs the council to submit, in writing, a series of policy recommendations to the Anti-Bullying Commission. The council may present the recommendations to the commission at a public hearing of the commission. The series of policy recommendations are to be 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.