

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR

SENATE, No. 4457

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 1, 2026

The Senate Education Committee reports favorably a Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 4457.

The committee substitute requires the State Board of Education to include bullying awareness and prevention in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

Under current law, the State Board of Education is required to review and update the New Jersey Student Learning Standards every five years. This bill requires that, during the next scheduled update to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards following the date of enactment of this bill, the State board will review and update the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards to ensure the incorporation of age-appropriate instruction on bullying awareness and prevention in an appropriate place in the curriculum for students in grades preschool through 12. The bill also requires the State board to consider revisions to this instruction concurrent with each update to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

The bill provides that the State board will consider the addition of bullying awareness and prevention instruction, including the various types of bullying, including physical bullying, verbal bullying, social bullying, and cyberbullying and the permanence of social media posts and the harm that may be caused through online harassment or bullying.

Under current State regulation, recommended changes to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards are presented by the Commissioner of Education to the State Board of Education at a public meeting of the board. Pursuant to the current State regulation, the board adopts the New Jersey Student Learning Standards after conducting public hearings on the commissioner's recommendations. The bill requires the State board to adhere to the review and readoption process for the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

Additionally, the bill requires the State board to post on its Internet website a written summary describing the updates to the New Jersey

Student Learning Standards and the New Jersey Preschool Teaching Learning Standards and detailing whether the instruction on bullying awareness and prevention is located.

Under the bill, the Commissioner of Education is required to provide school districts with age-appropriate sample learning activities and resources regarding bullying awareness and prevention that may be incorporated into the district's existing curriculum. School districts may use the sample learning activities and resources provided by the commissioner; however, the bill provides that it is not to be construed to require school districts to use sample learning activities and resources before the updates to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards required under the bill.