

CHAPTER 479

AN ACT concerning student suspensions and expulsions from public school and supplementing chapter 37 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

C.18A:37-2c Meeting relative to suspension, expulsion of student.

1. a. In the event a student has experienced multiple suspensions or may be subject to a proposed expulsion from public school, the principal shall convene a meeting, as soon as practicable, between the student and a school psychologist, a school counselor, a school social worker, a student assistance coordinator, or a member of the school's intervention and referral services team. The principal may convene such a meeting, if after the student has been suspended for the first time, the principal upon evaluation deems such a meeting appropriate. The purpose of the meeting shall be to identify any behavior or health difficulties experienced by the student and, where appropriate, to provide supportive interventions or referrals to school or community resources that may assist the student in addressing the identified difficulties.

b. The Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Health, shall make available to school districts a list of current resources that may be of assistance as referral services for students under subsection a. of this section. The resources may include, but need not be limited to, the New Jersey MentalHealthCares information and referral service, and county or local programs that provide youth services for mental health or substance abuse.

c. The requirements of subsection a. of this section shall not apply when a student's immediate removal or suspension from the school's regular education program is required pursuant to the provisions of the "Zero Tolerance for Guns Act," P.L.1995, c.127 (C.18A:37-7 et seq.); section 2 of P.L.1979, c.189 (C.18A:37-2.1); or section 1 of P.L.1995, c.128 (C.18A:37-2.2); or in any other instance in which the safety and security of other students or school staff requires the student's immediate removal from school. In these instances, the meeting required pursuant to subsection a. of this section shall take place as soon as practicable following the student's removal from the school's regular education program.

d. The provisions of this section shall be construed in a manner consistent with the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act," 20 U.S.C. s.1400 et seq.

e. The State Board of Education may promulgate regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), necessary to effectuate the provision of this act.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 21, 2020.