ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
ASSEMBLY, Nos. 1184 and 4414

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 22, 2020

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill Nos. 1184 and 4414.

This committee substitute requires each school district and charter school to provide to the Commissioner of Education a biannual report concerning every student disciplinary action taken at each school operated by the school district or within the charter school. The substitute defines "disciplinary action" as any instance where a student is either permanently or temporarily removed from the student's regular educational placement for disciplinary purposes for a period of time greater than half an instructional day by a school district or charter school

Under the substitute, the report submitted by a school district or charter school is required, at a minimum, to include: (1) a breakdown of the total student population numbers and the number of students disaggregated, to the extent practicable, by race, ethnicity, gender, eligibility for free or reduced price meals, eligibility for special education services, and grade level; (2) the number of expulsions, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions, respectively, and the number and percentage of students who received each form of disciplinary action disaggregated, to the extent practicable, by race, ethnicity, gender, eligibility for free or reduced price meals, eligibility for special education services, and grade level; and (3) the duration of the disciplinary actions imposed on the students and the number of prior disciplinary actions taken concerning a student during the biannual reporting period. The substitute requires the Commissioner of Education to provide each school district and charter school with access to a uniform data reporting system that will be used to submit the biannual reports.

Under the substitute, the Superintendent of a school district or charter school leader will present the results of the biannual report to the local board of education or board of trustees of the charter school at a public hearing held pursuant to section 1 of P.L.1982, c.163 (C.18A:17-46).

The substitute requires the commissioner to compile the biannual reports of each school district and charter school into an annual Statewide student disciplinary action database and to post the database on the department's Internet website. At a minimum, the database would be required to aggregate State, county, and districtwide totals for each category of student disciplinary action data included in the reports. The commissioner will submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature concerning student disciplinary practices in school districts and charter schools throughout the State based upon the information received from the school districts and charter schools in the biannual reports.