

ASSEMBLY, No. 1672

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblyman RALPH R. CAPUTO

District 28 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “School Opening and School Closing Student Safety Task Force” to review safety of students when schools open and close for school day.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** establishing the “School Opening and School Closing
2 Student Safety Task Force.”

3

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

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7 1. There is established a School Opening and School Closing
8 Student Safety Task Force. The task force shall consist of 12
9 members, including: the Commissioner of Education, ex officio, or
10 a designee; one member appointed by the President of the Senate
11 and one member appointed by the Speaker of the General
12 Assembly, both of whom shall be members of the public with
13 demonstrated expertise in issues relating to the work of the task
14 force; and nine public members appointed by the Governor,
15 including one representative from each of the following: the New
16 Jersey Association of School Administrators; the New Jersey
17 Education Association; the American Federation of Teachers New
18 Jersey; the New Jersey School Boards Association; the New Jersey
19 Principals and Supervisors Association; the New Jersey Charter
20 Schools Association; the Advisory Committee for Nonpublic
21 Schools of the Department of Education; and two parents of
22 students, one of whom attends a public school and one of whom
23 attends a nonpublic school.

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25 2. All appointments shall be made within 30 days of the
26 effective date of this act. Vacancies in the membership of the task
27 force shall be filled in the same manner as the original
28 appointments were made. Members of the task force shall serve
29 without compensation, but shall be entitled to actual and necessary
30 expenses incurred in the performance of their duties within the
31 limits of funds made available to the task force for its purposes.

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33 3. The task force shall organize as soon as practicable
34 following the appointment of its members, but not later than 60
35 days after the effective date of this act. The task force shall choose
36 a chairperson from among its members and shall appoint a secretary
37 who need not be a member of the task force.

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39 4. It shall be the duty of the task force to assess the public
40 safety of students when schools are opening or closing for the
41 school day. The task force shall study and consider issues including,
42 but not limited to:

43 a. an evaluation of student-arrival and student-departure
44 practices in New Jersey schools, as well as a review of existing
45 research and best practices, to ensure students:

46 (1) are properly accounted for during the loading and unloading
47 procedure for their assigned school bus, or being picked up or
48 dropped off at the school by a parent or guardian; and

1 (2) are loaded onto and unloaded from school buses, or a
2 parent's or guardian's vehicle, in areas away from other vehicles or
3 areas that could endanger the physical well-being of students;

4 b. changes in traffic patterns or congestion associated with
5 school openings and closings and the possible impact on student
6 safety; and

7 c. an examination of whether adequate personnel are provided
8 during the opening and closing of the school, including an
9 evaluation of the need for a municipal police presence during
10 student-arrival and student-departure.

11
12 5. Staff and related support services shall be provided to the
13 task force by the Department of Education. The task force shall be
14 entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the
15 employees of any State, county or municipal department, board,
16 bureau, commission or agency as it may require and as may be
17 available for its purposes.

18
19 6. The task force shall issue a final report of its findings and
20 recommendations to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant
21 to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than one
22 year after the task force organizes.

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24 7. This act shall take effect immediately and the task force
25 shall expire 30 days after the submission of the final report.

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28 STATEMENT

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30 This bill establishes a 12-member School Opening and School
31 Closing Student Safety Task Force. The task force will be
32 composed of: the Commissioner of Education, or his designee; one
33 member appointed by the President of the Senate and one member
34 appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, both of whom
35 shall be members of the public with demonstrated expertise in
36 issues relating to the work of the task force; and nine public
37 members appointed by the Governor, including one representative
38 from each of the following: the New Jersey Association of School
39 Administrators; the New Jersey Education Association; the
40 American Federation of Teachers New Jersey; the New Jersey
41 School Boards Association; the New Jersey Principals and
42 Supervisors Association; the New Jersey Charter Schools
43 Association; the Advisory Committee for Nonpublic Schools of the
44 Department of Education; and two parents of students, one enrolled
45 in a public school and one enrolled in a nonpublic school.

46 Under the bill, the task force will assess the safety of students
47 when schools are opening and closing for the school day. The task
48 force will examine issues including, but not limited to:

- 1 • an evaluation of student-arrival and student-departure
2 practices in New Jersey schools, as well as a review of
3 existing research and best practices, to ensure students: (1)
4 are properly accounted for when being loaded onto and
5 unloaded from their assigned school bus, or being picked up
6 or dropped off by a parent or guardian; and (2) are loaded
7 onto and unloaded from school buses, or a parent's or
8 guardian's vehicle, in areas away from other vehicles or
9 areas that could endanger the physical wellbeing of students;
 - 10 • changes in traffic patterns or congestion associated with
11 school openings and closings and the possible impact on
12 student safety; and
 - 13 • an examination of whether adequate personnel are provided
14 during the opening and closing of the school, including an
15 evaluation of the need for a municipal police presence
16 during student-arrival and student-departure.
- 17 The bill directs the task force to issue a final report of its
18 findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature
19 no later than one year after the task force organizes.