

# ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### ASSEMBLY, No. 4436

with committee amendments

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 14, 2020

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4436 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill establishes the “Student Mental Health Task Force” to study and survey the resources that are available to schools and parents when helping a student or child that experiences mental health issues.

Under the bill, the task force would consist of 15 members, including the Commissioner of Education, the Commissioner of Health, the Commissioner of Children and Families, the Commissioner of Banking and Insurance, the Director of the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services, one public member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, one public member appointed by the Senate President, and eight public members appointed by the Governor.

The eight members appointed by the Governor would include one representative from: (1) an organization representing school district leaders in the State; (2) an organization representing local boards of education in the State; (3) the National Alliance on Mental Illness; (4) the New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies; (5) the New Jersey Association of Counties; (6) the New Jersey League of Municipalities; (7) any mental health service provider that has entered into a partnership with one or more school districts in the State; and (8) any institution of higher education that has entered into a partnership with one or more school districts in the State to provide mental health services.

Specifically, the bill requires the task force to study and survey all resources that are currently available to schools and parents within each county in the State, and within the northern, central, and southern regions of the State, for helping a student or child who experiences mental health issues. At a minimum, the task force would indicate the availability of:

(1) mental health treatment services provided within each county and region of the State including, but not limited to, those services provided through a school district, professional mental health services provider, or community mental health services

organization, and any other tools or resources to address the mental health needs of students;

(2) mental health care provider networks that offer mental health treatment services within each county and region of the State;

(3) State, county, or municipal agencies within each county and region of the State that offer funding, professional mental health treatment services, or other resources to address the mental health needs of students; and

(4) partnership opportunities with institutions of higher education within each county and region of the State to address the mental health needs of students.

The bill requires the task force to issue a final report to the Governor and Legislature within one year of the organization of the task force. This report would be required to contain the information set forth above. The task force would also be required to forward the report to every school district in the State. The task force would expire 30 days after the issuance of this report.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- provide that a representative of an organization representing school district leaders in the State will be one of the public members appointed to the task force by the Governor;
- provide that a representative of an organization representing local boards of education in the State will also be one of the public members appointed to the task force by the Governor; and
- remove provisions of the bill providing for the Governor to appoint public members to the task force that represent the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association and the New Jersey School Boards Association.