ASSEMBLY, No. 5666

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 12, 2021

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman STERLEY S. STANLEY
District 18 (Middlesex)
Assemblyman KEVIN J. ROONEY
District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Permits excused absences for students who attend civic events.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/2/2021)

AN ACT concerning excused absences from public school for civic events and supplementing chapter 36 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, a pupil of a public school in grades six through 12 who is absent from school to attend a civic event shall have one absence each school year for that purpose recorded as an excused absence on the pupil's attendance record or on that of any group or class of which the pupil is a member. A board of education may permit additional excused absences for such purposes. Any transcript, application, employment form, or any similar form on which information concerning a pupil's attendance record is requested shall show, with respect to absences, only absences other than excused absences authorized pursuant to this subsection.

b. The parent or guardian of a pupil shall provide at least five school days' notice in advance of the intended excused absence and such documentation as the superintendent or administrative principal of the school district deems necessary to prove that the pupil meets the requirements for an excused absence pursuant to subsection a. of this section.

2. The Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, shall prescribe rules relative to absences for civic events including, but not limited to, a list of civic events where it shall be mandatory to excuse a pupil. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the right of a board of education, in its discretion, to excuse absences for civic events not included on the list.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would permit public school pupils in grades six through 12 one excused absence to attend a civic event each school year. School districts would be permitted to provide additional excused absences for such purposes. Excused absences taken under this bill would not be reflected on student attendance records.

Parents or guardians of pupils who wish to use an excused absence under this bill would be required to provide at least five school days' notice in advance of the intended excused absence and such documentation as the school district deems necessary to prove

that the pupil meets the requirements for an excused absence pursuant to the provisions of this bill.

The Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, would be responsible for prescribing rules relative to absences for civic events. This would include, but not be limited to, a list of civic events where it would be mandatory to excuse a pupil. The bill would not be construed to limit the right of boards of education to excuse absences for civic events not included on the commissioner's list.