

SENATE, No. 1022

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 30, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Requires meeting between student and appropriate school personnel after multiple suspensions or proposed expulsion from public school to identify behavior or health difficulties.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



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

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

7
8 1. a. In the event a student has experienced multiple suspensions
9 or may be subject to a proposed expulsion from public school, the
10 principal shall convene a meeting , as soon as practicable, between the
11 student and a school psychologist, a school counselor, a school social
12 worker, a student assistance coordinator, or a member of the school's
13 intervention and referral services team. The principal may convene
14 such a meeting, if after the student has been suspended for the first
15 time, the principal upon evaluation deems such a meeting appropriate.
16 The purpose of the meeting shall be to identify any behavior or health
17 difficulties experienced by the student and, where appropriate, to
18 provide supportive interventions or referrals to school or community
19 resources that may assist the student in addressing the identified
20 difficulties.

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

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

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

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

45
46 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would require that, in the event that a student has experienced multiple suspensions or in the event he may be subject to a proposed expulsion, the principal must 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 is also permitted to convene such a meeting after the student's first suspension, if the principal deems such meeting to be appropriate. The purpose of the meeting required under the bill is to identify any behavior or health difficulties experienced by the student and, if appropriate, to provide the student with supportive interventions or referrals to school or community resources that may assist the student in addressing the identified difficulties. Under the bill, if the student's immediate removal or suspension from the school's regular education program is required under certain provisions of current law 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, the meeting required pursuant to the bill will take place as soon as practicable following the student's removal from the school's regular education program. The provisions of the bill are required to be construed in a manner that is consistent with the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act."

The bill also directs the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Health, to provide school districts with a list of current resources that may be of assistance as referral services for students. 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.