

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2401

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: AUGUST 20, 2020

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 2401 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill prohibits the students and employees of a school district from immediately returning to the public school after traveling to certain places during certain public health emergencies.

During a state of public health emergency, as declared by the Governor pursuant to the “Emergency Health Powers Act,” P.L.2005, c.222 (C.26:13-1 et seq.), due to the spread of a contagious disease, the bill provides that if a student, teaching staff member, or other employee of a school district travels outside of the United States or to a state or territory of the United States that is designated in a quarantine travel advisory, then the person may not return to the public school until the termination of the public health emergency, the completion of 14 calendar days following the date of return to the State of New Jersey, or the removal of the state or territory from the quarantine travel advisory, whichever occurs first.

Under the bill, a student, teaching staff member, or other employee of a school district may participate in virtual or remote instruction during any period in which the person’s physical absence is required. The bill also provides that any student whose absence is mandated under the bill would have that absence recorded as an excused absence on the student’s attendance record.

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) prohibit a person from immediately returning to a public school after traveling to a state or territory of the United States that is designated in a quarantine travel advisory (i.e., “designated state”);

(2) provide that a person who traveled to a designated state may return to the public school after the state or territory has been removed from the quarantine travel advisory;

(3) clarify that a person who traveled outside of the United States or to a designated state may return to the public school after the completion of 14 calendar days following the person’s return to the State of New Jersey. As introduced, the bill required this period to begin following the person’s return to the United States;

(4) permit a student, teaching staff member, or other employee of a school district to participate in virtual or remote instruction during any period in which the person's physical absence is mandated under the bill;

(5) remove the provisions of the bill concerning the compensation of teaching staff members and other school employees whose absence is mandated under the bill; and

(6) remove the provisions of the bill concerning the recording of excused absences for students whose absences are mandated under the bill.