SENATE, No. 2737

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 28, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator NIA H. GILL
District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Requires boards of education to adopt policies to make schools asthma-friendly.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning asthma treatment in public schools and supplementing chapter 40 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 board of education shall adopt such policies and practices as are necessary for the schools of the district to achieve an "asthma friendly" designation from the Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey.

2. A board of education shall establish an indoor air quality team for each school in the district. The board shall ensure that the school nurse and another designated employee from each school in the district annually complete the Indoor Air Quality Training Course provided through the Public Employee Occupational Safety and Health Program.

3. The State Board of Education shall, as part of the professional development requirement established by the State board for teaching staff members, require each public school nurse to:

a. complete at least one hour of instruction on asthma treatment plans. The training shall be offered through an online presentation model developed by the Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey; and

b. conduct an annual in-service training program on asthma management in the classroom. The presentation shall be made available to all teaching staff members and shall be based upon a training model developed by the Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey.

4. A board of education shall adopt policies and procedures to reduce school bus idling including, but not limited to, policies and procedures that require:

a. school bus drivers to turn off engines while waiting to load and unload students;

b. the school district to use the newest school buses for the longest routes;

c. the school district to maintain buses to minimize exhaust; and

d. the school district to provide training to school bus drivers on ways to eliminate idling.

5. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to the 2021-2022 school year.

STATEMENT

This bill directs a board of education to adopt such policies and practices as are necessary for the schools of the district to achieve an "asthma friendly" designation from the Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey. The bill also directs the State Board of Education, as part of the professional development requirement established by the State board for teaching staff members, to require each public school nurse to: complete at least one hour of instruction on asthma treatment plans; and conduct an annual in-service training program on asthma management in the classroom.

The bill also requires a board of education to: establish an indoor air quality team for each school in the district; and ensure that the school nurse and another designated employee from each school in the district annually complete the Indoor Air Quality Training Course provided through the Public Employee Occupational Safety and Health Program. Under the bill, a board of education must adopt policies and procedures to reduce school bus idling.

This law was inspired by Ms. Barbara "BJ" Jackson, who worked tirelessly in her lifetime to better her community and State. Ms. Jackson passed away unexpectedly in 2006 following an asthma attack. Ms. Jackson's friends and family continue to honor her memory through a foundation in her name, BJ's Asthma Walk for Hope Foundation.