

SENATE, No. 3722

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 6, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Permits use of preferred names on student diplomas.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** concerning the use of preferred names on student diplomas
2 and supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey
3 Statutes.

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

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8 1. All public and nonpublic schools, institutions of higher
9 education, and proprietary institutions licensed to offer academic
10 degrees shall provide a graduating student with an option to request
11 that a diploma be conferred by the school or institution listing the
12 student's preferred name. A school or institution shall not require a
13 graduating student to provide legal documentation sufficient to
14 demonstrate a legal name or gender change to permit the student to
15 use a preferred name.

16 A school or institution shall have the right to deny a preferred
17 name request if the preferred name is intended to:

- 18 a. misrepresent the person's identity or misappropriate the
19 identity of another person;
20 b. avoid a legal obligation;
21 c. harm the reputation or interests of the school or institution;
22 or
23 d. be derogatory, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate.

24
25 2. a. A public or nonpublic school, institution of higher
26 education, or proprietary institution licensed to offer degrees shall
27 update a former student's records provided that the former student
28 provides sufficient documentation that the former student's legal
29 name or gender has been changed. Documents sufficient to
30 demonstrate a legal name or gender change include, but need not be
31 limit to, the following:

- 32 (1) state-issued driver's license;
33 (2) birth certificate;
34 (3) passport;
35 (4) social security card; or
36 (5) court order indicating a name change, gender change, or
37 both.

38 b. Upon receipt of proper documentation sufficient to
39 demonstrate a legal name or gender change, a school or institution
40 shall reissue any documents conferred upon the former student with
41 the former student's updated legal name or gender. Documents that
42 shall be reissued by the school or institution upon request include,
43 but need not be limited to, a transcript or diploma conferred by the
44 school or institution.

45
46 3. This act shall take effect on the first full day of the third
47 month next following the date of enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill permits graduating students to use preferred names on diplomas conferred by both public and nonpublic schools, institutions of higher education, and proprietary institutions licensed to offer academic degrees. Graduating students would not be required to provide legal documentation sufficient to demonstrate a legal name or gender change in order to use a preferred name. Schools or institutions would have the right to deny a preferred name request if the preferred name is intended to misrepresent the person's identity or misappropriate the identity of another person, avoid a legal obligation, harm the reputation or interests of the school or institution, or be derogatory, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate.

Schools and institutions would also be required to update a former student's records provided that the former student provides sufficient documentation demonstrating a legal name or gender change. Acceptable documents would include a state-issued driver's license, birth certificate, passport, social security card, or court order indicating a legal name or gender change, or both. Upon receipt of proper documentation sufficient to demonstrate a legal name or gender change, a school or institution would also be required to reissue any documents conferred upon the former student with the former student's updated legal name or gender upon request. Documents that could be reissued include, but not necessarily limited to, a transcript or diploma conferred by the school or institution.