

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 24

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 30, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Pou

SYNOPSIS

Urges federal government to preserve school discipline guidance package issued in 2014.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/7/2020)

1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** urging the federal government to preserve
2 school discipline guidance.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, In January 2014, the United States Department of
5 Education and the United States Department of Justice jointly
6 issued a school discipline guidance package including, but not
7 limited to, the January 8, 2014 Dear Colleague Letter on the
8 Nondiscriminatory Administration of School Discipline, and a
9 document entitled “Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for
10 Improving School Climate and Discipline”; and
11 **WHEREAS**, The 2014 federal guidance package was intended to assist
12 states and schools in enhancing school climate, improving school
13 discipline practices, and ensuring that such practices are effective
14 and nondiscriminatory; and
15 **WHEREAS**, The guidance encourages schools to utilize positive
16 behavioral interventions, such as conflict resolution and counseling,
17 and to limit the use of suspensions, expulsions, and other
18 exclusionary practices that remove students from regular academic
19 instruction; and
20 **WHEREAS**, The guidance provides valuable information to assist
21 schools in meeting their obligations under federal law to administer
22 student discipline without discriminating on the basis of race, color,
23 or national origin; and
24 **WHEREAS**, This past spring, the current federal administration held
25 meetings and roundtables concerning school discipline guidance
26 and is considering whether it might revise or rescind the 2014
27 school discipline guidance package; and
28 **WHEREAS**, On August 24, 2018, New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir
29 Grewal, together with the Attorneys General of nine other states
30 and the District of Columbia, submitted a letter to United States
31 Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and United States Attorney
32 General Jeff Sessions expressing strong support for the federal
33 school discipline guidance and opposing any efforts to weaken or
34 rescind it; and
35 **WHEREAS**, The multi-state letter emphasizes recent research on the
36 harmful effects of exclusionary school discipline and the positive
37 impacts of alternative behavioral interventions and supports; and
38 **WHEREAS**, The letter also highlights the disproportionate effect of
39 exclusionary school discipline on certain student groups, and the
40 Department of Education’s responsibility to protect students from
41 discrimination; and
42 **WHEREAS**, It is in the best interests of students and schools
43 throughout the nation to keep the 2014 federal guidance package in
44 place in order to continue to assist schools in employing positive,
45 non-exclusionary discipline measures and administering student
46 discipline in a nondiscriminatory manner; now, therefore,
47
48 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

SR24 RUIZ

3

1 1. This House urges the federal government to preserve the
2 school discipline guidance package issued in 2014, which
3 encourages schools to develop positive discipline policies and
4 assists schools in administering student discipline in a
5 nondiscriminatory manner.

6
7 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
8 shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the United
9 States Department of Education, the United States Department of
10 Justice, and the President of the United States.

11

12

13

STATEMENT

14

15 This resolution urges the federal government to preserve the
16 school discipline guidance package issued in 2014 by the United
17 States Department of Education and the United States Department
18 of Justice. The guidance encourages schools to develop positive
19 discipline policies and to limit the use of suspensions, expulsions,
20 and other exclusionary practices that remove students from the
21 classroom. The guidance also provides invaluable information to
22 assist schools in ensuring that their student discipline practices are
23 applied in a fair and nondiscriminatory manner.