Establishes New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy in Department of Education and requires school districts to designate school safety specialist.

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/4/2016)
AN ACT concerning school safety and supplementing chapter 17 ofTitle 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the Stateof New Jersey:

1. a. There is established in the Department of Education theNew Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy. It shall be thepurpose of the academy to serve as a central repository for bestpractices, training standards, and compliance oversight in allmatters regarding school safety and security, including preventionefforts, intervention efforts, and emergency preparedness planning.The academy shall: provide ongoing professional development onnational and State best practices, as well as the most currentresources on school safety and security; assume a lead role insetting the vision for school safety and security in the State; andprovide a coordinated and interdisciplinary approach to providingtechnical assistance and guidance to schools throughout the State.
b. The academy shall develop and implement a School SafetySpecialist Certification Program. A school safety specialistappointed pursuant to section 2 of this act shall be required toacquire the certification. The certification program shall provide training to newly-appointed school safety specialists in the areas ofbullying, hazing, truancy, Internet safety, emergency planning,emergency drills, drugs, weapons, gangs and school policing, andany other areas deemed necessary by the academy. The academyshall also offer annual training sessions for certified school safetyspecialists. The academy shall develop training modules in bothtraditional and online formats.

2. The superintendent in each school district shall designate a school safety specialist for the district. The school safety specialistshall: be responsible for the supervision and oversight for all school safety and security personnel, policies, and procedures in the school district; ensure that these policies and procedures are in compliance with State law and regulations; and provide the necessary training and resources to school district staff in matters relating to school safety and security. The school safety specialist shall also serve as the school district liaison with local law enforcement and national, State, and community agencies and organizations in matters of school safety and security.

3. This act shall take effect on the 180th day after the date of enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes in the Department of Education the NewJersey School Safety Specialist Academy. The purpose of theacademy will be to serve as a central repository for best practices,
training standards, and compliance oversight in all matters regarding school safety and security, including prevention efforts, intervention efforts, and emergency preparedness planning. Under the bill, the academy will develop and implement a School Safety Specialist Certification Program. This program will offer training to newly-appointed school safety specialists in the areas of bullying, hazing, truancy, Internet safety, emergency planning, emergency drills, drugs, weapons, gangs and school policing, and any other areas deemed necessary. The academy will also offer annual training sessions for certified school safety specialists.

The bill directs a school superintendent to designate a school safety specialist for the school district. The school safety specialist must complete the certification program developed by the academy. The school safety specialist will: be responsible for the supervision and oversight for all school safety and security personnel, policies, and procedures in the school district; ensure that these policies and procedures are in compliance with State law and regulations; and provide the necessary training and resources to school district staff in matters relating to school safety and security. The school safety specialist will also serve as the school district liaison with local law enforcement and national, State, and community agencies and organizations in matters of school safety and security.