

**SENATE, No. 2092**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**218th LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED MARCH 5, 2018

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO**

**District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires school districts to include instruction on consequences of distributing sexually explicit images through electronic means as part of New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/6/2018)**

1 AN ACT concerning the public school curriculum and  
2 supplementing chapter 35 of Title 18A of the New Jersey  
3 Statutes.

4  
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
6 *of New Jersey:*

7  
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. The teenage practice of “sexting,” sending a sexually  
10 explicit text message, is a nationwide problem that has perplexed  
11 parents, school administrators, and law enforcement officials. A  
12 Study by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned  
13 Pregnancy released data which indicated that 19% of teens aged 13  
14 to 19 had sent a sexually-suggestive picture or video of themselves  
15 to someone via email, cell phone, or through another form of online  
16 interaction, while 31% had received a nude or semi-nude picture  
17 from someone else.

18 b. What many teens do not realize is that, by law, a sexual  
19 image of any person under the age of 18 is child pornography.  
20 Prosecutors in several states have charged teenagers who have  
21 engaged in this behavior with criminal offenses, including  
22 distribution of child pornography.

23 c. Pursuant to a law which became effective in April, 2012, the  
24 New Jersey Legislature provided for a diversionary program for  
25 juveniles who are criminally charged for “sexting” or posting sexual  
26 images and permits them to participate in a remedial education or  
27 counseling program as an alternative to criminal prosecution.

28 d. Beyond the legal consequences of this behavior, however,  
29 sexting also has significant non-legal consequences including, but  
30 not limited to, the effect on relationships, loss of educational and  
31 employment opportunities, and being barred or removed from  
32 school programs and extracurricular activities.

33 e. Because of the unique characteristics of cyberspace and the  
34 Internet, a single sext has the potential to cause long-term and  
35 possibly unforeseen consequences, and result in severe  
36 embarrassment, ridicule, cyber-bullying, and lasting mental and  
37 emotional trauma.

38 f. Teachers, guidance counselors, and school officials are  
39 having to contend with and care for panic-stricken and depressed  
40 victims of malicious sexts who will not return to class, and may  
41 even resort to self-inflicted injury or suicide.

42 g. It is imperative that students understand at a young age the  
43 severity of sending sexually explicit text messages and the impact  
44 that these actions have on the students themselves, their victims,  
45 and the community and that they receive instruction on how and  
46 why to refrain from this very dangerous behavior.

1       2. A board of education shall include instruction on the social,  
2 emotional, and legal consequences of distributing sexually explicit  
3 images through electronic means once during middle school in an  
4 appropriate place in the curriculum as part of the school district's  
5 implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in  
6 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education. The Commissioner  
7 of Education shall provide school districts with age-appropriate  
8 sample learning activities and resources designed to implement this  
9 requirement.

10

11       3. This act shall take effect in the first full school year  
12 following the date of enactment.

13

14

15

STATEMENT

16

17       This bill requires a board of education to include instruction on  
18 the social, emotional, and legal consequences of distributing  
19 sexually explicit images through electronic means, a practice  
20 commonly referred to as "sexting," once during the middle school  
21 grades in an appropriate place in the curriculum as part of the  
22 district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning  
23 Standards in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education.