

# ASSEMBLY, No. 4403

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 13, 2018

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman PAMELA R. LAMPITT**

**District 6 (Burlington and Camden)**

**Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE**

**District 37 (Bergen)**

**Assemblyman JOHN ARMATO**

**District 2 (Atlantic)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman Mazzeo and Assemblywoman Murphy**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes task force within DOE on prevention of sexual abuse of children.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/27/2018)**

1 AN ACT establishing a task force on the prevention of sexual abuse  
2 of children and supplementing chapter 36 of Title 18A of the  
3 New Jersey Statutes.

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

7  
8 1. a. There is established within the Department of Education a  
9 task force on the prevention of, and response to, sexual abuse of  
10 children. The purpose of the task force shall be to study and make  
11 recommendations for reducing the prevalence and impact of child  
12 sexual abuse in the State, including recommendations for school  
13 policies and training concerning child sexual abuse prevention and  
14 response.

15 b. The task force shall consist of the following 16 members:

16 (1) the Commissioner of Education, or a designee;

17 (2) the Commissioner of the Department of Children and  
18 Families, or a designee;

19 (3) the President of the State Board of Education, or a designee;  
20 and

21 (4) 13 public members appointed by the Governor, in  
22 consultation with the Department of Education, who shall include  
23 the following:

24 (a) a representative from: the New Jersey School Boards  
25 Association; a New Jersey teachers union; the New Jersey  
26 Association of School Administrators; the New Jersey Principals  
27 and Supervisors Association; the New Jersey Coalition Against  
28 Sexual Assault; Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey; the New Jersey  
29 Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers; and the New  
30 Jersey Children's Alliance;

31 (b) a licensed therapist trained to counsel or treat child sexual  
32 abuse victims;

33 (c) a New Jersey county prosecutor;

34 (d) an individual who has experience and expertise in the field  
35 of harassment, intimidation, and bullying policies;

36 (e) a parent of a student enrolled in an elementary or secondary  
37 school in New Jersey; and

38 (f) an individual who is a survivor of child sexual abuse.

39 The appointment of public members shall reflect the geographic  
40 diversity of the State.

41 c. Public members of the task force shall serve for a term of  
42 three years, except that of the initial appointments, four public  
43 members shall serve for one year, five public members shall serve  
44 for two years, and four public members shall serve for three years.  
45 Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in the  
46 same manner as the original appointments were made. Members  
47 are eligible for reappointment to the task force.

1       d. The Commissioner of Education, or a designee, shall serve  
2 as chairperson of the task force. The task force shall meet at the  
3 call of the chairperson. The task force shall appoint a secretary who  
4 need not be a member of the task force. The task force, in its  
5 discretion, may divide its membership into subcommittees in the  
6 course of carrying out its duties.

7       e. Members of the task force shall serve without compensation,  
8 but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the  
9 performance of their duties as members of the task force within the  
10 limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task  
11 force for its purposes.

12

13       2. a. The Department of Education shall provide such  
14 stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistants, and such  
15 professional staff as the task force requires to carry out its work.

16       b. The task force shall be entitled to call to its assistance and  
17 avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or  
18 municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it  
19 may require and as may be available for its purposes.

20

21       3. In executing its duties under this act, the task force shall  
22 consult with the employees of the Department of Children and  
23 Families who work on child protection matters, the New Jersey  
24 State Police, the State Board of Education, and any other State  
25 agency or department necessary to accomplish the task force's  
26 responsibilities.

27

28       4. a. It shall be the duty of the task force to make  
29 recommendations for reducing child sexual abuse in this State. The  
30 task force shall also make recommendations for school policies and  
31 training that address the sexual abuse of children. In making its  
32 recommendations, the task force shall do the following:

33       (1) gather information concerning child sexual abuse throughout  
34 the State;

35       (2) receive reports and testimony from individuals, State and  
36 local agencies, community-based organizations, and other public  
37 and private organizations;

38       (3) review steps taken and programs established in other states  
39 to reduce child sexual abuse;

40       (4) create goals for State policy that are aimed at preventing  
41 child sexual abuse;

42       (5) create recommendations and guidelines for school policies  
43 addressing sexual abuse of children. The recommendations and  
44 guidelines shall be flexible enough to allow accommodation for  
45 local autonomy and values;

46       (6) review current instructional programs or curricula provided  
47 in New Jersey schools on issues related to child sexual abuse, and

- 1 create recommendations for a sample curriculum to be utilized by  
2 school districts;
- 3 (7) create recommendations and guidelines for school personnel  
4 to respond appropriately to students affected by sexual abuse,  
5 including any recommendations for teacher professional  
6 development and training on this issue;
- 7 (8) create recommendations and guidelines for age-appropriate,  
8 evidence-based child sexual abuse awareness, including guidelines  
9 for utilizing appropriately trained professionals to provide the  
10 student instruction and teacher training on this issue;
- 11 (9) create recommendations and guidelines for providing  
12 educational material to parents and guardians on the warning signs  
13 of child sexual abuse and information on assistance and referrals or  
14 resources; and
- 15 (10) develop a child sexual abuse protocol to be utilized by all  
16 community partners in order to help identify, prevent, and  
17 investigate child sexual abuse.
- 18 b. The recommendations described in subsection a. of this  
19 section may include proposals for specific statutory changes and  
20 methods to foster cooperation among State agencies and between  
21 the State and local government. The recommendations also may  
22 identify opportunities for collaboration among State and local  
23 agencies, community-based organizations, and other public and  
24 private organizations to provide prevention education services.
- 25 c. The task force shall present any recommendations and  
26 guidelines concerning school policies, updates to the New Jersey  
27 Student Learning Standards, and school personnel, as developed  
28 pursuant to paragraphs (5), (6), and (7) of subsection a. of this  
29 section, to the State Board of Education for consideration and  
30 possible adoption.
- 31
- 32 5. The task force shall issue a report of its recommendations to  
33 the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of  
34 P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than 18 months after the  
35 organization of the task force. The task force shall issue  
36 reports of any new or updated recommendations on at least a  
37 biennial basis.
- 38
- 39 6. The Department of Education shall create educational  
40 materials for parents and guardians based upon the  
41 recommendations developed by the task force pursuant to paragraph  
42 (9) of subsection a. of section 4 of this act. The department shall  
43 provide the educational materials to local Parent Teacher  
44 Associations throughout the State for presentation to their members.
- 45
- 46 7. This act shall take effect immediately.

## STATEMENT

This bill establishes a 16-member task force within the Department of Education to make recommendations for reducing child sexual abuse in this State, including recommendations for school policies and training that address the sexual abuse of children.

The members of the task force will consist of the Commissioner of Education, the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families, the President of the State Board of Education, and 13 public members as follows: (a) a representative from: the New Jersey School Boards Association; a New Jersey teachers union; the New Jersey Association of School Administrators; the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association; the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault; Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey; the New Jersey Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers; and the New Jersey Children's Alliance; (b) a licensed therapist trained to counsel or treat child sexual abuse victims; (c) a New Jersey county prosecutor; (d) an individual who has experience and expertise in the field of harassment, intimidation, and bullying policies; (e) a parent of a student enrolled in an elementary or secondary school in New Jersey; and (f) an individual who is a survivor of child sexual abuse. The appointment of public members must reflect the geographic diversity of the State.

In executing its duties under the bill, the task force will do the following:

- gather information concerning child sexual abuse throughout the State;
- receive reports and testimony from individuals, State and local agencies, community-based organizations, and other public and private organizations;
- review steps taken and programs established in other states to reduce child sexual abuse;
- create goals for State policy that are aimed at preventing child sexual abuse;
- create recommendations and guidelines for school policies addressing sexual abuse of children. The recommendations and guidelines shall be flexible enough to allow accommodation for local autonomy and values;
- review current instructional programs or curricula provided in New Jersey schools on issues related to child sexual abuse, and create recommendations for a sample curriculum to be utilized by school districts;
- create recommendations and guidelines for school personnel to respond appropriately to students affected by sexual abuse, including any recommendations for teacher professional development and training on this issue;

- 1       • create recommendations and guidelines for age-appropriate,  
2       evidence-based child sexual abuse awareness, including  
3       guidelines for utilizing appropriately trained professionals to  
4       provide the student instruction and teacher training on this  
5       issue;
- 6       • create recommendations and guidelines for providing  
7       educational material to parents and guardians on the warning  
8       signs of child sexual abuse and information on assistance  
9       and referrals or resources; and
- 10      • develop a child sexual abuse protocol to be utilized by all  
11      community partners in order to help identify, prevent, and  
12      investigate child sexual abuse.

13       The recommendations of the task force may include  
14      proposals for specific statutory changes and methods to foster  
15      cooperation among State agencies and between the State and  
16      local government. In addition, the bill directs the task force to  
17      present any recommendations and guidelines concerning school  
18      policies, updates to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards,  
19      and school personnel to the State Board of Education for  
20      consideration and possible adoption. The bill also requires the  
21      Department of Education to create educational materials for  
22      parents and guardians based upon the task force's  
23      recommendations, and to provide the materials to local Parent  
24      Teacher Associations throughout the State for presentation to  
25      their members.

26       The bill requires the task force to issue a report of its  
27      recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature no later  
28      than eighteen months after the task force organizes, and to issue  
29      additional reports of any new or updated recommendations on at  
30      least a biennial basis.