SENATE, No. 1512

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator M. TERESA RUIZ
District 29 (Essex)
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District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS
Requires DOE to maintain list of textbook vendors that use inclusive material and school districts to use textbooks from those vendors.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.
AN ACT concerning textbooks used in public schools and
supplementing chapter 34 of Title 18A of the New Jersey
Statutes.

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

1. a. As used in this section:

“Inclusive material” means content in a textbook that accurately
portrays the diversity of our society, in such areas as gender, race,
ethnicity, disability, gender identity or expression, and sexual
orientation.

“Textbook” means books, workbooks, or manuals, whether
bound or in looseleaf form, or electronic textbooks, intended as the
principal source of study material for a given class.

b. The Department of Education shall develop and maintain a
list of textbook vendors that incorporate inclusive material in their
textbooks. The list shall be distributed to school districts and shall
be made publicly available on the department’s website. Following
the effective date of this act, when a school district determines to
acquire a new textbook, the district shall select the textbook from a
vendor that is included on the department’s list.

c. Notwithstanding subsection b. of this section, a school
district may propose to the Commissioner of Education a textbook
vendor that is not currently on the list maintained by the
department, and may acquire and use textbooks from that vendor
upon the approval of the commissioner.

d. The provisions of this section shall not apply to textbooks
acquired by a school district using the Statewide textbook bank
created pursuant to section 1 of P.L.2002, c.98 (C.18A:34-3) or to
textbooks that require replacement due to damage or loss.

2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the nineteenth
month next following the date of enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill requires the Department of Education to develop and
maintain a list of textbook vendors that incorporate inclusive
material in their textbooks and to distribute the list to school
districts and make the list publicly available on the department’s
website. “Inclusive material” as defined in the bill means content in
a textbook that accurately portrays the diversity of our society, in
such areas as gender, race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity or
expression, and sexual orientation. Under the bill, when a school
district determines to acquire a new textbook, the district will be
required to select the textbook from a vendor that is included on the
department’s list. Notwithstanding, the bill allows a school district to propose to the Commissioner of Education a textbook vendor that is not currently on the department’s list and to acquire and use textbooks from that vendor upon the approval of the commissioner. The requirements of the bill would not apply to textbooks acquired by a school district using the Statewide textbook bank created pursuant to section 1 of P.L.2002, c.98 (C.18A:34-3) or to textbooks that require replacement due to damage or loss.