

SENATE, No. 3094

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 5, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Pou and Cunningham

SYNOPSIS

Requires Internet websites and web services of school districts, charter schools, and renaissance schools to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/9/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning the accessibility of public school websites and
2 web services and supplementing chapter 36 of Title 18A of the
3 New Jersey Statutes.

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

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8 1. a. Any Internet website or web service of a school district,
9 charter school, or renaissance school shall comply with the Web
10 Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA, or the
11 most up-to-date version of the guidelines.

12 b. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a procedure
13 to determine whether the Internet website or web service of a school
14 district, charter school, or renaissance school complies with the
15 requirements of this section. The Office of Information Technology
16 in the Department of Education shall be responsible for issuing
17 certifications of compliance, which certifications shall attest that an
18 Internet website or web service complies with the requirements of
19 the section.

20 c. (1) If a school district, charter school, or renaissance school
21 establishes or significantly improves an Internet website or web
22 service after the effective date of this act, the public school shall
23 receive a certification of compliance from the office before the
24 Internet website or web service may be considered operational.

25 (2) Every two years following initial certification, the office
26 shall recertify the compliance of each Internet website or web
27 service operated by a school district, charter school, or renaissance
28 school with the requirements of this section.

29 d. As used in this section, "Internet website or web service"
30 includes any webpage, website, web service, online curriculum, or
31 online third party or open educational resource product that is made
32 available to enrolled students or the public by a school district,
33 charter school, or renaissance school through the Internet.

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35 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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38 STATEMENT

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40 This bill establishes accessibility standards for the Internet
41 websites and web services of school districts, charter schools, and
42 renaissance schools ("public school").

43 Specifically, the bill requires the Internet website and web
44 services of every public school to comply with the Web Content
45 Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA, or the most up-to-
46 date version of the guidelines. The WCAG guidelines provide
47 standards through which digital content may be accessible for
48 persons with disabilities. In June 2018, the WCAG 2.1 guidelines

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1 were issued to improve accessibility guidance for three major
2 groups: users with cognitive or learning disabilities, users with low
3 vision, and users with disabilities on mobile devices.

4 Under the bill, the Commissioner of Education would be
5 required to establish a procedure for determining whether an
6 Internet website or web service complies with the WCAG
7 guidelines. The Office of Information Technology in the
8 Department of Education would be responsible for issuing
9 certifications of compliance to attest that an Internet website or web
10 service complies with these requirements.

11 The bill provides that when a public school establishes or
12 significantly improves an Internet website or web service after the
13 effective date of this bill, the school would be required to receive a
14 certification of compliance from the office before the website may
15 be considered operational. The bill also requires the office to
16 recertify the compliance of each Internet website or web service
17 operated by a public school every two years following initial
18 certification.

19 As defined in this bill, the term “Internet website or web service”
20 includes any webpage, website, web service online curriculum, or
21 online third party or open educational resource product that is made
22 available to enrolled students or the public by a public school
23 through the Internet.