

SENATE, No. 2793

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 3, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator NELLIE POU

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Singleton, Gopal and Turner

SYNOPSIS

Requires public institutions of higher education to take various actions to improve campus diversity and directs Secretary of Higher Education to develop guidance regarding diversity in faculty search and selection process.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/3/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning diversity at public institutions of higher
2 education and supplementing chapter 62 of Title 18A of the New
3 Jersey Statutes.
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:
7

8 1. a. A public institution of higher education shall develop a
9 faculty and student diversity plan. The diversity plan shall establish
10 clear and specific goals for increasing the recruitment and retention
11 of diverse faculty and students for each academic program at the
12 institution. The plan shall:

13 (1) establish diversity goals for increasing the recruitment and
14 retention of students, faculty, and staff who represent diverse
15 backgrounds;

16 (2) identify steps to achieve the diversity goals established by
17 the institution under the plan;

18 (3) identify metrics to be used by the institution
19 when monitoring progress towards meeting the diversity goals;

20 (4) outline programming that will improve and enhance the
21 campus climate for a diverse faculty and student body; and

22 (5) address student learning to ensure that all students acquire
23 the knowledge, experience, and cultural competencies necessary to
24 succeed in the workforce.

25 b. The institution shall update the diversity strategic plan every
26 three years, and as needed.
27

28 2. a. A public institution of higher education shall annually
29 develop and submit to the Secretary of Higher Education a student
30 diversity report. The student diversity report shall include, for each
31 academic degree program at the institution:

32 (1) the new enrollment rates, the third semester retention rates;
33 the graduation rates; and the professional certification rates of
34 recent graduates, for each academic program of the institution. This
35 information shall be further broken down by race, ethnicity, and
36 gender; and

37 (2) a description of any targeted programs, services, or supports
38 offered by the institution to support the successful education of
39 students who represent diverse backgrounds.

40 b. The Secretary of Higher Education shall prepare an annual
41 report containing a compilation of the data collected pursuant to
42 subsection a. of this section. The secretary shall submit the report to
43 the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991,
44 c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), by November 15th of each year.
45

46 3. The governing board of a public institution of higher
47 education shall assign a new or existing employee to serve as a
48 faculty diversity ambassador for each school and college of the

1 institution. The faculty diversity ambassador shall ensure the
2 implementation of the diversity strategic plan established pursuant
3 to section 1 of this act and shall report directly to the governing
4 board of the institution.

5
6 4. a. A public institution of higher education shall provide
7 annual diversity training to all faculty, staff, and students who may
8 serve on a faculty search committee. The training shall set forth a
9 list of specific interventions for addressing unconscious bias in the
10 context of faculty recruitment. The interventions shall be grounded in
11 research and shall include, but need not be limited to:

12 (1) strategies to recruit an excellent and diverse pool of applicants;

13 (2) discussion that raises awareness of unconscious assumptions
14 and their influence on the evaluation of applicants; and

15 (3) strategies to ensure a fair and thorough review of applicants
16 through the establishment of uniform academic criteria, evaluation
17 templates, and interview questions to be used for evaluating
18 candidates.

19 b. The institution shall require its faculty search committees to
20 increase the number of candidates considered for faculty positions
21 who are members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups by
22 such measures as are established by that institution's governing
23 board. The institution shall report annually to the Governor, and to
24 the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-
25 19.1), on its efforts.

26
27 5. a. The Secretary of Higher Education shall develop
28 guidance for public institutions of higher education concerning the
29 faculty search and selection process. The purpose of the guidance
30 shall be to assist institutions in identifying, recruiting, and retaining
31 diverse faculty.

32 b. The guidance developed by the secretary shall include, but
33 not be limited to, information on best practices at each stage of the
34 recruiting and hiring process such as: having an approved
35 recruitment search plan; writing broad, inclusive, and gender free
36 position descriptions and job advertisements; engaging in continual
37 networking at professional conferences, especially those where
38 women and minorities are prominently represented; being vigilant
39 for future talent; and providing dual career resources for a spouse or
40 significant other. The guidance shall also address best practices for
41 creating a vibrant, inclusive community on campus that ensures the
42 continued growth and opportunities needed to retain a diverse
43 faculty.

44
45 6. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires each public institution of higher education to develop a faculty and student diversity plan. The diversity plan shall establish clear and specific goals for increasing the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and students for each academic program at the institution. The institution is directed to update the diversity strategic plan every three years, and as needed.

The bill also requires a public institution of higher education to annually develop and submit to the Secretary of Higher Education a student diversity report. The student diversity report must include demographic analyses of students and recent graduates, for each academic degree program at the institution, as well as a description of any targeted programs, services, or supports offered by the institution to support the successful education of students who represent diverse backgrounds. The bill directs the Secretary of Higher Education to prepare, and submit to the Governor and the Legislature, an annual report containing a compilation of the collected data.

The bill also directs the governing board of a public institution of higher education to assign a new or existing employee to serve as a faculty diversity ambassador for each school of the institution. The faculty diversity ambassador is directed to ensure the implementation of the diversity strategic plan.

Under the bill, a public institution of higher education must provide annual diversity training to all faculty, staff, and students who may serve on a faculty search committee. The training must set forth a list of specific interventions for addressing unconscious bias in the context of faculty recruitment. Under the bill, institutions are required to increase the number of candidates considered for faculty positions who are members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups by such measures as are established by that institution's governing board. The institution must report annually to the Governor and to the Legislature on its efforts.

The bill requires the Secretary of Higher Education to develop guidance for public institutions of higher education concerning the faculty search and selection process. The purpose of the guidance will be to assist institutions in identifying, recruiting, and retaining diverse faculty.