SENATE, No. 4008

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 28, 2021

Sponsored by: Senator JOSEPH P. CRYAN District 20 (Union) Senator TROY SINGLETON District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Division of School Desegregation in DOE to identify racial and socioeconomic segregation of school districts and to ensure better integration in public schools.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



AN ACT concerning the desegregation of public schools and supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

- 1. a. There is established in the Department of Education the Division of School Desegregation. The purpose of the division is to identify instances of de facto racial and socioeconomic segregation of school districts and to ensure better integration and a more diverse enrollment in public schools.
- b. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint the Director of the Division of School Desegregation, who shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the division, from among current department employees. The director shall be a person of recognized judgment, integrity, and objectivity, and shall be skilled in communication, conflict resolution, and professionalism.
- c. The director shall organize and direct the work of the division, including the work of such professional and clerical staff as may be necessary to carry out the director's duties.

- 2. The duties of the Director of the Division of School Desegregation shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
- a. compiling statistics on the racial, ethnic, and economic composition of students for each public school in the State;
- b. a comparative analysis of the educational outcomes of students enrolled in highly-segregated schools with the educational outcomes of students enrolled in more racially- and economicallyintegrated schools;
- c. reviewing housing patterns and State laws and regulations which require students to attend schools in their resident districts;
- d. reviewing and making recommendations to strengthen the "Interdistrict Public School Choice Program Act," P.L.2010, c.65 (C.18A:36B-14 et seq.) to:
 - (1) promote and increase participation in the program; and
- (2) ensure that student population diversity in all districts participating in a choice district program is maintained;
- e. examining other states which have implemented programs that have successfully increased the ethnic, racial, and economic diversity of a school district's student population; and
- f. the development of a strategic plan for increasing and subsequently maintaining diversity in all school districts, which plan may not be used to supersede a court-ordered or administrative court-ordered desegregation plan. Within 180 days of the effective date of P.L., c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), and every five years thereafter, the director shall adopt a new strategic plan.

1	3. Upon adoption, the director shall submit the strategic plan
2	required pursuant to section 2 of P.L., c. (C.) (pending
3	before the Legislature as this bill) to the Governor, and to the
4	Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1).
5 6	4. This act shall take effect immediately.
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9	STATEMENT
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11	This bill establishes the Division of School Desegregation in the
12	Department of Education. The purpose of the division is to identify
13	instances of de facto racial and socioeconomic segregation of
14	school districts and to ensure better integration and a more diverse
15	enrollment in public schools. The Commissioner of Education will
16	appoint a Director of the Division of School Desegregation, who
17	will be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of
18	the division, from among current department employees.
19	Under the bill, the director's duties will include, but not be
20	limited to, the following:
21	a. compiling statistics on the racial, ethnic, and economic
22	composition of students for each public school in the State;
23	b. a comparative analysis of the educational outcomes of
24	students enrolled in highly-segregated schools with the educational
2526	outcomes of students enrolled in more racially- and economically-
	integrated schools;
2728	c. reviewing housing patterns and State laws and regulations
	which require students to attend schools in their resident districts;
29	d. reviewing and making recommendations to strengthen the
30	"Interdistrict Public School Choice Program Act," P.L.2010, c.65
31	(C.18A:36B-14 et seq.) to:
32	(1) promote and increase participation in the program; and
33	(2) ensure that student population diversity in all districts
34	participating in a choice district program is maintained;
35	e. examining other states which have implemented programs
36	that have successfully increased the ethnic, racial, and economic
37	diversity of a school district's student population; and
38	f. the development of a strategic plan for increasing and
39	subsequently maintaining diversity in all school districts, which
40	plan may not be used to supersede a court-ordered or administrative
41	court-ordered desegregation plan, and which is required to be
42	adopted within 180 days of the effective date of the bill. The bill
43	requires the Director of the Division of School Desegregation to
44	adopt a new strategic plan every five years thereafter.
45	The bill requires the Director of the Division of School
46	Desegregation to submit the strategic plan to the Governor and the

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Legislature.