## SENATE, No. 820 STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 18, 2022

Sponsored by: Senator JOSEPH P. CRYAN District 20 (Union) Senator VIN GOPAL District 11 (Monmouth)

Co-Sponsored by: Senator Ruiz

## **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.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/14/2022)

1 AN ACT concerning the desegregation of public schools and 2 supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes. 3 4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State 5 of New Jersey: 6 7 1. a. There is established in the Department of Education the 8 Division of School Desegregation. The purpose of the division is to 9 identify instances of de facto racial and socioeconomic segregation 10 of school districts and to ensure better integration and a more 11 diverse enrollment in public schools. 12 The Commissioner of Education shall appoint the Director h 13 of the Division of School Desegregation, who shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the division, from 14 15 among current department employees. The director shall be a 16 person of recognized judgment, integrity, and objectivity, and shall 17 be skilled in communication, conflict resolution, and 18 professionalism. c. The director shall organize and direct the work of the 19 20 division, including the work of such professional and clerical staff as may be necessary to carry out the director's duties. 21 22 23 2. The duties of the Director of the Division of School 24 Desegregation shall include, but not be limited to, the following: 25 compiling statistics on the racial, ethnic, and economic a. 26 composition of students for each public school in the State; 27 b. a comparative analysis of the educational outcomes of students enrolled in highly-segregated schools with the educational 28 29 outcomes of students enrolled in more racially- and economically-30 integrated schools; 31 reviewing housing patterns and State laws and regulations c. 32 which require students to attend schools in their resident districts; 33 d. reviewing and making recommendations to strengthen the 34 "Interdistrict Public School Choice Program Act," P.L.2010, c.65 35 (C.18A:36B-14 et seq.) to: (1) promote and increase participation in the program; and 36 37 (2) ensure that student population diversity in all districts 38 participating in a choice district program is maintained; 39 examining other states which have implemented programs e. 40 that have successfully increased the ethnic, racial, and economic 41 diversity of a school district's student population; and the development of a strategic plan for increasing and 42 f. subsequently maintaining diversity in all school districts, which 43 44 plan may not be used to supersede a court-ordered or administrative 45 court-ordered desegregation plan. Within 180 days of the effective 46 date of P.L., c. (C. ) (pending before the Legislature as this 47 bill), and every five years thereafter, the director shall adopt a new 48 strategic plan.

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1 Upon adoption, the director shall submit the strategic plan 3. 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 Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1). 4 5 6 4. This act shall take effect immediately. 7 8 9 **STATEMENT** 10 This bill establishes the Division of School Desegregation in the 11 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 25 outcomes of students enrolled in more racially- and economically-26 integrated schools; 27 c. reviewing housing patterns and State laws and regulations 28 which require students to attend schools in their resident districts; 29 reviewing and making recommendations to strengthen the d. 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 that have successfully increased the ethnic, racial, and economic 36 37 diversity of a school district's student population; and 38 the development of a strategic plan for increasing and f. 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 47 Legislature.