

CHAPTER 53

AN ACT establishing the Office of Learning Equity and Academic Recovery and supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

C.18A:4-1.6 "Office of Learning Equity and Academic Recovery" established; duties.

1. a. There is established in the Department of Education the Office of Learning Equity and Academic Recovery. It shall be the purpose of the office to promote student literacy and advance learning equity through academic recovery practices. Personnel for the office shall be selected by the Commissioner of Education, and the leadership of the office shall directly advise the commissioner on these matters.

b. The office shall establish guidelines as necessary to effectuate the duties established pursuant to this section. The duties of the office shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) improving the capacity of the department to make data-driven decisions regarding literacy and learning equity policies by identifying, compiling, and analyzing data collected by the department and other reputable data sources that could improve the department's understanding of the factors that impact reading, English-Language Arts, and other performance metrics of students;

(2) coordinating resources within the department to promote the implementation of effective literacy and learning acceleration policies. These efforts may include recommending strategies for improving cohesion across all current and future literacy initiatives and providing expertise in analyzing current and future policy initiatives to ensure considerations for improving student literacy and closing academic achievement gaps experienced by students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities;

(3) conducting research on State and national best practices in the areas of literacy, learning equity, and learning acceleration and providing subject matter expertise that informs future policy decisions in these areas;

(4) supporting school districts in developing and implementing best practices, including the use of high-quality instructional materials, for improving elementary literacy and academic recovery through research, data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and other appropriate methods;

(5) supporting the department in seeking out opportunities and leading efforts to obtain funding, professional development, and other policy supports that promote literacy and learning equity; and

(6) any other duties as deemed necessary by the commissioner.

c. The office shall be funded by any combination of State or federal funds in accordance with the requirements of any federal funds.

d. Two years following the establishment of the office, the commissioner shall conduct a review of office operations. The review shall evaluate the success of the office in carrying out its duties established pursuant to this section and shall include recommendations for improving the organization and administration of the office to enhance the department's capacity to promote student literacy and learning equity.

2. The Commissioner of Education shall promulgate rules pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as necessary to effectuate the provisions of this section.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 13, 2024.