

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3543

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 23, 2023

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 3543.

This bill directs the Department of Education, in partnership with the Department of Human Services and the Department of Children and Families, to develop and distribute to school districts guidelines for providing mental health services to students. The purpose of the guidelines are to assist school districts in enhancing and improving mental health services for students. The guidelines are to be reviewed and updated annually by the Department of Education. In developing and updating the guidelines, the department is required to seek the input and recommendations of school district administrators, educators, mental health professionals, and other appropriate stakeholders. The Department of Education is required to post the guidelines on the department's Internet website.

The Department of Education, in partnership with the Department of Human Services and the Department of Children and Families, are required to create and maintain a database consisting of available mental health resource providers throughout the State. Once completed, the database will be available to school districts, as well as students and their families.