

CHAPTER 138

AN ACT establishing a Commission on Early Childhood Education and supplementing chapter 44 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

C.18A:44-5 Commission on Early Childhood Education.

1. a. There is established a Commission on Early Childhood Education in, but not of, the Department of Education. The commission shall consist of 23 members, including the Commissioners of Education and Human Services and the State Treasurer, or their designees, who shall serve as ex officio members, and 20 public members who shall be appointed by the Governor, including two representatives of higher education and one representative of each of the following organizations: the New Jersey Child Care Advisory Council; the Association for Children of New Jersey; the Center for Early Education at Rutgers, the State University; the New Jersey Association for the Education of Young Children; the New Jersey Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies; the New Jersey Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators; the New Jersey Association of School Administrators; the New Jersey Child Care Association; the New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers; the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network; the New Jersey Education Association; the New Jersey State Federation of Teachers; the New Jersey School Boards Association; the New Jersey Head Start Association; the New Jersey Policy Development Board; the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association; the Advisory Committee for Nonpublic Schools of the Department of Education; and the New Jersey Professional Development Center of New Jersey.

Within 60 days of the effective date of this act, and at least one month prior to the expiration of the term of a member nominated by an organization listed above, that organization shall submit to the Governor three nominees for consideration, from which the Governor may choose. If any organization does not submit three nominees for consideration at any time required, the Governor may appoint a member of her choice.

Of the 20 public members appointed by the Governor, no more than 10 shall be of the same political party. Of the 20 public members appointed by the Governor, at least six shall represent the northern region of the State and reside in one of the following counties: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Union or Warren. Of the 20 public members appointed by the Governor, at least six shall represent the central region of the State and reside in one of the following counties: Hunterdon, Somerset, Middlesex, Mercer, Monmouth or Ocean. Of the 20 public members appointed by the Governor, at least six shall represent the southern region of the State and reside in one of the following counties: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester or Salem.

The public members shall serve for three-year terms, but of the members first appointed, six shall be appointed for a term of one year, seven shall be appointed for a term of two years and seven shall be appointed for a term of three years. A member shall hold office for the term of his appointment and until his successor has been appointed.

Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments are made and a member may be eligible for reappointment. Vacancies occurring other than by expiration of a term shall be filled for the unexpired term.

The members of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for the reasonable expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the commission for its purposes.

b. The commission shall organize no later than 30 days after the appointment of all the members and shall select a chairman from among its members and a secretary who need not be a member of the commission.

c. The department shall provide such stenographic, clerical and other administrative assistants, and such professional staff, as the commission requires to carry out its work.

d. It shall be the responsibility of the commission to provide advice on early childhood education issues, including, but not limited to:

- (1) the appropriate staff credentials for pre-school educators;
- (2) appropriate Statewide standards for early childhood education program design, implementation and assessment;
- (3) the development of standards for appropriate facilities for early childhood education

programs;

- (4) coordination of early childhood programs and services across State agencies;
- (5) the identification and dissemination of information on model early childhood programs;
- (6) the funding levels necessary to support high quality early childhood education programs, including funding for certified, well-trained teachers, developmentally appropriate curriculum and materials, appropriate facilities and particularized needs.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Establishes a Commission on Early Childhood Education in but not of the DOE.

Approved November 1, 2000.