

CHAPTER 58

AN ACT establishing an Ergonomics in Education Study Commission.

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

1. There is created a commission to be known as the "Ergonomics in Education Study Commission." The commission shall consist of 15 members, including the Commissioners of Education and Labor, and the Executive Director of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, or their designees, who shall serve as ex officio members. There shall be six public members, no more than three of whom shall be of the same political party, who shall be appointed by the Governor as follows: one college professor who is published in the field of ergonomics; one academic medical professional who is published in the field of ergonomics; one licensed medical professional with knowledge and experience in the field of pediatrics; one licensed physical therapist with knowledge and experience in the field of physical rehabilitation; one licensed occupational therapist with knowledge and experience in the field of preventive occupational therapy; and one non-academic professional from the ergonomics technology industry. The Governor shall also appoint one representative of each of the following organizations: the New Jersey Education Association; the New Jersey School Boards Association; the New Jersey Association of School Administrators; the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association; the New Jersey State Federation of Teachers; and the Advisory Committee for Nonpublic Schools of the Department of Education.

2. All appointments to the commission shall be made within 30 days after the effective date of this act. Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments were made. Members of the commission shall serve without compensation.

3. The commission shall organize within 30 days after the appointment of its members and shall select a chairperson and a vice chairperson from among its members and a secretary who need not be a member of the commission.

4. It shall be the duty of the commission to study the issues associated with ergonomics in New Jersey schools and develop a final report determining the need, viability, and cost associated with educating kindergarten through grade 12 pupils about classroom ergonomics and ergonomic study practices. The commission shall examine ergonomic issues, including, but not limited to:

- a. the types and levels of severity of injuries associated with non-ergonomic study environments and study practices;
- b. the development of ergonomic design standards for current and future school facilities, including classroom design, study equipment, computers, and furniture;
- c. the development of ergonomics education programs and the distribution of information on ergonomic study practices, including computer use; and
- d. the funding levels necessary to support high quality ergonomics education programs, including funding for teacher training, appropriate curriculum and materials, and appropriate facilities.

5. The commission shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

6. The commission may meet and hold hearings at the place or places it designates during the sessions or recesses of the Legislature. The commission shall issue a final report to the Governor and Legislature no later than six months following its organizational meeting on the need, viability, and cost associated with educating kindergarten through grade 12 pupils about classroom ergonomics and ergonomic study practices. The final report shall also include a plan for implementing recommended ergonomic design standards and ergonomic study practices. The commission shall expire upon the completion of its final report.

7. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved May 1, 2003.