

CHAPTER 24

AN ACT concerning the study of school bus passenger safety and making an appropriation.

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

1. a. The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Superintendent of the Division of State Police in the Department of Law and Public Safety, the Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety in the Department of Law and Public Safety, the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, and the Director of the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, shall study or contract with a research institution to study: the safety of school bus passengers involved in emergency situations, including, but not limited to, school bus accidents, such as head-on, rear-end, and side-impact collisions, and situations where the school bus may roll over; safety technologies, including, but not limited to, speed restrictors, automatic braking, electronic stability control, and event data recorders, that are available in newly manufactured school buses or may be installed in school buses after manufacture; and the qualifications for school bus drivers, including, but not limited to, age, physical fitness requirements, and necessary experience. The study shall include an evaluation of the statutory and regulatory requirements relating to school bus safety, the oversight of school bus operations, including, but not limited to, maintenance of vehicles, school bus drivers qualifications, and audits of school districts and contractors, and the current policies, plans, and procedures implemented by school districts.

b. Within 120 days of the completion of the study, the commissioner, in consultation with the Superintendent of the Division of State Police, the Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety, the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, and the Director of the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, shall prepare and submit a report to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature summarizing the study's findings and making recommendations to improve the safety of school bus passengers.

c. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Education the sum of \$250,000 to implement the provisions of this act.

2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the seventh month after enactment.

Approved January 31, 2019.