

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Executive Order Directing State Agencies to Implement Youth Bias Task Force Report Recommendations

10/13/2020

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed Executive Order No. 188, directing the Office of the Attorney General, including the Department of Law & Public Safety’s Division on Civil Rights, Division of Criminal Justice, Division of State Police, and Juvenile Justice Commission, as well as the Department of Children & Families, the Department of Education, the Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness; and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, to implement the recommendations of the Interagency Task Force to Combat Youth Bias that do not require legislation. The task force, which was established by Governor Murphy on August 7, 2019 through Executive Order No. 78, released it’s report on Friday, October 9, 2020.

“Youth bias incidents have been on a steep increase in our state,” **said Governor Murphy**. “We must act now to reverse this disturbing trend. The Youth Bias Task Force has provided critical insight into this alarming issue and we will act accordingly to ensure that minors and young adults in our state receive the education, knowledge, and positive reinforcement they need in order to prevent future bias incidents.”

“I thank Governor Murphy for taking swift action to ensure the recommendations for change contained in the Youth Bias Task Force report are realized and for turning these ideas into action,” **said Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal**. “Hate and bias persist in New Jersey. But the Task Force’s recommendations point us toward a better future—a future in which hate will have no place, and where diversity, acceptance, and inclusion will be the norm. The sooner we get there, the better.”

“We can’t turn away from the role our institutions and systems play in teaching and perpetuating bias. Indeed, part of how we got here is by failing to address the ways in which many of the institutions that shape our country have a long legacy of excluding, oppressing, and degrading people of color, religious minorities, immigrants, women, LGBTQ+ people, and people with disabilities,” **said Task Force Chair Rachel Wainer Apter**. “With COVID-19 continuing to lay bare unacceptable inequalities, and protests around the country demanding racial justice, the recommendations in this Report are an important first step in responding to this historic moment with efforts to build a more equitable New Jersey for all.”

“Bias intimidation can cause emotional damage in children, which can often manifest into depression, low self-esteem, and substance abuse in adulthood. New Jersey prides itself on being one of the most diverse states in the country and there is no room for hatred in our communities or education institutions,” **said New Jersey State Police Superintendent Colonel Patrick J. Callahan**. “Every child and young adult in New Jersey has a right to a safe and bias-free learning environment, and we are committed to working with our partners to ensure that those who propagate intolerance, prejudice, and hate are held accountable.”


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“During this time of heightened tensions and uncertainty, we recognize the pivotal role that students play in our state's future. New Jersey is home to a diverse set of students and we remain committed to fulfilling the promise in our state higher education plan, which ensures all learners—regardless of their background, have a healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environment,” **said Interim Secretary of Higher Education Diana Gonzalez**. “I look forward to the ongoing work of the Interagency Task Force in ensuring all New Jerseyans can live free of hate and bias.”

“The Department is committed to fostering the positive development of students by eradicating hate, bias, and intolerance in the educational setting,” **said Interim Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer**. “Educators throughout New Jersey have worked hard to ensure students are provided a safe and supportive learning environment, and we share the understanding that there is still more work to be done in the fight to combat youth bias.”

Each department will be required to report their progress on the implementation of the Task Forces' recommendations to the Office of the Governor by December 31, 2021.

The order will take effect immediately.

For a copy of Executive Order No. 188, please click here (<https://www.nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-188.pdf>).

Governor Phil Murphy

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