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SENATE BILL

**55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2021**

INTRODUCED BY

Harold Pope, Jr. And Linda M. Lopez  
and Antoinette Sedillo Lopez and Benny Shendo  
and Shannon D. Pinto

AN ACT

RELATING TO RACE; PROHIBITING THE IMPOSITION OF DISCIPLINE,  
DISCRIMINATION OR DISPARATE TREATMENT IN SCHOOLS BASED ON THE  
HAIR OR CULTURAL HEADDRESSES OF A STUDENT; DEFINING TERMS IN  
THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CODE AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

**SECTION 1.** Section 22-5-4.3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986,  
Chapter 33, Section 9, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-5-4.3. SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES--STUDENTS MAY SELF-  
ADMINISTER CERTAIN MEDICATIONS.--

A. Local school boards shall establish student  
discipline policies and shall file them with the department.  
The local school board shall involve parents, school personnel  
and students in the development of these policies, and public  
hearings shall be held during the formulation of these policies

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1 in the high school attendance areas within each school district  
2 or on a district-wide basis for those school districts that  
3 have no high school. No local school board shall allow for the  
4 imposition of discipline, discrimination or disparate treatment  
5 against a student based on the student's race or culture or  
6 because of the student's use of protective hairstyles or  
7 cultural headdresses.

8 B. Each school district discipline policy shall  
9 establish rules of conduct governing areas of student and  
10 school activity, detail specific prohibited acts and activities  
11 and enumerate possible disciplinary sanctions, which sanctions  
12 may include in-school suspension, school service, suspension or  
13 expulsion. Corporal punishment shall be prohibited by each  
14 local school board and each governing body of a charter school.

15 C. An individual school within a school district  
16 may establish a school discipline policy, provided that  
17 parents, school personnel and students are involved in its  
18 development and a public hearing is held in the school prior to  
19 its adoption. If an individual school adopts a discipline  
20 policy in addition to the local school board's school district  
21 discipline policy, it shall submit its policy to the local  
22 school board for approval.

23 D. No school employee who in good faith reports any  
24 known or suspected violation of the school discipline policy or  
25 in good faith attempts to enforce the policy shall be held

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1       liable for any civil damages as a result of such report or of  
2       the employee's efforts to enforce any part of the policy.

3               E. All public school and school district discipline  
4       policies shall allow students to carry and self-administer  
5       asthma medication and emergency anaphylaxis medication that has  
6       been legally prescribed to the student by a licensed health  
7       care provider under the following conditions:

8                       (1) the health care provider has instructed  
9       the student in the correct and responsible use of the  
10      medication;

11                      (2) the student has demonstrated to the health  
12      care provider and the school nurse or other school official the  
13      skill level necessary to use the medication and any device that  
14      is necessary to administer the medication as prescribed;

15                      (3) the health care provider formulates a  
16      written treatment plan for managing asthma or anaphylaxis  
17      episodes of the student and for medication use by the student  
18      during school hours or school-sponsored activities, including  
19      transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities; and

20                      (4) the student's parent has completed and  
21      submitted to the school any written documentation required by  
22      the school or the school district, including the treatment plan  
23      required in Paragraph (3) of this subsection and other  
24      documents related to liability.

25               F. The parent of a student who is allowed to carry

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1 and self-administer asthma medication and emergency anaphylaxis  
2 medication may provide the school with backup medication that  
3 shall be kept in a location to which the student has immediate  
4 access in the event of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency.

5 G. Authorized school personnel who in good faith  
6 provide a person with backup medication as provided in this  
7 section shall not be held liable for civil damages as a  
8 result of providing the medication.

9 H. As used in this section:

10 (1) "cultural headdresses" includes burkas,  
11 head wraps or other headdresses used as part of an individual's  
12 personal cultural beliefs;

13 (2) "protective hairstyles" includes such  
14 hairstyles as braids, locs, twists, tight coils or curls,  
15 cornrows, bantu knots, afros, weaves, wigs or head wraps; and

16 (3) "race" includes traits historically  
17 associated with race, including hair texture, length of hair,  
18 protective hairstyles or cultural headdresses."

19 SECTION 2. Section 22-8B-4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1999,  
20 Chapter 281, Section 4, as amended) is amended to read:

21 "22-8B-4. CHARTER SCHOOLS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES--  
22 OPERATION.--

23 A. A charter school shall be subject to all federal  
24 and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting  
25 discrimination on the basis of disability, physical or mental

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1 handicap, serious medical condition, race, creed, color, sex,  
2 gender identity, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation,  
3 national origin, religion, ancestry or need for special  
4 education services and shall not allow for the imposition of  
5 discipline, discrimination or disparate treatment against a  
6 student based on the student's race or culture or because of  
7 the student's use of protective hairstyles or cultural  
8 headdresses.

9 B. A charter school shall be governed by a  
10 governing body in the manner set forth in the charter contract;  
11 provided that a governing body shall have at least five  
12 members; and provided further that no member of a governing  
13 body for a charter school that is initially approved on or  
14 after July 1, 2005 or whose charter is renewed on or after July  
15 1, 2005 shall serve on the governing body of another charter  
16 school. No member of a local school board shall be a member of  
17 a governing body for a charter school or employed in any  
18 capacity by a locally chartered charter school located within  
19 the local school board's school district during the term of  
20 office for which the member was elected or appointed.

21 C. A charter school shall be responsible for:  
22 (1) its own operation, including preparation  
23 of a budget, subject to audits pursuant to the Audit Act; and  
24 (2) contracting for services and personnel  
25 matters.

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1           D. A charter school may contract with a school  
2 district, a university or college, the state, another political  
3 subdivision of the state, the federal government or one of its  
4 agencies, a tribal government or any other third party for the  
5 use of a facility, its operation and maintenance and the  
6 provision of any service or activity that the charter school is  
7 required to perform in order to carry out the educational  
8 program described in its charter contract. Facilities used by  
9 a charter school shall meet the standards required pursuant to  
10 Section 22-8B-4.2 NMSA 1978.

11           E. A conversion school chartered before July 1,  
12 2007 may choose to continue using the school district  
13 facilities and equipment it had been using prior to conversion,  
14 subject to the provisions of Subsection F of this section.

15           F. The school district in which a charter school is  
16 geographically located shall provide a charter school with  
17 available facilities for the school's operations unless the  
18 facilities are currently used for other educational purposes.  
19 An agreement for the use of school district facilities by a  
20 charter school may provide for reasonable lease payments;  
21 provided that the payments do not exceed the sum of the lease  
22 reimbursement rate provided in Subparagraph (b) of Paragraph  
23 (1) of Subsection I of Section 22-24-4 NMSA 1978 plus any  
24 reimbursement for actual direct costs incurred by the school  
25 district in providing the facilities; and provided further that

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1 any lease payments received by a school district may be  
2 retained by the school district and shall not be considered to  
3 be cash balances in any calculation pursuant to Section 22-8-41  
4 NMSA 1978. The available facilities provided by a school  
5 district to a charter school shall meet all occupancy standards  
6 as specified by the public school capital outlay council. As  
7 used in this subsection, "other educational purposes" includes  
8 health clinics, daycare centers, teacher training centers,  
9 school district administration functions and other ancillary  
10 services related to a school district's functions and  
11 operations.

12 G. A locally chartered charter school may pay the  
13 costs of operation and maintenance of its facilities or may  
14 contract with the school district to provide facility operation  
15 and maintenance services.

16 H. Locally chartered charter school facilities are  
17 eligible for state and local capital outlay funds and shall be  
18 included in the school district's five-year facilities plan.

19 I. A locally chartered charter school shall  
20 negotiate with a school district to provide transportation to  
21 students eligible for transportation under the provisions of  
22 the Public School Code. The school district, in conjunction  
23 with the charter school, may establish a limit for student  
24 transportation to and from the charter school site not to  
25 extend beyond the school district boundary.

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1           J. A charter school shall be a nonsectarian,  
2 nonreligious and non-home-based public school.

3           K. Except as otherwise provided in the Public  
4 School Code, a charter school shall not charge tuition or have  
5 admission requirements.

6           L. With the approval of the chartering authority, a  
7 single charter school may maintain separate facilities at two  
8 or more locations within the same school district; but, for  
9 purposes of calculating program units pursuant to the Public  
10 School Finance Act, the separate facilities shall be treated  
11 together as one school.

12           M. A charter school shall be subject to the  
13 provisions of Section 22-2-8 NMSA 1978 and the Assessment and  
14 Accountability Act.

15           N. Within constitutional and statutory limits, a  
16 charter school may acquire and dispose of property; provided  
17 that, upon termination of the charter, all assets of the  
18 locally chartered charter school shall revert to the local  
19 school board and all assets of the state-chartered charter  
20 school shall revert to the state, except that, if all or any  
21 portion of a state-chartered charter school facility is  
22 financed with the proceeds of general obligation bonds issued  
23 by a local school board, the facility shall revert to the local  
24 school board.

25           O. The governing body of a charter school may

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1 accept or reject any charitable gift, grant, devise or bequest;  
2 provided that no such gift, grant, devise or bequest shall be  
3 accepted if subject to any condition contrary to law or to the  
4 terms of the charter. The particular gift, grant, devise or  
5 bequest shall be considered an asset of the charter school to  
6 which it is given.

7 P. The governing body may contract and sue and be  
8 sued. A local school board shall not be liable for any acts or  
9 omissions of the charter school.

10 Q. A charter school shall comply with all state and  
11 federal health and safety requirements applicable to public  
12 schools, including those health and safety codes relating to  
13 educational building occupancy.

14 R. A charter school is a public school that may  
15 contract with a school district or other party for provision of  
16 financial management, food services, transportation,  
17 facilities, education-related services or other services. The  
18 governing body shall not contract with a for-profit entity for  
19 the management of the charter school.

20 S. To enable state-chartered charter schools to  
21 submit required data to the department, an accountability data  
22 system shall be maintained by the department.

23 T. A charter school shall comply with all  
24 applicable state and federal laws and rules related to  
25 providing special education services. Charter school students

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1 with disabilities and their parents retain all rights under the  
2 federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and its  
3 implementing state and federal rules. Each charter school is  
4 responsible for identifying, evaluating and offering a free  
5 appropriate public education to all eligible children who are  
6 accepted for enrollment in that charter school. The state-  
7 chartered charter school, as a local educational agency, shall  
8 assume responsibility for determining students' needs for  
9 special education and related services. The division may  
10 promulgate rules to implement the requirements of this  
11 subsection.

12 U. As used in this section:

13 (1) "cultural headdresses" includes burkas,  
14 head wraps or other headdresses used as part of an individual's  
15 personal cultural beliefs;

16 (2) "protective hairstyles" includes such  
17 hairstyles as braids, locs, twists, tight coils or curls,  
18 cornrows, bantu knots, afros, weaves, wigs or head wraps; and

19 (3) "race" includes traits historically  
20 associated with race, including hair texture, length of hair,  
21 protective hairstyles or cultural headdresses."

22 SECTION 3. Section 28-1-2 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1969,  
23 Chapter 196, Section 2, as amended) is amended to read:

24 "28-1-2. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Human Rights Act:

25 A. "person" means one or more individuals, a

1 partnership, association, organization, corporation, joint  
2 venture, legal representative, trustees, receivers or the state  
3 and all of its political subdivisions;

4 B. "employer" means any person employing four or  
5 more persons and any person acting for an employer;

6 C. "commission" means the human rights commission;

7 D. "director" or "bureau" means the human rights  
8 bureau of the labor relations division of the workforce  
9 solutions department;

10 E. "employee" means any person in the employ of an  
11 employer or an applicant for employment;

12 F. "labor organization" means any organization that  
13 exists for the purpose in whole or in part of collective  
14 bargaining or of dealing with employers concerning grievances,  
15 terms or conditions of employment or of other mutual aid or  
16 protection in connection with employment;

17 G. "employment agency" means any person regularly  
18 undertaking with or without compensation to procure  
19 opportunities to work or to procure, recruit or refer  
20 employees;

21 H. "public accommodation" means any establishment  
22 that provides or offers its services, facilities,  
23 accommodations or goods to the public, but does not include a  
24 bona fide private club or other place or establishment that is  
25 by its nature and use distinctly private;

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1 I. "housing accommodation" means any building or  
2 portion of a building that is constructed or to be constructed,  
3 which is used or intended for use as the residence or sleeping  
4 place of any individual;

5 J. "real property" means lands, leaseholds or  
6 commercial or industrial buildings, whether constructed or to  
7 be constructed, offered for sale or rent, and any land rented  
8 or leased for the use, parking or storage of house trailers;

9 K. "secretary" means the secretary of workforce  
10 solutions;

11 L. "unlawful discriminatory practices" means those  
12 unlawful practices and acts specified in Section 28-1-7 NMSA  
13 1978;

14 M. "physical or mental handicap" means a physical  
15 or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of a  
16 person's major life activities. A person is also considered to  
17 be physically or mentally handicapped if the person has a  
18 record of a physical or mental handicap or is regarded as  
19 having a physical or mental handicap;

20 N. "major life activities" means functions such as  
21 caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking,  
22 seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working;

23 O. "applicant for employment" means a person  
24 applying for a position as an employee;

25 P. "sexual orientation" means heterosexuality,

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1 homosexuality or bisexuality, whether actual or perceived;

2 Q. "gender identity" means a person's self-  
3 perception, or perception of that person by another, of the  
4 person's identity as a male or female based upon the person's  
5 appearance, behavior or physical characteristics that are in  
6 accord with or opposed to the person's physical anatomy,  
7 chromosomal sex or sex at birth;

8 R. "reasonable accommodation" means modification or  
9 adaptation of the work environment, work schedule, work rules  
10 or job responsibilities, and reached through good faith efforts  
11 to explore less restrictive or less expensive alternatives to  
12 enable an employee to perform the essential functions of the  
13 job and that does not impose an undue hardship on the employer;  
14 [~~and~~]

15 S. "undue hardship" means an accommodation  
16 requiring significant difficulty or expense when considered in  
17 light of the following factors:

- 18 (1) the nature and cost of the accommodation;  
19 (2) the financial resources of the employer  
20 involved in the provision of the reasonable accommodation;  
21 (3) the number of persons the employer  
22 employs;  
23 (4) the effect of the accommodation on  
24 expenses and resources;  
25 (5) the impact of the accommodation otherwise

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1 upon the employer's business;

2 (6) the overall financial resources of the  
3 employer;

4 (7) the overall size of the business of an  
5 employer with respect to the number, type and location of its  
6 facilities;

7 (8) the type of operation of the employer,  
8 including the composition, structure and functions of the  
9 workforce of the employer; or

10 (9) the geographic separateness or  
11 administrative or fiscal relationship to the employer of the  
12 employer's facilities;

13 T. "cultural headdresses" includes burkas, head  
14 wraps or other headdresses used as part of an individual's  
15 personal cultural beliefs;

16 U. "protective hairstyles" includes such hairstyles  
17 as braids, locs, twists, tight coils or curls, cornrows, bantu  
18 knots, afros, weaves, wigs or head wraps; and

19 V. "race" includes traits historically associated  
20 with race, including hair texture, length of hair, protective  
21 hairstyles or cultural headdresses."

22 **SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.**--The effective date of the  
23 provisions of this act is July 1, 2021.