

Aruna Miller
Lt. GovernorWes Moore
GovernorVincent Schiraldi
Secretary

Date: January 23, 2025
Bill Number/Title: HB 137 - Public Schools - Children Charged With a Crime of Violence - Prohibition on In-Person Attendance (School Safety Act of 2025)
Committee: Ways and Means
DJS Position: Oppose

The Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) opposes HB 137.

HB 137 prohibits a child charged with a crime of violence from attending a public school until the child is found non-delinquent or the charge is dismissed.

HB 137 unnecessarily keeps children out of school based solely on an accusation they were involved in a crime of violence, undermining their education and increasing the likelihood of further involvement in the juvenile justice system. School systems are equipped to address student behaviors through a continuum of responses developed to support students and promote safety in the school community. Prohibiting in-person attendance prior to any formal court disposition will result in students being unfairly excluded, stigmatized, and penalized.

Research consistently shows that school engagement is a critical protective factor in preventing delinquency. Denying in-person attendance isolates students from a structured, supportive environment, increasing the likelihood of future challenges, including academic failure, behavioral problems, and involvement in the justice system.

For these reasons, DJS requests an unfavorable report on HB 137.

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