AN ACT regarding genocide education in the public schools and supplementing chapter 35 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

   a. New Jersey has recently become the focal point of national attention for the most venomous and vile of ethnic hate speeches.

   b. There is an inescapable link between violence and vandalism and ethnic and racial intolerance. The New Jersey Department of Education itself has formally recognized the existence of the magnitude of this problem in New Jersey schools by the formation of a Commissioner's Task Force on Violence and Vandalism.

   c. New Jersey is proud of its enormous cultural diversity. The teaching of tolerance must be made a priority if that cultural diversity is to remain one of the State's strengths.

   d. National studies indicate that fewer than 25% of students have an understanding of organized attempts throughout history to eliminate various ethnic groups through a systematic program of mass killing or genocide.

   e. The New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education, created pursuant to P.L.1991.c.193 (C.18A:4A-1 et seq.), several years ago expanded its mission to study and recommend curricular material on a wide range of genocides. The Holocaust Commission is an ideal agency to recommend curricular materials to local districts.

2. a. Every board of education shall include instruction on the Holocaust and genocides in an appropriate place in the curriculum of all elementary and secondary school pupils.

   b. The instruction shall enable pupils to identify and analyze applicable theories concerning human nature and behavior: to understand that genocide is a consequence of prejudice and discrimination: and to understand that issues of moral dilemma and conscience have a profound impact on life. The instruction shall further emphasize the personal responsibility that each citizen bears to fight racism and hatred whenever and wherever it happens.

3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to curriculum offerings in the 1994-95 school year.