

ASSEMBLY, No. 5420

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 8, 2023

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman P. CHRISTOPHER TULLY

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblywoman ANNETTE CHAPARRO

District 33 (Hudson)

Assemblyman HERB CONAWAY, JR.

District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes New Jersey Student Educator Stipend Program.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** establishing the New Jersey Student Educator Stipend
2 Program and supplementing chapter 71B of Title 18A of the New
3 Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. As used in this act:

9 “Approved program of study” means an undergraduate program
10 leading to a bachelor's degree offered by a four-year public
11 institution of higher education; or a graduate program leading to a
12 master's degree offered by a public institution of higher education
13 in the State.

14 “Authority” means the Higher Education Student Assistance
15 Authority.

16 “Certificate of eligibility with advanced standing” means an
17 instructional certificate with lifetime validity issued by the State
18 Board of Examiners to candidates who meet degree, academic, and
19 test requirements for teacher certification and complete an educator
20 preparation program.

21 “Clinical practice” means the culminating field-based experience
22 or internship required by an educator preparation program.

23 “Eligible student” means a student completing a required clinical
24 practice through a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing
25 educator preparation program at a public institution of higher
26 education.

27 “Program” means the New Jersey Student Educator Stipend
28 Program.

29
30 2. a. There is established in the Higher Education Student
31 Assistance Authority, in coordination with the Department of
32 Education, the New Jersey Student Educator Stipend Program. The
33 purpose of the program shall be to reduce financial barriers to
34 teacher certification.

35 b. Under the program, the authority shall award stipends to
36 eligible students for each semester of full-time clinical practice
37 completed by a student. Students shall be awarded a stipend in the
38 amount of \$7,200 for each semester of full-time clinical practice
39 completed by a student. A student shall be eligible to receive a
40 stipend under the program for a maximum of two academic
41 semesters.

42
43 3. a. To be eligible for a stipend under the program, an
44 applicant shall:

45 (1) be a United States citizen, permanent resident alien, or any
46 student eligible to complete the New Jersey Alternative Financial
47 Aid Application;

48 (2) be a resident of the State;

1 (3) be enrolled on a full-time basis in an approved program of
2 study; and

3 (4) complete any steps required by the approved program of
4 study to be eligible to apply for clinical practice.

5 b. The authority, in coordination with the department, may
6 establish additional eligibility requirements and minimum
7 qualifications for the program, including limiting the program to
8 students seeking degrees in math, science, special education, world
9 languages, bilingual education, or other subjects determined to be in
10 high demand for educators by the department.

11 c. A student's stipend shall continue only during the period the
12 student achieves satisfactory academic progress as defined by the
13 institution and continues to meet the eligibility and minimum
14 qualifications established pursuant to subsections a. and b. of this
15 section.

16 d. (1) The stipend shall be terminated if a student is dismissed
17 from the public institution of higher education or educator
18 preparation program for academic or disciplinary reasons, is
19 disqualified from employment by a school district due to the
20 detection of criminal history record information pursuant to section
21 1 of P.L.1986, c.116 (C.18A:6-7.1), or otherwise becomes ineligible
22 to receive a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing from
23 the Board of Examiners, and the student shall be required to repay
24 the full amount of any stipend received under the program as a debt
25 to the State.

26 (2) The stipend shall be terminated if a student withdraws from
27 an approved program of study due to the student's illness, the
28 illness of a member of the student's immediate family, or a family
29 emergency, but the student shall not be required to repay the
30 amount of any stipend received under the program.

31
32 4. Within 90 days of the effective date of this act, the authority
33 shall establish an application process to provide stipends to eligible
34 students under the New Jersey Student Educator Stipend Program
35 established pursuant to section 2 of this act. No later than the first
36 day of the fourth month next following the effective date of this act,
37 the authority shall make the application available, and shall, within
38 a reasonable time frame thereafter, commence approving
39 applications for the program.

40
41 5. The authority, in coordination with the Department of
42 Education, shall annually collect data to measure the effectiveness
43 of the program, which shall include, but not be limited to:

44 a. the total number of program participants, disaggregated by
45 certificate of eligibility with advanced standing educator
46 preparation program;

47 b. a survey of program participants to measure the participant's
48 experience with the stipend program; and

1 c. the demographic data of each program participant,
2 disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.

3
4 6. Nothing in this act shall be construed to exempt a student
5 from meeting educator certification requirements in accordance
6 with rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of
7 Education.

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9 7. The Legislature shall annually appropriate from the General
10 Fund to the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority
11 amounts as may be necessary to effectuate the purposes of this act.

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13 8. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
14 the first full academic year following the date of enactment.

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17 STATEMENT

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19 This bill establishes the New Jersey Student Educator Stipend
20 Program in the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority to
21 reduce financial barriers to teacher certification.

22 Under the bill, the program is to provide stipends to students
23 completing required clinical practice through a certificate of
24 eligibility with advanced standing educator preparation program at
25 a public institution of higher education. A student is eligible to
26 receive a stipend for a maximum of two academic semesters.

27 To be eligible for a stipend, an applicant is required to: be a
28 United States citizen, permanent resident alien, or any student
29 eligible to complete the New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid
30 Application; be a resident of the State; be enrolled full time in an
31 approved program of study; and complete any steps required by the
32 approved program of study to be eligible to apply for clinical
33 practice. The bill requires the authority to establish an application
34 process for the program.

35 The authority, in coordination with the Department of Education,
36 may establish additional eligibility requirements and minimum
37 qualifications for the program. Additionally, the authority, in
38 coordination with the department, is to annually collect data on the
39 program.

40 Finally, the bill stipulates that a student's stipend will be
41 terminated if the a student: is dismissed from the program of study
42 for academic or disciplinary reasons, is disqualified from
43 employment by a school district due to the detection of criminal
44 history record information under current law, or becomes ineligible
45 to receive a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing for any
46 other reason. The bill also stipulates that the stipend will be
47 terminated if the student withdraws due to illness, but the student
48 would not be required to repay the stipend.