[Third Reprint] **SENATE, No. 2476**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 9, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE

District 19 (Middlesex)

Assemblyman CRAIG J. COUGHLIN

District 19 (Middlesex)

Assemblywoman MILA M. JASEY

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

Assemblywoman SHAVONDA E. SUMTER

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Cruz-Perez, Cryan, Cunningham, Stanfield, Turner, Zwicker, O'Scanlon, Pou, Assemblywoman McKnight, Assemblyman Benson, Assemblywomen Reynolds-Jackson, Park, Mosquera, Assemblyman Wimberly, Assemblywomen Jimenez, Lopez, Swain, Assemblyman Moen, Assemblywomen Pintor Marin and Lampitt

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Thriving By Three Act to award competitive grants for infant and toddler child care programs; appropriates \$28 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As amended on June 29, 2022 by the Senate pursuant to the Governor's recommendations.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/29/2022)

AN ACT establishing ²[an]² infant and toddler child care grant ²[program] programs², supplementing Title 30 of the New Jersey Statutes, and making an appropriation.

4 5

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

6 7

2223

24

25

2627

2829

3031

32

33

34

35

3637

38 39

40

41

42

43

- ²[1. a. ¹[There is established in the] The Department of 8 Human Services, in coordination with the Department of Education, 9 the Bureau of Licensing in the Department of Children and 10 Families, and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, 11 ¹shall establish a grant program, which shall be known as ¹ the ¹...¹ 12 Thriving By Three ¹, grant program ¹, the purpose of which shall 13 be 1 to incentivize the development of child care programs for 14 infants and toddlers '[and], provide technical assistance to child 15 care services providers for the expansion of child care spaces for 16 ¹[infant] <u>infants</u> and toddlers ¹[. The purpose of the grant 17 program shall be to], 1 address 1 [the] 1 shortages 1 [of] in the 18 number of 1 regulated child care 1 providers that are available 1 for 19 working families ¹, ¹ and ¹[to] ¹ support the developmental needs of 20 young children. 21
 - b. ¹[Grants under] <u>Under</u>¹ the program ¹, the department¹ shall ¹[be awarded to a licensed child care or registered family day care provider, Head Start program, or school district] <u>award one-time grants</u>,¹ on a competitive basis ¹, to licensed child care providers, registered family day care providers, Health Start programs, and school districts that meet the requirements of subsection c. of this section¹. Providers, programs, ¹[or] <u>and</u>¹ school districts that ¹[receive a grant under the program shall use the funds to develop or expand quality child care spaces for infant and toddlers, and preference shall be given to providers, programs, or school districts:
 - (1) located in communities identified as child care deserts with little or no child care options for infants and toddlers;
 - (2) located in communities with high percentages of low-income families; and
 - (3) that can align their infant and toddler child care programs with high-quality preschool, support collaborations for shared services, and build upon existing early childhood education services meet the requirements of subsection c. of this section shall be eligible for both a one-time grant that may be used to renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing facilities to increase the number of infant and toddler child care spaces or classrooms, as appropriate, and for a one-time grant that may be

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Senate SHH committee amendments adopted June 6, 2022.

²Senate SBA committee amendments adopted June 27, 2022.

³Senate amendments adopted in accordance with Governor's recommendations June 29, 2022.

- 1 <u>used to recruit staff and provide staff development opportunities.</u>
- 2 One-time grants awarded to increase the number of infant and
- 3 toddler child care spaces or classrooms and one-time grants
- 4 <u>awarded to recruit staff and provide staff development opportunities</u>
- 5 may be awarded to a provider, program, or school district at
- 6 <u>separate times</u>¹.

15

16

1718

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

2728

2930

31

32

33

34

35

36

3738

39

40

- 7 c. To be eligible for consideration ¹[of] <u>for</u> a grant award, a 8 licensed child care ¹[or] <u>provider</u>, registered family day care 9 provider, Head Start program, or school district shall:
- 10 (1) submit an application to the Commissioner of Human 11 Services, in ¹ [accordance with application procedures and 12 requirements] a form and manner as shall be ¹ prescribed by the 13 commissioner ¹, which application shall outline the purposes for 14 which a grant award would be used ¹;
 - (2) comply with the current child care licensing standards for infant and toddler child care, including ¹, ¹ but not limited to, class size, ¹[child to staff] child-to-staff ratios, and health and safety standards;
 - (3) participate in the State's child care quality rating and improvement system, Grow NJ Kids ¹[(GNJK)]¹;
 - (4) require ¹ [classroom teachers] <u>room supervisors</u> ¹ to have earned ¹ [or to attain] ¹ an infant and toddler child development associate (CDA) or equivalent credential ¹ or to attain a CDA or equivalent credential ¹ within two years of ¹ the effective date of this act or within two years of commencing ¹ employment ¹ with the provider, program, or school, whichever occurs later ¹; and
 - (5) require that ¹ [classroom teachers with] every six to eight rooms at the provider, program, or school be supervised by at least one individual who holds a ¹ bachelor of arts ¹ [degrees supervise at least six but no more than eight classrooms or up to] degree and has at least two years of early childhood experience, provided that no room supervisor shall be responsible for supervising more than ¹ 24 children at one time.
 - d. ¹(1)¹ The commissioner shall establish selection criteria for the awarding of grant funds under the program. One-time grants shall be awarded ¹, in an amount to be determined by the commissioner, ¹ based upon review of the applications and subject to the availability of funds ¹[, and shall be used:
 - (1) to expand, renovate, or reconstruct existing facilities to increase the number of infant and toddler child care spaces or classrooms, as appropriate; and].¹
- 42 (2) ¹ [for staff recruitment and staff development initiatives] In awarding grants pursuant to this subsection, the commissioner shall establish a preference for licensed child care providers, registered family day care providers, Head Start programs, and school districts that:

(a) are located in communities with few or no child care options for infants and toddlers;

- (b) are located in communities with high percentages of lowincome families; and
- (c) can align the provider's, program's, or school district's infant and toddler child care programs with high-quality preschools, support collaborations for shared services, and build upon existing early childhood education services¹.

¹[Additional grants shall be made] (3) In addition to the one-time grants awarded to increase the number of infant and toddler child care spaces or classrooms and the one-time grants awarded to recruit staff and provide staff development opportunities the commissioner shall make an additional one-time grant¹ available to ¹any¹ family day care ¹[providers who meet all the eligibility requirements pursuant to subsection c. of this section to incentivize such providers to register] provider that is registered¹ with the Department of Children and Families in accordance with the "Family Day Care Provider Registration Act," ¹[P.L. L. 1987, c. 27] P.L.1987, c.27¹ (C.30:5B-16 et seq.). ¹An additional grant awarded pursuant to this paragraph may be used to increase the number of infant and toddler child care spaces, to recruit staff and provide staff development opportunities, or both.¹

- e. A licensed child care ¹[or] provider,¹ registered family day care provider, Head Start program, or school district receiving a grant under the program ¹[and using]¹ that ¹uses the¹ grant to expand, renovate, or reconstruct existing facilities to increase the number of infant and toddler child care spaces or classrooms, as appropriate, shall receive from the Department of Human Services a child care reimbursement rate of \$22,000 per year per child to ¹[cover] help offset the cost of additional¹ staff salaries ¹, which salaries shall be¹ commensurate with the infant and toddler ¹[child development associate (CDA)] CDA¹ or ¹[other]¹ equivalent credential ¹held by the additional staff members¹.
- f. The commissioner shall ¹[establish the amount for each grant that is approved and shall]¹:
- (1) publicize the existence of, and encourage licensed child care ¹[or] <u>providers</u>, ¹ registered family day care providers, Head Start programs, ¹[or] <u>and</u> school districts ¹[in applying] <u>to apply</u> to participate in, the ¹<u>grant</u> program; and
- (2) provide technical assistance to the grant awardees to meet the requirements of the ¹grant ¹ program.
- g. Within one year after receiving a grant award under the program, a licensed child care ¹[or] provider, ¹ registered family day care provider, Head Start program, or school district shall submit a report to the Department of Human Services containing information on the provider's, program's, or school district's use of

the grant funds. The report shall include, at a minimum, information on the number of additional infant and toddler child care spaces created using grant funds, ¹the number of additional staff hired and any staff development initiatives created using grant funds, 1 increases or improvements in the provision of child care services as a result of the grant, and any notable changes in child care enrollment and attendance rates or other measures 1the provider, program, or school district observed since receiving the grant.]2

²1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Thriving By Three Act."²

²2. The purpose of this act shall be to incentivize the expansion of capacity for infants and toddlers, provide technical assistance to child care providers for the expansion of child care spaces for infants and toddlers, address shortages in infant and toddler care capacity that is available for working families, and support the developmental needs of young children.²

- ²3. a. The New Jersey Economic Development Authority shall award one-time grants, on either a competitive or rolling application basis, to licensed child care providers, registered family day care providers, ³and ³ Head Start programs ³[, charter schools, renaissance schools, and school districts] ³ that meet the requirements of subsection b. of this section. Providers ³[,] and ³ programs ³[, schools, and school districts] ³ that meet the requirements of subsection b. of this section shall be eligible for a one-time grant that may be used to renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing facilities in a manner that will have the predominant effect of increasing the number of infant and toddler child care slots or classrooms, as appropriate. The authority may provide technical assistance to assist providers in meeting the requirements of the grant program.
- b. To be eligible for consideration for a grant award under this section, a licensed child care provider, registered family day care provider, ³or³ Head Start program ³[, charter school, renaissance school, or school district] shall:
- (1) submit an application to the authority, in a form and manner as shall be prescribed by the authority and in accordance with criteria established by the authority in consultation with the Commissioner of Human Services, which application shall outline the purposes for which a grant award would be used;
- (2) comply with the current child care licensing standards for infant and toddler child care, including, but not limited to, class size, child-to-staff ratios, and health and safety standards; and

- (3) participate or apply to participate in the State's child care
 quality rating and improvement system, Grow NJ Kids.
- c. In awarding grants under this section, the authority shall give preference to providers ³[,] and ³ programs ³[, schools, and school districts] ³ that:
- 6 (1) are located in communities identified as child care deserts
 7 with few or no options for high-quality child care for infants and
 8 toddlers;
- 9 (2) are located in communities with high percentages of low-10 income families; and
 - (3) can align their infant and toddler child care programs with high-quality preschool programs, support collaborations for shared services, and build upon existing early childhood education services.²

1415

43

44

45

11

12

- 16 ²4. a. The Commissioner of Human Services shall award grants, on a competitive basis pursuant to criteria established by the 17 Commissioner of Human Services, to licensed child care ³[centers] 18 providers³, registered family day care providers, ³and³ Head Start 19 programs ³[, and school districts] ³ that meet the requirements of 20 subsection b. of this section. Providers ³[,] and ³ programs ³[, 21 schools, and school districts]3 that meet the requirements of 22 subsection b. of this section shall be eligible for a one-time initial 23 grant that may be used to: purchase equipment; recruit, train, or 24 25 compensate staff for new infant and toddler slots or classrooms; and 26 for other initiatives to support the expansion of infant and toddler child care capacity. The Department of Human Services may 27 provide technical assistance to assist providers in meeting the 28 29 requirements of the grant program.
- b. To be eligible for consideration for a grant award under this 30 section, a licensed child care provider, registered family day care 31 provider ³[,] or ³ Head Start program ³[, charter school, renaissance 32 school, or school district 3 shall submit an application to the 33 Department of Human Services, in a form and manner as shall be 34 prescribed by the Commissioner of Human Services and in 35 accordance with criteria established by the Commissioner of Human 36 37 Services, which application shall outline the purposes for which a grant award would be used. Eligible providers shall include, but 38 39 shall not be limited to, providers that receive a grant from the 40 Economic Development Authority pursuant to section 2 of this act. 41 To be eligible for consideration for a grant award under this section, 42 an applicant shall additionally:
 - (1) comply with the current child care licensing standards for infant and toddler child care, including, but not limited to, class size, child-to-staff ratios, and health and safety standards;
- 46 (2) demonstrate that the grant funding will be used to support 47 the expansion of infant and toddler child care capacity; and

(3) participate or apply to participate in the State's child care
 quality rating and improvement system, Grow NJ Kids.

- c. The commissioner shall establish selection criteria for the awarding of grant funds under the program. One-time initial grants shall be awarded, in an amount to be determined by the commissioner, based upon review of the applications and subject to the availability of funds.
- d. The department shall calculate the initial grant award for an eligible recipient based on the number of new infant or toddler child care slots that will be supported through the grant program created pursuant to this section. Initial grants awarded pursuant to this section shall be in an amount that is not less than \$3,000 per new infant or toddler child care slot that will be supported through the grant program.
- e. (1) Subject to appropriation and the availability of funds, grant recipients not already participating in Grow NJ Kids at the time the grant recipient applied to the department for a grant award under this section, which recipients apply to participate in Grow NJ Kids as a condition of program eligibility, shall be eligible to apply for and receive up to two additional grant awards to allow for time for the recipient to join and become rated under Grow NJ Kids. A recipient shall not be eligible for an additional grant award under this subsection if the recipient has received a Grow NJ Kids rating.
- (2) A grant recipient shall apply for additional grant awards pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection in a form and manner as shall be prescribed by the commissioner. The application for an additional grant award shall outline the purposes for which the grant would be used. Additional grant awards may be used for the same purposes as are authorized for grants awarded pursuant to subsection a. of this section.
- (3) The department shall calculate an additional grant award for an eligible recipient based on the number of new infant or toddler child care slots that are supported using the recipient's initial grant award. Additional grants awarded pursuant to this subsection shall be in an amount that is not less than \$1,200 per infant or toddler child care slot that will be supported through the grant program.
- (4) A first additional grant awarded pursuant to this subsection shall be paid on the first day of the 12th month next following the date the initial grant award is paid. A second additional grant awarded pursuant to this subsection shall be paid on the first day of the 24th month next following the date the initial grant award is paid.
- f. In awarding grants under this section, the commissioner shall give preference to providers ³[,] and ³ programs ³[, schools, and school districts] ³ that:
- 46 (1) are located in communities identified as child care deserts
 47 with few or no options for high-quality child care for infants and
 48 toddlers;

S2476 [3R] RUIZ, VITALE

1 (2) are located in communities with high percentages of lowincome families; and

(3) can align their infant and toddler child care programs with high-quality preschool programs, support collaborations for shared services, and build upon existing early childhood education services.²

²5. The Economic Development Authority and the Department of Human Services shall each publicize the existence of, and encourage licensed child care providers, registered family day care providers, ³and ³ Head Start programs ³[, charter schools, renaissance schools, and school districts] ³ to apply to participate in, the grant programs established under this act; and shall provide technical assistance to the grant awardees to meet the requirements of the grant program. ²

²6. Within one year after receiving a grant award under this act, a licensed child care provider, registered family day care provider, ³or³ Head Start program ³[, charter school, renaissance school, or school district]³ shall submit a report to the agency that awarded the grant to the licensed child care provider, registered family day care provider, ³or³ Head Start program ³[, charter school, renaissance school, or school district 3 containing information on the provider's ³[,] or ³ program's ³[, school's, or school district's] ³ use of the grant funds. The report shall include, to the extent relevant, information any new infant and toddler child care capacity, including new slots, created using grant funds, any staff recruitment initiatives supported using grant funds, increases or improvements in the provision of child care services as a result of the grant, and any notable changes in child care enrollment and attendance rates or other measures the provider ³[,] or ³ program ³[, school, or school district 3 observed since receiving the grant.2

²[2.] 7.² The Commissioner of Human Services ²and the Economic Development Authority² shall ²each² submit a report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than two years after the establishment of the ²[Thriving By Three infant and toddler child care] grant ²[program] programs established pursuant to this act². The report shall include, but need not be limited to, information on the number of grant applicants, the number and amounts of ¹[the grant awards] grants awarded, the purposes for which grant funds were used 1, the number of additional infant and toddler child care spaces created using grant funds, information provided by licensed child care 1[and] providers, registered 1 family day care providers, ³and 3 Head Start programs ³[, ²charter schools, renaissance

schools,² and school districts]³ under ²[subsection g. of]² section

²[1] 6² of this act, and any recommendations concerning the

continuation or expansion of the grant ²[program] programs².

4

²[3.] <u>8.</u> The ²Economic Development Authority and the ² 5 Commissioner of Human Services, in consultation with the 6 Department of Education ²[,] and ² the Bureau of Licensing in the 7 Department of Children and Families ²[, and the New Jersey 8 Economic Development Authority 12, pursuant to the "Administrative 9 Procedure ¹[Act"] Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), 10 ²[shall] may each² adopt such rules and regulations as ¹may be¹ 11 necessary to implement the provisions of this act. 12

13 14

15

16

- ²[4.] 9.² There is appropriated ²[to the Department of Human Services] ¹ the following sums ³[, which shall be used by the department] ³ to effectuate the provisions of this act ¹:
- 2 [\$22,000,000] \$8,000,000 2 from the General Fund 2 [from 17 the federal "Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund" established 18 19 pursuant to the federal "American Rescue Plan Act", Pub.L.117-2, 20 which] to the ³[Division of Disaster Recovery and Mitigation in the Department of Community Affairs, which sum shall be made 21 available to and used by the **]** Economic Development Authority to 22 effectuate the provisions of section 3 of this act, of which a 23 24 reasonable amount not to exceed five percent may be used by the 25 authority for organizational, administrative and other work and services, including salaries, equipment, services, and materials 26 necessary to administer the activities authorized by this act ³[. The 27 authority shall enter into a memorandum of understanding or grant 28 29 agreement, as applicable, with the division to effectuate the 30 purposes of this subsection, to establish appropriate administrative 31 costs, and to ensure compliance with federal rules and guidance²]³;

32 and

- \$20,000,000² 33 ²[\$6,000,000] ²[federal from the 34 "Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund" established pursuant to 35 the federal "American Rescue Plan Act", Pub.L.117-2, of which 36 ¹ [the following amounts shall be distributed by the authority, on a one-time basis, to a licensed child care or registered family day care 37 38 provider, Head Start program, or school district awarded a grant in 39 accordance with section 1 of this act:
- 40 (1) amount \$5,000,000 shall be dedicated to grants awarded to cover the costs of renovating, improving, expanding, or reconstructing existing schild care spaces and to increase the number of infant and toddler child care spaces and classrooms, and
- 45 ¹[(2)]¹ \$1,000,000 ¹[for] shall be dedicated to grants awarded 46 to cover the costs of staff recruitment initiatives and creating

S2476 [3R] RUIZ, VITALE 10

1	scholarships for staff development and training General Fund to
2	the Department of Human Services to effectuate the provisions of
3	section 4 of this act, of which a reasonable amount not to exceed
4	five percent may be used by the department for organizational,
5	administrative and other work and services, including salaries,
6	equipment, services, and materials necessary to administer the
7	activities authorized by this act ² .
0	

9

10

²[5.] 10.² This act shall take effect ²[on the first day of the sixth month next following enactment <u>immediately</u>².