

[Second Reprint]

SENATE, No. 2661

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 16, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator RICHARD J. CODEY

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

Senator TROY SINGLETON

District 7 (Burlington)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Diegnan, Turner and Pou

SYNOPSIS

Establishes New Jersey Educator Scholarship Program; appropriates \$3 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As amended by the Senate on February 27, 2023.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/20/2023)

1 AN ACT establishing the New Jersey Educator Scholarship
 2 Program, ²**[and]**² supplementing chapter ¹**[6]** 71B¹ of Title 18A
 3 of the New Jersey Statutes², and making an appropriation².
 4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
 6 of New Jersey:
 7

8 1. There is established in the ¹Higher Education Student
 9 Assistance Authority, in coordination with the¹ Department of
 10 Education ¹,¹ the New Jersey Educator Scholarship Program. The
 11 purpose of the program shall be to provide incentives for ¹**[high-**
 12 achieving]¹ students to pursue careers in education.

13 a. Under the program, the ¹**[department]** authority¹ shall
 14 award ²a total of 200 scholarships annually, consisting of² 50
 15 scholarships ²**[annually]**² to eligible recipients enrolled in ²each of
 16 the first, second, third, and fourth years of academic study at² an
 17 institution of higher education in the State. Students shall receive a
 18 ¹**[tuition waiver]** scholarship in an amount up to the remaining
 19 amount of tuition that is not covered by State, federal, or any other
 20 need-based grant or merit scholarship, for up to 18 credits¹ for each
 21 semester of study ¹**[and be awarded]** plus¹ a stipend in the amount
 22 of \$5,000 annually. ¹Notwithstanding the provisions of this
 23 subsection to the contrary, the amount of a scholarship awarded to a
 24 student under the program shall not exceed the average in-State
 25 tuition amount charged by the four-year public institutions of higher
 26 education in the academic year in which the scholarship is
 27 awarded.¹

28 b. A student shall be eligible to receive a stipend and ¹**[tuition**
 29 **waiver]** scholarship¹ under the program for a maximum of four
 30 academic years, or until receipt of a bachelor's degree and
 31 completion of an educator preparation program, whichever occurs
 32 first.

33 c. Within the first five full school years immediately following
 34 receipt of a bachelor's degree and completion of an educator
 35 preparation program, a student who received a scholarship under the
 36 program shall seek and accept full time employment as a teaching
 37 staff member with a public school district ¹, charter school, or
 38 renaissance school¹ in the State of New Jersey for no less than three
 39 full school years, during which time the student shall receive
 40 mentoring coordinated by the ¹**[department]** hiring district or
 41 school in consultation with the Department of Education.
 42 Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, rule, or regulation
 43 to the contrary, the mentoring provided to an individual under this

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 SED committee amendments adopted June 2, 2022.

²Senate floor amendments adopted February 27, 2023.

1 subsection shall be in addition to any minimum requirements for
2 mentorship established pursuant to State law or regulation¹. For the
3 purposes of fulfilling the requirements of this subsection, the three
4 years of employment with a public school district ², charter school,
5 or renaissance school² may be nonconsecutive and may be divided
6 between multiple public school districts in the State of New Jersey.
7 A student who fails to meet the requirements of this subsection
8 shall be subject to the provisions of paragraph (3) of subsection d.
9 of section 2 of this act.

10 d. Nothing in this section shall be construed to exempt a
11 student from meeting teacher certification requirements in
12 accordance with rules and regulations promulgated by the State
13 Board of Education.

14
15 2. a. In order to be eligible for a scholarship under the program,
16 a student shall:

17 (1) be a United States citizen or ¹~~["permanent resident alien"]~~ an
18 eligible noncitizen as determined under 20 U.S.C. s.1091, or meet
19 the requirements of N.J.S.18A:71B-2 or section 1 of P.L.2018, c.12
20 (C.18A:71B-2.1) as applicable¹;

21 (2) be a resident of the State of New Jersey; and

22 (3) be enrolled full time in an ¹~~["approved"]~~ educator
23 preparation¹ program ¹~~["of study"]~~ at an institution of higher
24 education in the State.

25 b. The ¹Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, in
26 coordination with the¹ Department of Education ¹,¹ may establish
27 additional eligibility requirements and minimum qualifications for
28 the program, ¹including limiting the program to students seeking
29 degrees in math, science, special education, world languages,
30 bilingual education, or other subjects determined to be in high
31 demand for teachers by the department,¹ as well as a process for
32 assessing eligible individuals for consideration for ¹~~["appointment~~
33 ~~as a student"]~~ acceptance into the program¹.

34 c. A student's scholarship shall remain in effect only during
35 such period as the student achieves satisfactory academic progress
36 as defined by the institution and continues to meet the eligibility
37 requirements and minimum qualifications established pursuant to
38 subsections a. and b. of this section.

39 d. (1) The scholarship shall not remain in effect for a student
40 who is dismissed from the institution of higher education or
41 educator preparation program for academic or disciplinary reasons,
42 is disqualified from employment by a school district due to the
43 detection of criminal history record information pursuant to section
44 1 of P.L.1986, c.116 (C.18A:6-7.1), or otherwise becomes ineligible
45 to receive a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing from
46 the Board of Examiners, and the student shall be required to repay
47 ¹~~["to the department"]~~¹ in full the amount of any stipend and the

1 value of any ¹~~tuition waiver~~ scholarship¹ received ¹as a debt to
2 the State¹.

3 (2) The scholarship shall not remain in effect for a student who
4 does not obtain a bachelor's degree within the first four years of the
5 scholarship or who withdraws from an ¹~~approved~~ educator
6 preparation¹ program ¹~~of study~~¹ due to the student's illness, the
7 illness of a member of the student's immediate family, or a family
8 emergency but the student shall not be required to repay ¹~~to the~~
9 ~~department~~¹ the amount of any stipend or the value of any
10 ¹~~tuition waiver~~ scholarship¹ received.

11 (3) A student who received a scholarship under the program
12 who does not complete three full years of employment as a teaching
13 staff member with a public school district ¹, charter school, or
14 renaissance school¹ in the State of New Jersey within five years of
15 receiving a bachelor's degree and completing an educator
16 preparation program shall repay ¹~~to the department~~¹ the amount
17 of any stipend and the value of any ¹~~tuition waiver~~ scholarship¹
18 received under the ¹~~scholarship~~¹ program ¹as a debt to the State¹,
19 prorated against the duration of employment with a public school
20 district ¹charter school, or renaissance school¹ in the State as
21 follows: a student who completes two full years of employment
22 shall repay one-third of the amount of any financial support
23 received, a student who completes one full year of employment
24 shall repay two-thirds of the amount of any financial support
25 received, and a student who fails to complete a full year of
26 employment shall repay the full amount of any financial support
27 received.

28 ¹~~(4)~~ A student who fails to make repayment to the department
29 pursuant to this subsection who is the holder of any certification
30 issued by the Board of Examiners shall be subject to disciplinary
31 action by the board which may include, but need not be limited to,
32 the revocation or suspension of the certification until such time as
33 repayment is made to the department. Any amount a student is
34 required to pay shall be treated as a debt to the State, not a student
35 loan.¹

36

37 3. The ²~~State~~ Legislature² shall appropriate ²~~funds~~ the
38 sum of \$4,000,000² in each fiscal year ², beginning in the fiscal
39 year 2024,² to finance the ¹scholarships and¹ stipends provided to
40 students pursuant to section 1 of P.L. , c. (C.)(pending before
41 the Legislature as this bill) ²~~in such sums as may be necessary,~~²
42 and to effectuate the purposes of the program established in
43 accordance with section 1 of P.L. , c. (C.)(pending before the
44 Legislature as this bill).

45

46 ²4. In addition to the funds appropriated for the New Jersey
47 Educator Scholarship Program under P.L.2022, c.49, there is

1 appropriated from the General Fund to the Higher Education
2 Student Assistance Authority the sum of \$3,000,000 for the purpose
3 of implementing the provisions of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
4 before the Legislature as this bill).²

5

6 ²**[4.]** 5.² This act shall take effect immediately and shall first
7 apply to the first full academic year following the date of
8 enactment.