

SENATE, No. 3885

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 22, 2023

Sponsored by:
Senator M. TERESA RUIZ
District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes New Jersey Student Educator Tuition Remission Program.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



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

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

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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 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 “Eligible tuition expenses” means tuition expenses that were
28 incurred by a program participant in attending an approved course
29 of study while completing clinical practice towards a certificate of
30 eligible with advanced standing.

31 “Program” means the New Jersey Student Educator Tuition
32 Remission Program.

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34 2. a. There is established in the Higher Education Student
35 Assistance Authority, in coordination with the Department of
36 Education, the New Jersey Student Educator Tuition Remission
37 Program. The purpose of the program shall be to reduce financial
38 barriers to teacher certification.

39 b. Under the program, the authority shall provide remission of
40 eligible tuition expenses to eligible students for each semester of
41 clinical practice completed by a student. A student shall be eligible
42 to receive tuition remission under the program for a maximum of
43 two academic semesters. Tuition remission provided to an eligible
44 student shall not exceed a student's eligible tuition expenses.

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46 3. a. To be eligible for tuition remission under the program, an
47 applicant shall:

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

4 (2) be a resident of the State;

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

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

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

15 c. A student's tuition remission shall continue provided the
16 student achieves satisfactory academic progress as defined by the
17 institution and continues to meet the eligibility and minimum
18 qualifications established pursuant to subsections a. and b. of this
19 section.

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

30 (2) The tuition remission shall be terminated if a student
31 withdraws from an approved program of study due to the student's
32 illness, the illness of a member of the student's immediate family,
33 or a family emergency, but the student shall not be required to
34 repay the amount of any tuition remission received under the
35 program.

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37 4. Within 90 days of the effective date of this act, the authority
38 shall establish an application process to provide tuition remission to
39 eligible students under the New Jersey Student Educator Tuition
40 Remission Program established pursuant to section 2 of this act. No
41 later than the first day of the fourth month next following the
42 effective date of this act, the authority shall make the application
43 available, and shall, within a reasonable time frame thereafter,
44 commence approving applications for the program.

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46 5. Nothing in this act shall be construed to exempt a student
47 from meeting educator certification requirements in accordance

1 with rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of
2 Education.

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4 6. The Legislature shall annually appropriate from the General
5 Fund to the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority
6 amounts as may be necessary for the New Jersey Student Educator
7 Tuition Remission Program established pursuant to this act.

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9 7. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
10 the first full academic year following the date of enactment.

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STATEMENT

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15 This bill establishes the New Jersey Student Educator Tuition
16 Remission Program to reduce financial barriers to teacher
17 certification.

18 Under the bill, the program is to provide tuition remission, up to
19 a student's full eligible tuition expenses, to students completing
20 required clinical practice through a certificate of eligibility with
21 advanced standing educator preparation program at a public
22 institution of higher education. A student is eligible to receive
23 tuition remission for a maximum of two academic semesters.

24 To be eligible for tuition remission, an applicant is required to:
25 be a United States citizen, permanent resident alien, or any student
26 eligible to complete the New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid
27 Application; be a resident of the State; be enrolled full time in an
28 approved program of study; and complete the necessary steps to
29 apply for clinical practice.

30 The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, in
31 coordination with the Department of Education, may establish
32 additional eligibility requirements and minimum qualifications for
33 the program. Additionally, the authority, in coordination with the
34 department, is to annually collect data on the program.

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