

P.L. 2025, CHAPTER 317, *approved January 20, 2026*
Senate, No. 4678 (*Second Reprint*)

1 AN ACT concerning a grant program for teachers of certain
2 subjects¹**[,]** and¹ amending ¹and supplementing¹ P.L.2019, c.256
3 ¹**[, and making an appropriation]**¹.
4

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

8 1. Section 1 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-137) is amended to
9 read as follows:

10 1. As used in sections 2 through 5 of P.L.2019, c.256
11 (C.18A:6-138 through C.18A:6-141):

12 "Eligible teacher" means an individual who is employed as a
13 teacher in a public school ¹**[or]** ²**[,]** ¹was previously employed as a
14 teacher in a public school and is receiving a retirement allowance
15 under the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund ¹, or is currently
16 employed as a faculty member at a county college and participates
17 in a collective bargaining agreement.¹² and who meets one of the
18 following criteria: (1) holds a valid and effective provisional or
19 standard instructional certificate issued by the State Board of
20 Examiners with an endorsement in a science field, mathematics,
21 technology education, **[or]** computer science education, or other
22 STEM subject or area; (2) is currently enrolled in a degree program
23 or a coherent sequence of courses in science, mathematics,
24 technology, **[or]** computer science, or other STEM subject or area;
25 (3) will enroll in a degree program or a coherent sequence of
26 courses in science, mathematics, technology, **[or]** computer
27 science, or other STEM subject or area within two years of the
28 effective date of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-137 et seq.) or within
29 two years of participating in the grant program established pursuant
30 to section 2 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-138); ¹**[or]**¹ ²or² (4) is
31 currently employed ²**[or was previously employed]**² by a public
32 school district to teach in a science, technology, engineering,
33 mathematics, **[or]** computer science field, or other STEM subject
34 or area and will teach a subject and a grade level in the nonpublic
35 school for which the teacher holds appropriate certification,

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 SBA committee amendments adopted December 15, 2025.

²Senate amendments adopted in accordance with Governor's
recommendations January 12, 2026.

including certification without a specific subject matter endorsement where permitted by N.J.S.18A:26-1 et seq.^{1 2}]; or (5)]

“Eligible retired teacher” means an individual who was previously employed as a teacher in a public school and is receiving a retirement allowance under the Teachers’ Pension and Annuity Fund for reasons other than disability, and who holds a valid and effective standard instructional certificate issued by the State Board of Examiners with an endorsement in a science field, mathematics, technology education, computer science education, or other STEM subject or area.

“Eligible county college faculty member” means an individual who² is currently employed as a faculty member at a county college teaching a course in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, computer science, or other STEM subject or area² and who participates in a collective bargaining agreement^{2 1}.

"Nonpublic school" means an elementary or secondary school within the State, other than a public school, offering education for grades kindergarten through 12, or any combination of them, wherein any child may legally fulfill compulsory school attendance requirements and which complies with the requirements of Title VI of the "Civil Rights Act of 1964," Pub.L.88-352 (42 U.S.C. s.2000d et seq.).

"Valid objection" means an explanation of why a school district disapproves of an eligible teacher currently employed by the school district from entering into a partnership with a participating nonpublic school. A school district with a valid objection shall cite, with sufficient supporting proof, as determined by the Commissioner of Education, one or more of the following reasons:

a. the proposed teaching hours at the nonpublic school conflict with the teacher's public school work responsibilities and no resolution could be found after consulting with the teacher and nonpublic school; or

b. approval of a proposed partnership between the nonpublic school and teacher would otherwise substantially impact the quality of student instruction in the school district.

(cf: P.L.2022, c.119, s.1)

2. Section 2 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-138) is amended to read as follows:

2. a. There is established in the Department of Education a grant program in which an eligible teacher employed ²[or previously employed]² by a school district ²[or currently employed by a county college]^{1 2} may receive additional remuneration ², pursuant to the provisions of section 3 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-139), and an eligible retired teacher or eligible county college faculty member may receive remuneration, pursuant to the provisions of section 4 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending

1 before the Legislature as this bill).² to teach science, technology,
2 engineering, or mathematics (STEM) classes, or other STEM
3 subject or area at a nonpublic school. Under the program,
4 participating nonpublic schools shall form partnerships with eligible
5 teachers ¹and school districts ²and the school district in which
6 the eligible teacher is employed as applicable¹, in which] and
7 school districts, as applicable, or with eligible retired teachers,
8 eligible county college faculty members, and the nonprofit selected
9 pursuant to section 4 of P.L. , c. (C) (pending before the
10 Legislature as this bill), as applicable, and under which
11 partnerships² an eligible teacher ², eligible retired teacher, or
12 eligible county college faculty member² ¹employed or previously
13 employed by the district]¹ teaches STEM classes at the nonpublic
14 school at such times and during such hours mutually agreed upon
15 by the teacher, nonpublic school, and school district, which may
16 include hours beyond regular public school day hours such as
17 extended day, evening, or weekend programming.

18 b. The purposes of the grant program ²administered pursuant to
19 section 3 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-139)² shall be to: incentivize
20 current ²and retired]² teachers ²and current county college
21 faculty members]¹² to obtain the necessary qualifications to teach
22 STEM subjects; incentivize individuals to enter the teaching
23 profession to fill the demand for qualified educators in STEM
24 subjects; assist in addressing the difficulties public and nonpublic
25 schools face in attracting qualified educators in the STEM fields;
26 ¹increase the earning potential of teachers in public schools ²and
27 county colleges]²; improve retention among public school
28 teachers;¹ and improve Statewide access to education in the STEM
29 fields to address the workforce demands of New Jersey's economy.

30 c. A school district annually shall notify all teachers employed
31 by the district¹and, as well as individuals who are retired but
32 previously employed by the district,]¹ of the grant program
33 ²administered pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-
34 139)², and shall submit a list of all eligible teachers that express an
35 interest in participating in the program to the executive county
36 superintendent by January 15 of each year. The executive county
37 superintendent shall share the lists with nonpublic schools upon
38 request.

39 (cf: P.L.2019, c.256, s.2)

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41 3. Section 3 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-139) is amended to
42 read as follows:

43 3. a. A nonpublic school that wishes to participate in the grant
44 program established under section 2 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-
45 138) shall submit an application to the Commissioner of Education,
46 in a manner and on such forms as determined by the commissioner.

1 The commissioner shall establish the application deadlines for each
2 school year. In the event that the grant program is not operational
3 by September 1, 2019, the commissioner shall allow nonpublic
4 schools to submit applications during the course of the 2019-2020
5 school year for implementation of the program in that nonpublic
6 school during the 2019-2020 school year.

7 An application shall include the following:

8 (1) the names of the nonpublic school, school district ²~~['or~~
9 ~~county college']~~², and eligible teacher that will form a STEM
10 partnership under the program;

11 (2) acknowledgement from the nonpublic school that ~~the~~ ^a
12 ~~currently employed~~ eligible teacher will teach at the nonpublic
13 school during hours ¹~~['during']~~¹ which the teacher has no conflicting
14 public school duties;

15 (3) the proposed schedule and grades to be taught by the eligible
16 teacher at the nonpublic school;

17 (4) the number of students, based on enrollment projections, that
18 will receive instruction from the eligible teacher under the proposed
19 schedule at the nonpublic school;

20 (5) a certification from the nonpublic school that the eligible
21 teacher shall provide only secular instruction at the nonpublic
22 school; and

23 (6) any other information specified by the commissioner.

24 Upon receiving a notification from a nonpublic school that a
25 teacher currently employed by the school district plans to
26 participate in the program, a school district may submit to the
27 commissioner or designee any valid objection within 10 business
28 days. The notification from a nonpublic school that a teacher
29 currently employed by the school district plans to participate in the
30 program and the 10-business-day period for receipt of a valid
31 objection from the district shall occur prior to application
32 submission. If a valid objection is received, then the commissioner
33 shall reject the application and inform both the teacher and
34 nonpublic school that the application was rejected.

35 b. The commissioner shall establish selection criteria for the
36 awarding of grants under the program, including consideration of
37 the application information submitted pursuant to subsection a. of
38 this section. To the maximum extent possible, the commissioner
39 shall select at least three nonpublic schools in each of the northern,
40 central, and southern regions of the State to participate in the
41 program, and nothing shall prohibit more than three nonpublic
42 schools in each region of the State from participating. During the
43 program's operation, the program may be expanded beyond the
44 nonpublic schools that were initially selected to participate, as
45 determined by the commissioner and subject to the availability of
46 funds.

47 c. The commissioner shall award grants under the program
48 based upon review of the applications and subject to the limit of

1 funds appropriated or otherwise made available for the program.
 2 Grant funds for approved applications ¹of eligible teachers currently
 3 employed by a school district¹ shall be allocated by the Department
 4 of Education to ~~the school district of~~ ¹the school district of¹ each
 5 eligible teacher participating in the program¹.¹ ~~the school~~
 6 ~~district shall use the funds~~ ¹The school district shall use the funds¹
 7 to provide compensation to ~~a participating~~ ¹the ¹a participating¹
 8 eligible teacher pursuant to this subsection ~~including applicable~~
 9 ~~federal employment payroll taxes~~ ¹including applicable federal
 10 payroll taxes¹. ¹~~The commissioner may contract with a third party~~
 11 ~~to administer grant fund payments.~~ ²Grant funds for approved
 12 applications of eligible teachers, who are retired teachers previously
 13 employed by a school district or county college faculty members,
 14 may be allocated by the Department of Education to each eligible
 15 teacher participating in the program to provide compensation to the
 16 eligible teacher pursuant to this subsection or the commissioner
 17 may contract with a third party to administer the grant funds for
 18 approved applications of eligible teachers, who are retired teachers
 19 previously employed by a school district or county college faculty
 20 members.¹²

21 The commissioner shall establish the amount of each grant
 22 awarded for an eligible teacher, subject to the following:

23 (1) (a) A participating teacher currently employed by a school
 24 district shall receive an amount equal to the teacher's annual salary
 25 as calculated on a per-hour basis multiplied by the number of hours
 26 the teacher will teach STEM classes at a nonpublic school under the
 27 program multiplied by 1.25 ²; and

28 (b) A participating retired teacher previously employed by a
 29 school district ¹or currently employed by a county college¹ shall
 30 receive an amount equal to the Statewide average teacher salary in
 31 the prior school year calculated on a per-hour basis multiplied by
 32 the number of hours the teacher will teach STEM classes at a
 33 nonpublic school under the program multiplied by 1.25².

34 (2) In the event that sufficient funds are not appropriated to fully
 35 fund the compensation to be provided to participating eligible
 36 teachers pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection, the
 37 commissioner shall apportion the amount appropriated among the
 38 participating eligible teachers in proportion to the compensation
 39 each participating eligible teacher would have received had the full
 40 amount been appropriated¹, provided that applications by eligible
 41 teachers currently employed by a school district shall be fully
 42 funded before any funding is apportioned to eligible ²teachers who
 43 are² retired teachers or ²eligible² county college faculty members¹
 44 ²pursuant to section 4 of P.L. , c. (C.)(pending before the
 45 Legislature as this bill)².

(3) Payments received by a participating teacher under the grant program shall not be considered "compensation" under N.J.S.18A:66-2 ¹. Payments received by a participating teacher under the grant program shall not be considered in the calculation of "base salary" or "base annual salary" as defined pursuant to section 3 of P.L.1969, c.242 (C.18A:66-169). The payments shall not change any status or benefits under any retirement system or program to which the eligible teacher has membership¹.

d. Funds appropriated for the grant program shall be used exclusively for **the hiring of** compensating eligible teachers to teach STEM classes at a participating nonpublic school, and the eligible teacher shall teach only the classes stipulated under the program.

e. If at any time a participating nonpublic school determines that a participating eligible teacher is not in compliance with the program or is violating the nonpublic school's code of conduct, the nonpublic school may submit information to the commissioner supporting its determination, and request that the teacher be removed from participation in the program at the nonpublic school. The information submitted shall demonstrate noncompliance with the program, the nonpublic school's code of conduct, or the nonpublic school's faculty handbook. After reviewing the information, the commissioner may terminate the teacher's participation in the program at that nonpublic school.

f. The grant program established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.2019, c.256 (C.18A:6-138) shall not infringe upon the collective bargaining agreement between the majority representative of the collective negotiations unit in which **the** a participating eligible teacher currently employed by a school district ²[¹or a county college¹]² is a member and the school district ²[¹or county college¹]² in which the teacher is employed.

g. Any appropriation for the grant program made in a fiscal year that is not expended in that fiscal year shall be available to be used for the same purpose in the subsequent fiscal years.

²h. The provisions of this section shall not be deemed to apply to the provisions of section 4 of P.L. , c. (C.)(pending before the Legislature as this bill).²
(cf: P.L.2022, c.119, s.2)

¹**[4. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Education the sum of \$3,500,000 to implement the provisions of this act.]¹**

¹4. (New section) ²a. The Commissioner of Education may award a grant consistent with the provisions of this section for the purposes of allowing an eligible retired teacher or eligible county college faculty member to receive remuneration to teach science,

1 technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) classes, or other
2 STEM subject or area at a nonpublic school.

3 b. In accordance with the provisions of this section, subject to
4 available appropriations, and in compliance with section 1 of
5 P.L.1987, c.7 (C.52:14-34.4), the Commissioner of Education shall
6 award funding as a grant or grants to one or more nonprofit
7 organizations for the purpose of allowing eligible retired teachers
8 and eligible county college faculty members to teach STEM classes
9 in nonpublic schools. Such organization or organizations shall
10 review applications submitted by individuals for participation as an
11 eligible retired teacher or eligible college county faculty members.
12 A nonprofit organization awarded a grant pursuant to this
13 subsection shall provide funding to eligible retired teachers and
14 eligible county college faculty members in accordance with the
15 provisions of subsection d. of this section.

16 c. The commissioner shall establish eligibility criteria and
17 program requirements. Only secular instruction shall be provided
18 pursuant to participation in the program. To the maximum extent
19 possible, the Commissioner of Education shall select one or more
20 nonprofit organizations that are able to administer the program
21 across the northern, central, and southern regions of the State.

22 d. A participating eligible retired teacher or eligible county
23 college faculty member shall receive grants in an amount equal to
24 the Statewide average teacher salary in the prior school year
25 calculated on a per-hour basis multiplied by the number of hours the
26 teacher will teach STEM classes at a nonpublic school under the
27 program multiplied by 1.25.

28 e. The grant program shall not infringe upon the collective
29 bargaining agreement between the majority representative of the
30 collective negotiations unit in which a participating eligible county
31 college faculty member is a member and the county college for
32 which the eligible county college faculty member is employed.

33 f. Any appropriation for the grant program made in a fiscal year
34 that is not expended in that fiscal year shall be available to be used
35 for the same purpose in the subsequent fiscal years.

36 g.² Notwithstanding the provisions of N.J.S.18A:66-53.2 or any
37 other law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, the cancellation,
38 reenrollment, and additional retirement allowance provisions of
39 subsection a. of N.J.S.18A:66-53.2 or any other similar provision of
40 law related to other retirement systems or programs shall not apply
41 to a former member of the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund
42 who is a teacher and who, after having been granted a retirement
43 allowance, becomes employed for the purposes of the grant
44 program established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.2019, c.256
45 (C.18A:6-138); except that the cancellation, reenrollment, and
46 additional retirement allowance provisions shall apply if the former
47 member becomes employed within 180 days with the employer
48 from which the member retired. The former member's retirement

1 shall have been a bona fide retirement and any employment or
2 reemployment under this section shall not be prearranged before
3 retirement. This subsection shall be effective if the qualified status
4 of the retirement system under federal law can be maintained upon
5 its application, and such modifications to the system as may be
6 available shall be made to allow for its application.¹

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8 5. This act shall take effect ²~~immediately~~ July 1, 2026².

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13 Includes retired teachers and county college faculty members in
14 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics teacher grant
15 program.