

CHAPTER 371

AN ACT concerning the New Jersey Council of County Colleges and amending various parts of the statutory law.

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

1. N.J.S.18A:64A-22 is amended to read as follows:

Annual budget requests for State support of colleges.

18A:64A-22. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, the Council of County Colleges shall submit to the State Treasurer, the Secretary of Higher Education, the Governor, and the Legislature an annual budget request for State support of county colleges to meet the colleges' and State's strategic priorities. Within the limits of funds appropriated for State support of the county colleges, the board of trustees of a county college may, based upon the itemized statement fixed and determined pursuant to N.J.S.18A:64A-17, apply to the State Treasurer and receive State support:

- a. For capital projects in amounts not to exceed one-half of the cost of the capital projects, and
- b. For operational costs to the extent of 43 percent but not to exceed 50 percent of the educational and general costs of the county colleges in the base year, provided, however, that for the purposes of determining State aid, only credit courses and noncredit remedial, developmental, general education development, and adult basic education courses shall be included in calculating the educational and general costs. This sum shall be distributed to the county colleges by the State Treasurer pursuant to a performance-based formula developed by the Council of County Colleges and approved by the State Treasurer and the Secretary of Higher Education. The formula shall include categorical support and differential funding based on program costs and shall ensure that all county colleges receive funding in an equitable, results-oriented, and transparent manner. The council shall, every three years, provide to the State Treasurer and secretary any recommended improvements to the performance-based formula to ensure that State aid to the county colleges rewards postsecondary access, equity, and student success.

No county college shall receive more than 50 percent of its projected educational and general costs through the provisions of this act.

Each county which operates a county college shall continue to provide moneys for the support of the college in an amount no less than those moneys provided in the year in which this act is enacted or 25 percent of the operational expense in the base State fiscal year, whichever is greater.

State support for the operational expenses of county colleges shall be made within limits of State appropriation.

2. Section 6 of P.L.1989, c.141 (C.18A:64A-28.2) is amended to read as follows:

C.18A:64A-28.2 Perpetual succession; powers, responsibilities.

6. The council shall have perpetual succession and shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

- a. To make, amend, and repeal rules, regulations, and bylaws for its own government and guidance, not inconsistent with the purposes of the council;
- b. To adopt an official seal and alter the same at pleasure;
- c. To maintain an office at such place or places in the State as it may designate;

- d. To sue and be sued in its own name;
- e. To acquire, hold, and dispose of real and personal property in the exercise of its powers and the performance of its duties under this article. All this property shall be exempt from taxation under chapter 4 of Title 54 of the Revised Statutes;
- f. To act as an advocate and promote the advancement of the county colleges of New Jersey;
- g. To promote diversity of development among the county colleges in ways which shall be responsive to the particular needs of the particular counties and the State's diverse population and regions;
- h. To develop and submit to the Governor, the Secretary of Higher Education, and the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), a biennial strategic plan outlining a shared vision and set of goals for the county colleges, which are aligned with State educational and economic priorities, and recommending policy solutions to meet the needs of the State as well as the individuals and communities that the county colleges serve. The strategic plan shall be developed in consultation with State government agencies, county college faculty, staff, and students;
- i. To serve as an advisory body to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education on any matter related to the county colleges, including consulting on the development and design of State laws, regulations, and State-funded pilot programs and grant programs that pertain to the county colleges;
- j. To develop a performance-based formula to be used in the distribution of State operational aid to the county colleges, and recommending improvements to the State Treasurer and the secretary, pursuant to N.J.S.18A:64A-22;
- k. To serve as a coordinating body that organizes and expands collaboration among the county colleges in a variety of areas impacting student success and institutional advancement;
- l. To provide contract services to State departments and agencies, as permitted pursuant to subsection (a) of section 5 of P.L.1954, c.48 (C.52:34-10);
- m. To ensure strong collaboration, and provide guidance, on academic issues by undertaking activities, including, but not limited to:
 - (1) maintaining a Statewide general education framework for county colleges;
 - (2) approving credit courses used in calculating the educational and general costs for the purposes of determining State operating aid to county colleges pursuant to N.J.S.18A:64A-22;
 - (3) operating a Community College Joint Purchasing Consortium, in accordance with section 3 of P.L.2015, c.140 (C.18A:64A-28.2a), that seeks economies in the purchase of goods and services by increasing efficiency, reducing redundancy, sharing services, and promoting regional collaboration and contracting where appropriate;
 - (4) convening county college leaders to share promising practices and identify opportunities for collaboration;
 - (5) undertaking and promoting professional development for faculty and staff; and
 - (6) collaborating on the marketing and promotion of county colleges;
- n. To serve as a partner with Statewide business, labor, education, and community organizations to advance equity, opportunity, and prosperity in New Jersey;
- o. To build strong partnerships with employers, elementary and secondary schools, four-year colleges and universities, labor unions, workforce development boards, and community-based organizations in developing the New Jersey Pathways to Career Opportunities Initiative. To accomplish these responsibilities, the council shall:
 - (1) work in collaboration with State agencies and authorities to create and document transparent, portable, and stackable credentials and lifelong education and learning for students and workers with a focus on work-based learning opportunities, pre-apprenticeships,

apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships, credit for prior learning, lifelong learning accounts, and other models;

(2) annually provide a report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), with recommendations for improving equity, labor market outcomes, economic mobility, and employer satisfaction and input from employers on future workforce priorities and needed skills; and

(3) assist the Governor, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, and other State agencies in planning for the attraction and retention of businesses, including the design of new open-source curricula and new credentials to reflect evolving employer technology and needed skills and the development and promotion of county college programs that prepare workers for the impact of new technology;

p. To facilitate county college requests for capital funding pursuant to P.L.1971, c.12 (C.18A:64A-22.1 et seq.) and work in consultation with the State Treasurer to determine capital projects for which funding shall be allocated; and

q. To assist in the administration of funds provided to county colleges pursuant to the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, Pub.L.109-270 (20 U.S.C. s.2301 et seq.).

3. Section 8 of P.L.1989, c.141 (C.18A:64A-28.4) is amended to read as follows:

C.18A:64A-28.4 Improvement of county college education.

8. The council shall encourage and aid movements which it deems necessary for the improvement of county college education and ensure collaboration among the county colleges on academic issues. The council shall, from time to time, make recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature, the Presidents' Council, and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education.

4. N.J.S.18A:64A-29 is amended to read as follows:

Purpose of council.

18A:64A-29. The council shall seek to ensure acceptable and effective lines of development in admissions policy, academic standards, programs, financing, including the requirement enumerated in N.J.S.18A:64A-22 that the council develop a performance-based formula for the allocation of annual appropriations among the county colleges and making recommendations for capital funding, and community relations in the several county colleges.

The council shall serve as a means of communication between the county colleges, act as a resource center to aid them in planning, act as a clearing house of information, and provide continuing field services.

The council shall act as an advisory body to the Governor, the Legislature, the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, and the Presidents' Council.

5. Section 5 of P.L.1954, c.48 (C.52:34-10) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:34-10 Circumstances under which advertising is unnecessary under 52:34-8.

5. Any such purchase, contract, or agreement may be made, negotiated, or awarded pursuant to section 3 of P.L.1954, c.48 (C.52:34-8) when:

(a) the purchase is to be made from, or the contract to be made with, the federal or any State government or any agency or political subdivision thereof, including the New Jersey Council of County Colleges;

(b) the public exigency requires the immediate delivery of the articles or performance of the service;

(c) only 1 source of supply is available;

(d) more favorable terms can be obtained from a primary source of supply;

(e) articles of wearing apparel are to be purchased which are styled or seasonal in character;

(f) commodities traded on a national commodity exchange are to be purchased and fluctuations of the market require immediate action; or

(g) the equipment to be purchased is of a technical nature and the procurement thereof without advertising is necessary in order to assure standardization of equipment and interchangeability of parts in the public interest.

6. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 20, 2026.