SENATE, No. 787

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Senator  GORDON M. JOHNSON
District 37 (Bergen)
Senator  SHIRLEY K. TURNER
District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

SYNOPSIS

Provides supplemental transportation aid to certain districts participating in the interdistrict public school choice program.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Education Committee with technical review.
AN ACT concerning interdistrict public school choice transportation aid and supplementing P.L.2010, c.65 (C.18A:36B-14 et seq.).

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

1. a. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 9 of P.L.2010, c.65 (C.18A:36B-22) to the contrary, a choice district located in a city of the second class, which district has been directed by the New Jersey Supreme Court to engage in efforts to desegregate the student population, shall be responsible for providing transportation, including the organization of bus routes and bidding for transportation services, or aid-in-lieu-of transportation, to an elementary school choice pupil who lives more than two miles from the choice district school of attendance and to a secondary school choice pupil who lives more than two and one-half miles from the choice district school of attendance, provided the choice district school of attendance is not more than 20 miles from the residence of the pupil.

   b. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection a. of this section, the sending district shall receive State aid for transportation calculated pursuant to section 15 of P.L.2007, c.260 (C.18A:7F-57) for a student transported or receiving aid-in-lieu-of transportation pursuant to subsection a. of this section. The sending district shall pay directly to the choice district the State aid for transportation, or aid-in-lieu-of transportation, received pursuant to this section for a student transported pursuant to subsection a. of this section.

   c. (1) Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, the choice district responsible for transportation pursuant to subsection a. of this section shall be eligible to receive supplemental State aid for transportation when the total costs of providing transportation, or aid-in-lieu of transportation, from the sending districts to the choice district exceeds the amount of State aid for transportation the sending district receives for those students pursuant to subsection b. of this section.

   (2) A choice district shall be eligible to receive supplemental State aid pursuant to the provisions of this subsection if the choice district is able to demonstrate to the Commissioner of Education that the bus routes utilized to transport pupils from sending districts to the choice district utilize cost efficient methods, such as centralized pick-ups and drop-offs and, to the extent possible, bus routes that include students from multiple sending districts.

   (3) The choice district seeking supplemental State aid for transportation pursuant to this subsection shall annually report to the Department of Education at the end of each school year the cost
of providing transportation to students from sending districts that exceeds the amount of transportation aid the choice district receives from the sending district pursuant to subsection b. of this section. The department shall reimburse the choice district for the additional costs reported pursuant to this paragraph.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.