

SENATE, No. 2973

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 18, 2024

Sponsored by:

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS

Requires upcoming Educational Adequacy Report to include comprehensive review of certain components of school funding in consultation with certain stakeholders and experts.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



S2973 BEACH

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1 AN ACT concerning the Educational Adequacy Report and
2 amending P.L.2007, c.260.

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

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7 1. Section 4 of P.L.2007, c.260 (C.18A:7F-46) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 4. a. The State Board of Education shall review and update the
10 core curriculum content standards every five years. The standards
11 shall ensure that all children are provided the educational
12 opportunity needed to equip them for the role of citizen and labor
13 market competitor.

14 The Commissioner of Education shall develop and establish,
15 through the report issued pursuant to subsection b. of this section,
16 efficiency standards which define the types of programs, services,
17 activities, and materials necessary to achieve a thorough and
18 efficient education.

19 b. By September 1 of 2010 and by September 1 every three
20 years thereafter, the Governor, after consultation with the
21 commissioner, shall recommend to the Legislature through the
22 issuance of the Educational Adequacy Report for the three school
23 years to which the report is applicable:

24 (1) the base per pupil amount based upon the core curriculum
25 content standards established pursuant to subsection a. of this
26 section;

27 (2) the per pupil amounts for full-day preschool;

28 (3) the weights for grade level, county vocational school
29 districts, at-risk pupils, bilingual pupils, and combination pupils;

30 (4) the cost coefficients for security aid and transportation aid;

31 (5) the State average classification rate for general special
32 education services pupils and for speech-only pupils;

33 (6) the excess cost for general special education services pupils
34 and for speech-only pupils; and

35 (7) the extraordinary special education aid thresholds.

36 The base per pupil amount, the per pupil amounts for full-day
37 preschool, the excess costs for general special education services
38 pupils and for speech-only pupils, and the cost-coefficients for
39 security aid and transportation aid shall be adjusted by the CPI for
40 each of the two school years following the first school year to
41 which the report is applicable.

42 The amounts shall be deemed approved for the three successive
43 fiscal years beginning from the subsequent July 1, unless between
44 the date of transmittal and the subsequent November 30, the
45 Legislature adopts a concurrent resolution stating that the
46 Legislature is not in agreement with all or any specific part of the

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.

1 report. The concurrent resolution shall advise the Governor of the
2 Legislature's specific objections to the report and shall direct the
3 commissioner to submit to the Legislature a revised report which
4 responds to those objections by January 1.

5 c. (1) In developing the Educational Adequacy Report to next
6 be issued following the date of enactment of P.L. , c. (C.)
7 (pending before the Legislature as this bill), the Governor, in
8 consultation with the commissioner, shall engage a diverse group of
9 stakeholders, including school administrators, staff, students,
10 parents, and other community members, to identify the necessary
11 school resources and student supports that are not adequately
12 funded through State school aid determined pursuant to P.L.2007,
13 c.260 (C.18A:7F-43 et al.).

14 (2) In updating the information required to be recommended
15 pursuant to subsection b. of this section for the Educational
16 Adequacy Report to next be issued following the date of enactment
17 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
18 bill), the Governor, in consultation with the commissioner, shall
19 commission various school finance experts to recommend revisions
20 to the methodologies for the determination of the: base per pupil
21 amount for grades kindergarten through 12; per pupil amounts for
22 full-day preschool; weights for grade level, county vocational
23 school districts, at-risk pupils, bilingual pupils, and combination
24 pupils; excess costs for general special education services pupils
25 and for speech-only pupils; and cost-coefficients for security aid
26 and transportation aid. The recommended revisions to the
27 methodologies for determining these weights and amounts shall
28 ensure that the weights and amounts result in funding to school
29 districts sufficient to adequately support students in meeting the
30 State's current core curriculum content standards. With respect to
31 the recommended revisions to the methodology for determining the
32 per pupil amounts for full-day preschool, the recommendations
33 shall ensure that the per pupil amounts are sufficient to assist school
34 districts in meeting current preschool program requirements across
35 all settings, including district programs, licensed child care provider
36 programs, Head Start Programs, and mixed delivery systems. With
37 respect to the recommended revisions to the methodology for
38 determining the cost coefficients for transportation aid, the
39 recommendations shall reflect actual district expenditures on pupil
40 transportation services.

41 (cf: P.L.2007, c.260, s.4)

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43 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

This bill requires the upcoming Educational Adequacy Report to be developed in consultation with certain education stakeholders and school finance experts.

Under current law, an Educational Adequacy Report is required to be issued every three years by the Governor, in consultation with the Commissioner of Education. The purpose of the report is to update the various parameters used to calculate State aid to school districts, including the base per pupil amount, various grade level and student characteristic weights, preschool education per pupil amounts, security and transportation aid cost coefficients, excess cost and classification rate assumption for census-based special education funding, and extraordinary special education aid thresholds.

The requirements established under the bill would apply to the next upcoming Educational Adequacy Report that is to be issued by September 1, 2025. Specifically, the bill requires the Governor, in consultation with the commissioner, to engage a diverse group of stakeholders, including school administrators, staff, students, parents, and other community members, to identify the necessary school resources and student supports that are not adequately funded through the State school funding formula. In addition, the bill requires the Governor and the commissioner to commission various school finance experts to recommend revisions to the methodologies used for the determination of various cost factors that are required to be updated under the Educational Adequacy Report.