

**ASSEMBLY, No. 2773**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**222nd LEGISLATURE**

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2026 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman ANDREA KATZ**

**District 8 (Atlantic and Burlington)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes four-year Performing Arts Education Improvement Grant Program.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 AN ACT establishing a grant program to support performing arts  
2 education in school districts.

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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. The Commissioner of Education shall develop and administer  
8 a four-year Performing Arts Education Improvement Grant  
9 Program. The purpose of the program shall be to award grants to  
10 school districts to bolster educational programming and academic  
11 enrichment opportunities in the performing arts. The commissioner  
12 shall consult with the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in the  
13 Department of State regarding the design and administration of the  
14 grant program.

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16 2. a. The Commissioner of Education shall award grants, within  
17 the limit of funds appropriated to or otherwise made available for  
18 the program, to selected school districts to be used for the  
19 development and improvement of educational opportunities in the  
20 performing arts and to assist districts in implementing  
21 comprehensive performing arts education programs that are  
22 consistent with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in  
23 Visual and Performing Arts.

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25 b. A school district that wants to apply for a grant shall submit  
26 an application to the commissioner in a manner and form to be  
27 determined by the commissioner. A school district shall  
28 demonstrate in its application that a majority of the schools in the  
29 district have high concentrations of multilingual learners, students  
30 in resource family care, students from rural areas of the State, or at-  
31 risk pupils as defined pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2007, c.260  
(C.18A:7F-45). In addition, the application shall include:

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33 (1) an overview of the school district's current educational  
offerings and programming in the performing arts;

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35 (2) a description of the school district's need for additional  
funds to develop or enhance performing arts education programs;

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37 (3) details on performing arts programming that may be  
38 expanded or created following the school district's receipt of a  
39 grant, including related costs, any other funds that will be used to  
40 supplement the school district's proposal, and the projected demand  
for any expanded or new programming;

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42 (4) the number of students that may be accommodated in a  
43 performing arts program that is expanded or newly created as a  
result of the school district's receipt of a grant;

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45 (5) a plan to sustain any expanded or new performing arts  
46 education programs beyond the period of grant funding using other  
State, federal, and local resources; and

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(6) any other information the commissioner deems appropriate.

1 c. The commissioner shall select 10 school districts to receive  
2 grants under the grant program and determine the amount of each  
3 grant award. The commissioner may award multi-year grants.

4 d. A school district selected for a grant under the grant program  
5 may use the proceeds of the grant for purposes including, but not  
6 limited to, the:

7 (1) purchase of performing arts-related materials, equipment,  
8 and supplies;

9 (2) provision of professional development opportunities and  
10 other training to performing arts teachers currently employed by the  
11 school district;

12 (3) development of programs to assist students interested in the  
13 performing arts in navigating the transition from elementary school,  
14 middle school, and high school, as well as to potential higher  
15 education opportunities or careers in the performing arts; and

16 (4) the development of tutoring and extracurricular programs in  
17 the performing arts.

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19 3. a. At the conclusion of each school year in which a school  
20 district receives a grant under the Performing Arts Education  
21 Improvement Grant Program, the school district shall submit a  
22 report to the Commissioner of Education containing, at a minimum:

23 (1) the number of performing arts education programs that were  
24 expanded or created as the result of a grant, including a breakdown  
25 of student participation by grade level and descriptions of each  
26 program;

27 (2) an explanation of how grant funds were used to expand or  
28 create performing arts education programs; and

29 (3) a narrative description of the benefits of the receipt of a  
30 grant.

31 b. Following the conclusion of the grant program, the  
32 commissioner shall submit a report to the Governor, and the  
33 Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1),  
34 that contains a summary of the information submitted to the  
35 commissioner pursuant to subsection a. of this section. The report  
36 shall also include the commissioner's recommendation on the  
37 advisability of the program's continuation and expansion to  
38 additional school districts in the State.

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40 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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45 This bill requires the Commissioner of Education to develop and  
46 administer a four-year Performing Arts Education Improvement  
47 Grant Program. The purpose of the program is to award grants to  
48 school districts to bolster educational programming and academic

1 enrichment opportunities in the performing arts. The commissioner  
2 is required to consult with the New Jersey State Council on the Arts  
3 regarding the design and administration of the grant program.

4 Pursuant to the bill, a school district that wants to apply for a  
5 grant is required to submit an application, which is to include  
6 certain information related to the current state of performing arts  
7 education in the district and details on how the district plans to use  
8 grant funds to enhance performing arts educational programming.  
9 In addition, an applicant school district is required to demonstrate in  
10 its application that a majority of the schools in the district have high  
11 concentrations of multilingual learners, students in resource family  
12 care, students from rural areas, or at-risk students.

13 The bill requires the commissioner to select 10 school districts to  
14 receive grants under the grant program and determine the amount of  
15 each grant award. The commissioner may award multi-year grants.  
16 A school district selected for a grant may use the grant proceeds for  
17 purposes including the: purchase of performing arts-related  
18 materials, equipment, and supplies; provision of professional  
19 development opportunities and other training to performing arts  
20 teachers currently employed by the school district; and development  
21 of programs to assist students interested in the performing arts in  
22 navigating the transition from elementary school, middle school,  
23 and high school, as well as to potential higher education  
24 opportunities or careers in the performing arts; and the development  
25 of tutoring and extracurricular programs in the performing arts.

26 Finally, the bill requires school districts receiving grants to  
27 annually report certain program participation information to the  
28 commissioner. At the conclusion of the four-year grant program,  
29 the commissioner is to provide a report to the Governor and the  
30 Legislature that includes a summary of the information submitted to  
31 the commissioner by each participating school district. This report  
32 is also to include the commissioner's recommendation on the  
33 advisability of the program's continuation and expansion to  
34 additional school districts in the State.