ASSEMBLY, No. 4678

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 10, 2026

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman LOUIS D. GREENWALD
District 6 (Burlington and Camden)
Assemblyman WILLIAM W. SPEARMAN
District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

SYNOPSIS

Clarifies payments for non-resident students enrolled in renaissance school projects.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning payments to renaissance school projects and amending P.L.2011, c.176.

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

1. Section 7 of P.L.2011, c.176 (C.18A:36C-7) is amended to read as follows:

7. a. Notwithstanding that a renaissance school project shall be constructed, controlled, operated, and managed by a nonprofit entity, and not the local board of education, it shall be a public school. However nothing contained herein shall restrict a for-profit entity from constructing a renaissance school project, or a renaissance school project from being located on land owned by a for-profit entity. Further, the renaissance school project shall be authorized to retain any business entity, however formed, whose primary purpose is the staffing, operation, and management of elementary schools, middle schools, or high schools in the United States, except as it relates to instructional services.

b. The costs of a renaissance school project including, but not limited to, the costs of land acquisition, site remediation, site development, design, construction, and any other costs required to place into service the school facility or facilities constituting the renaissance school project shall be at the sole expense of the nonprofit entity. The nonprofit entity may use State funds to pay for a lease, debt service, or mortgage for any facility constructed or otherwise acquired.

c. Notwithstanding the provisions of the "Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act," P.L.2000, c.72 (C.18A:7G-1 et al.), or any other law or regulation to the contrary, there shall be no State share for the costs of a renaissance school project.

d. Notwithstanding the provisions of the "Public School Contracts Law," N.J.S.18A:18A-1 et seq., or any other law or regulation to the contrary, the nonprofit entity or any entity acting in cooperation with a renaissance school project shall not be subject to public bidding for goods and services, and any contracts entered into by the nonprofit entity shall not be deemed public contracts or public works; except that any contract entered into by the nonprofit entity or any entity acting in cooperation with a renaissance school project shall be deemed a public work for the purposes of the "New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act," P.L.1963, c.150 (C.34:11-56.25 et seq.), and subject to the applicable provisions of that act.

e. (1) The renaissance school district in which a renaissance school project is located shall pay to the nonprofit entity in 12 equal monthly installments an amount per pupil equal to **[**95%**]** 95

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.

percent of the district's per pupil expenditure for each student who is enrolled in the renaissance school project and resides in the renaissance school district. In addition the 12 monthly installments shall include the security categorical aid attributable to the student, a percentage of the district's special education categorical aid equal to the percentage of the district's special education students enrolled in the renaissance school project, and if applicable **[**100%**]** 100 percent of preschool education aid. The district shall also pay directly to the renaissance school project any federal funds attributable to the student.

(2) For each student enrolled in the renaissance school project who does not reside in the renaissance school district, the student's school district of residence shall pay to the nonprofit entity in 12 equal monthly installments an amount per pupil equal to 95 percent of the district's per pupil expenditure. In addition the 12 monthly installments shall include the security categorical aid attributable to the student, a percentage of the district's special education categorical aid equal to the percentage of the district's special education students enrolled in the renaissance school project, and if applicable 100 percent of preschool education aid. The district shall also pay directly to the renaissance school project any federal funds attributable to the student.

f. Renaissance school projects shall be required to meet the same testing and academic performance standards established by law and regulation for public school students, and shall meet any additional testing and academic performance standards established by the nonprofit entity and approved by the commissioner.

g. The nonprofit entity shall have complete discretion in naming the renaissance school project. The nonprofit entity may not realize a net profit from its operation of a renaissance school project. A private or parochial school shall not be eligible for renaissance school project status.

h. A nonprofit entity shall operate a renaissance school project in accordance with the contract entered into pursuant to section 6 of this act, the provisions of this act, and the laws and regulations that govern charter schools which are not inconsistent with this act.

(cf: P.L.2014, c.61, s.3)

2. Section 8 of P.L.2011, c.176 (C.18A:36C-8) is amended to read as follows:

8. a. (1) In the case of a renaissance school project built on land owned by the New Jersey Schools Development Authority or the renaissance school district, students residing in the attendance area established by the renaissance school district for that property shall be automatically enrolled in the renaissance school project, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection. The parent or guardian of the student may determine not to enroll the student in the renaissance school project, and in that case the

student shall be eligible for enrollment in another school in the renaissance school district. If spaces remain available in the renaissance school project, students shall be selected for the remaining spaces through a lottery system. The first lottery shall include students who reside in the renaissance school district but outside the attendance area of the renaissance school. If space remains available, a second lottery shall be conducted that may include students who reside outside of the renaissance school district.

(2) A renaissance school project built on land owned by the New Jersey Schools Development Authority or the renaissance school district, shall allow any student who was enrolled in the renaissance school project in the immediately preceding school year to enroll in the renaissance school project in the appropriate grade unless the appropriate grade is not offered; and if a grade is at capacity, a student enrolled in the immediately preceding school year shall have priority for enrollment in that grade over a student who would otherwise be eligible for initial enrollment in the renaissance school project automatically based on the fact that he resides in the attendance area established by the renaissance school project for that property.

b. (1) In the case of a renaissance school project which is not built on land owned by the New Jersey Schools Development Authority or the renaissance school district, preference for enrollment in the renaissance school project shall be given to students who reside in the attendance area identified in the application submitted by the nonprofit entity and approved by the commissioner for the renaissance school project. In no case may an attendance area include an area outside of the renaissance school district. If spaces remain available in the renaissance school project, then the renaissance school project may select students for the remaining spaces through a lottery system. The first lottery shall include students who reside in the renaissance school district but outside the attendance area identified in the application approved by the commissioner for the renaissance school project. If space remains available, a second lottery shall be conducted that may include students who reside outside of the renaissance school district.

(2) A renaissance school project which is not built on land owned by the New Jersey Schools Development Authority or the renaissance school district shall allow any student who was enrolled in the renaissance school project in the immediately preceding school year to enroll in the renaissance school project in the appropriate grade unless the appropriate grade is not offered.

In developing and executing its selection process, the nonprofit entity shall not discriminate on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis

that would be illegal if used by a school district. A nonprofit entity may, however, limit admission to a particular grade level or levels consistent with its organizational document.

c. A school district other than the renaissance school district shall be required to provide funding to the renaissance school project for any students enrolled at the renaissance school project that reside in the district in an amount calculated pursuant to subsection e. of section 7 of P.L.2011, c.176 (C.18A:36C-7).

The Department of Education shall include renaissance school projects in the Charter School Enrollment System for the purpose of calculating and reconciling payments to be made by school districts to renaissance school projects.

In the event of a dispute over a student's residency status or payments for any student enrolled at the renaissance school project, the Department of Education shall follow any existing rules and procedures used to resolve disputes of the same nature for charter schools.

(cf: P.L.2017, c.131, s.29)

3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to the first full school year following the date of enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill clarifies the provision of payments for non-resident students that enroll at a renaissance school project.

Under current law, the school district in which a renaissance school project is located is required to pay to the nonprofit entity partnering with the renaissance school project a per pupil amount. However, current law does not specify whether the amount is to be paid for all students enrolled in the renaissance school project or only students resident in the district.

The bill clarifies that the school district in which a renaissance school project is located is required to pay the per pupil amount for each student that resides in the district. For all students enrolled in the renaissance school project that do not reside in the district in which the renaissance school project is located, the student's school district of residence would be required to pay the per pupil amount to the nonprofit entity.

The bill also provides that the Department of Education would include renaissance school projects in the Charter School Enrollment System for the purpose of calculating and reconciling payments between school districts and renaissance school projects.

Finally, the bill directs the department to employ any existing rules and procedures for settling residency and payment disputes for charter schools in the settlement of such disputes for renaissance school projects.