

ASSEMBLY, No. 5595

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 5, 2026

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman PAUL KANITRA
District 10 (Monmouth and Ocean)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Scharfenberger

SYNOPSIS

Permits use of New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship Program award at county college located in county adjacent to recipient's home county.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/15/2026)

1 AN ACT concerning eligibility under the New Jersey Student
2 Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship Program and amending
3 P.L.2004, c.59.

4

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

7

8 1. Section 5 of P.L.2004, c.59 (C.18A:71B-85) is amended to
9 read as follows:

10 5. a. A scholarship under the NJ STARS Program shall cover the
11 full cost of tuition, subject to the prior application of other grants
12 and scholarships against those costs as provided under paragraph
13 (2) of subsection c. of this section, for up to 18 credit hours in any
14 semester, for an eligible student enrolled in a full-time course of
15 study at the New Jersey county college serving the student's county
16 of residence or at a county college located in a county that
17 geographically borders the student's county of residence. An
18 otherwise eligible student who demonstrates to the authority, in
19 accordance with such criteria and by means of such documentation
20 as the authority shall establish by regulation, that the [county
21 college serving the student's county of residence does not offer the]
22 curriculum that the student chooses to study is not offered at the
23 county college serving the student's county of residence or at any
24 county college located in a county that geographically borders the
25 student's county of residence shall be eligible for such scholarship
26 at another New Jersey county college offering that curriculum. The
27 amount of any scholarship allowed hereunder to a student at a
28 county college serving a county other than the student's county of
29 residence shall be computed as though the student were a resident
30 of the county served by that college, and the college shall likewise
31 compute the amount of any additional payment, required with
32 respect to the enrollment of that student for credit hours of study
33 during a semester in which the scholarship is awarded that are not
34 covered by that scholarship, as though the student were a resident of
35 the county.

36 b. A student shall be eligible for a scholarship under the NJ
37 STARS Program for up to five semesters, including summer
38 sessions. The scholarship shall be payable for the first year of
39 enrollment in a county college to a student who:

40 (1) has graduated high school and, in the case of a student who
41 graduates in the 2013-2014 school year and thereafter, whose class
42 rank at the completion of the 11th grade or 12th grade was in the
43 top 15.0% of the student's high school class, provided that in the
44 case of students graduating from high schools that do not calculate
45 the class rank of their students, the student's ranking at 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 completion of the 11th grade or 12th grade shall be determined by
2 the high school in consultation with the authority; and

3 (2) completed a rigorous high school course of study in
4 accordance with standards established by the Secretary of Higher
5 Education in consultation with the Commissioner of Education.

6 During a student's enrollment in a county college after the first
7 year of enrollment, the scholarship shall be payable to that student
8 if the student attains a grade point average of at least 3.0 by the start
9 of the student's second year of county college enrollment. A
10 student who attains a grade point average of less than 3.0 at the start
11 of the second semester of the student's first year of county college
12 enrollment shall participate in an enrichment program designed by
13 the county college during the second semester of the student's first
14 year of enrollment.

15 c. To be eligible to receive a scholarship under the NJ STARS
16 Program a student shall:

17 (1) be a State resident pursuant to guidelines established by the
18 authority. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1 of P.L.1979,
19 c.361 (C.18A:62-4) or any other section of law to the contrary, a
20 dependent child of a parent or guardian who has been transferred to
21 a military installation located in this State shall be considered a
22 resident of this State for the purposes of qualifying for an NJ
23 STARS scholarship;

24 (2) have applied for all other available forms of State and
25 federal need-based grants and merit scholarships, exclusive of
26 loans, the full amount of which grants and scholarships shall be
27 applied to tuition to reduce the amount of any scholarship that the
28 student shall receive under the provisions of this act;

29 (3) except as otherwise provided pursuant to subsection a. or
30 subsection c. of section 3 of P.L.2008, c.124 (C.18A:71B-85.2), be
31 enrolled in a full-time course of study at a New Jersey county
32 college;

33 (4) have graduated from high school in 2004 or later, and not
34 earlier than the calendar year two years prior to the first calendar
35 year in which a scholarship payment is to be made; and

36 (5) except as otherwise provided pursuant to subsection a. of
37 section 3 of P.L.2008, c.124 (C.18A:71B-85.2), maintain
38 continuous enrollment in a full-time course of study, unless on
39 medical leave due to the illness of the student or a member of the
40 student's immediate family or emergency leave because of a family
41 emergency, which medical or emergency leave shall have been
42 approved by the county college, or unless called to partial or full
43 mobilization for State or federal active duty as a member of the
44 National Guard or a Reserve component of the Armed Forces of the
45 United States.

46 d. A student who is dismissed for academic or disciplinary
47 reasons from a county college shall no longer be eligible for a
48 scholarship under this act. If a student participating in the program

1 is dismissed for disciplinary reasons, the student shall repay in full
2 all amounts received under the program. The county college shall
3 be responsible for collecting the repayment, or the amount of any
4 overpayment or other improper payment, of any State awards under
5 the program, in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.18A:71B-
6 10.

7 e. A student scholarship under the NJ STARS Program may be
8 renewed upon the student's filing of a renewal financial aid
9 application and providing evidence that the student has satisfied the
10 requirements pursuant to subsection b. of this section.

11 (cf: P.L.2017, c.360, s.1)

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13 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
14 the first full academic year following the date of enactment.

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17 STATEMENT

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19 The New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship
20 Program (NJ STARS) program covers the full cost of tuition, for up
21 to 18 credit hours in any semester, for an eligible student enrolled in
22 a full-time course of study at the New Jersey county college serving
23 the student's county of residence.

24 This bill permits the use of this scholarship at a county college
25 located in a county adjacent to the recipient's county of residence.