

ASSEMBLY, No. 5617

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 15, 2026

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman GERRY SCHARFENBERGER

District 13 (Monmouth)

SYNOPSIS

Requires DOE to establish supplemental curriculum resources list for Black history studies; appropriates \$60,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning supplemental curriculum resources for school
2 districts, supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey
3 Statutes, and making an appropriation.
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*
7

8 1. a. The Department of Education shall establish a
9 “Supplemental Curriculum Resources List for Black History
10 Studies” comprised of department-approved resource materials
11 available to school districts interested in offering elective courses in
12 social studies that seek to add to students’ understanding and
13 knowledge of Black history in America.

14 b. (1) In order to be considered for inclusion in the
15 “Supplemental Curriculum Resources List for Black History
16 Studies” established pursuant to this section, a resource material
17 shall be:

18 (a) submitted to the department by a school district; and

19 (b) reviewed by the department for alignment with the New
20 Jersey Student Learning Standards in Social Studies.

21 (2) After the department’s review and approval of a resource
22 material submitted pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection, the
23 department shall organize a 30-day period for public comment on
24 the resource material. After consideration of comments received
25 through the public comment period, the Commissioner of Education
26 may elect to include the resource material on the “Supplemental
27 Curriculum Resources List for Black History Studies.”

28 c. Resource materials included in the “Supplemental Curriculum
29 Resources List for Black History Studies” established pursuant to
30 this section shall not be construed as required materials to meet the
31 New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Social Studies, and each
32 school district, its teachers, and teaching staff shall maintain
33 discretion regarding the use of these resource materials in an
34 elective course in social studies offered in the district.
35

36 2. a. There is established in the Department of Education a
37 “Supplementary Curriculum Resources List for Black History
38 Studies Grant Program” to assist school districts seeking to adopt
39 resource materials included in the “Supplemental Curriculum
40 Resources List for Black History Studies” established pursuant to
41 section 1 of this act in an elective course in social studies offered in
42 the district. A grant not exceeding \$5,000 per recipient per school
43 year may be awarded to assist a school district in covering the costs
44 of materials used in the classroom and providing optional teacher
45 training.

46 b. A school district may apply to the commissioner for a grant,
47 in a manner and form prescribed by the commissioner.

1 c. The commissioner shall develop criteria for the evaluation of
2 applications for grant funds within the limit of funds appropriated
3 or otherwise made available for the purposes of the program.

4 d. Within three school years of receiving a grant award under
5 the program, a school district shall submit a report to the
6 commissioner, in a form and manner prescribed by the
7 commissioner, containing information on the use of the grant funds.
8

9 3. A school district that utilizes the resource materials included
10 in the “Supplementary Curriculum Resources List for Black History
11 Studies” established pursuant to section 1 of this act shall submit a
12 report to the department every two school years, in a form and
13 manner prescribed by the department, on school and student use of
14 the resource materials as well as educator feedback.
15

16 4. The department shall review the 1776 Unites Black History
17 and Excellence curriculum developed by the Woodson Center for
18 potential inclusion in the “Supplementary Curriculum Resources
19 List for Black History Studies” established pursuant to section 1 of
20 this act.
21

22 5. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
23 Department of Education the sum of \$60,000 to fund grants
24 awarded through the “Supplementary Curriculum Resources List for
25 Black History Studies Grant Program” established pursuant to
26 section 2 of this act.
27

28 6. This act shall take effect immediately.
29
30

31 STATEMENT 32

33 This bill requires the Department of Education to establish a
34 “Supplemental Curriculum Resources List for Black History
35 Studies.” The list would be comprised of department-approved
36 resource materials that would be available to school districts
37 interested in offering elective courses in social studies that seek to
38 add to students’ understanding and knowledge of Black history in
39 America.

40 Resource materials would be required to be reviewed by the
41 department and be subject to a 30-day public comment period prior
42 to being considered for inclusion in the Supplemental Curriculum
43 Resources List for Black History Studies. Materials included in the
44 list would not be considered required materials to the meet the New
45 Jersey Student Learning Standards in Social Studies, and each
46 school district, its teachers, and teaching staff would maintain
47 discretion regarding the use of these resource materials in an
48 elective course in social studies offered in the district.

1 The bill would also establish a grant program in the department
2 to assist school districts seeking to adopt the resource materials
3 included in the list established under the bill. Each grant recipient
4 would be awarded up to \$5,000 per school year to assist with the
5 costs of materials used in the classroom, and to provide optional
6 teacher training. Grant recipients are required under the bill to
7 report to the commissioner on the use of grant funds.

8 Finally, school districts that utilize the resources included in the
9 list would be required to report to the department every two school
10 years on school and student use of the resource materials, as well as
11 educator feedback.