

ASSEMBLY, No. 2752

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 217th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 8, 2016

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI

District 33 (Hudson)

Assemblyman JOE DANIELSEN

District 17 (Middlesex and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Directs Secretary of Higher Education to establish a communication and incentive plan to encourage re-enrollment in college; requires Statewide reverse transfer agreement.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/4/2016)

1 AN ACT concerning higher education and supplementing chapter 3B
2 and chapter 62 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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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. a. Each public institution of higher education, in
8 consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education and the New
9 Jersey Presidents' Council, shall establish and enter into by July 1,
10 2017 a collective Statewide reverse transfer agreement under which
11 at least 30 credits that a student earns at a four-year public
12 institution of higher education in the State toward a baccalaureate
13 degree are transferrable to any county college for credit toward an
14 associate degree.

15 b. An independent institution of higher education in the State
16 may elect to enter into the agreement.

17 c. The annual report prepared by the Secretary of Higher
18 Education pursuant to section 4 of P.L.2007, c.175 (C.18A:62-49)
19 shall include an analysis of each institution's compliance with the
20 provisions of this section.

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22 2. The secretary and each public institution of higher education
23 shall develop and implement incentives for students to obtain an
24 associate degree prior to enrolling in a four-year public institution
25 of higher education.

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27 3. Each four-year public institution of higher education shall
28 dedicate a portion of its institutional financial aid to provide
29 financial assistance to resident undergraduate students who transfer
30 with an associate degree from a county college in the State.

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32 4. a. As used in this section, "near completer" means an
33 individual who resides in the State and who has completed some
34 college credits but has not attained a college degree and is no longer
35 attending an institution of higher education.

36 b. The Secretary of Higher Education, in consultation with the
37 public institutions of higher education, shall create a Statewide
38 communication campaign to identify near completers and to
39 encourage them to re-enroll in a degree program in an institution of
40 higher education. The communication campaign shall:

41 (1) make use of a variety of marketing media including
42 billboards, brochures, and electronic resources;

43 (2) provide a centralized contact point for near completers to
44 obtain information about and assistance with re-enrollment;

45 (3) make readily available contact information for each public
46 institution of higher education; and

47 (4) focus on near completers who,

1 (a) earned a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a scale of
2 4.0 while enrolled in college; and

3 (b) earned at least 45 credit hours if enrolled in a county
4 college, or at least 90 credit hours if enrolled in a four-year
5 institution of higher education.

6 c. The secretary shall develop and implement a plan that
7 provides an incentive to:

8 (1) a near completer to re-enroll and earn a degree; and

9 (2) a public institution of higher education to identify and
10 graduate near completers.

11 The incentive plan shall use all available resources including
12 institutional funds, private sector funds, and State funds.

13 d. The secretary and public institutions of higher education
14 may implement other near completer initiatives in addition to those
15 required pursuant to subsections b. and c. of this section.

16 e. The secretary shall submit a report by July 1, 2017 to the
17 Governor and to the Senate Higher Education Committee and the
18 Assembly Higher Education Committee, or their successor
19 committees, that outlines the details of the Statewide
20 communication campaign and the incentive plan, including the
21 timeline for implementation.

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23 5. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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28 This bill directs each public institution of higher education, in
29 consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education and the New
30 Jersey Presidents' Council, to establish and enter into a Statewide
31 reverse transfer agreement under which at least 30 credits that a
32 student earns at a four-year public institution of higher education
33 toward a baccalaureate degree are transferrable to any county college
34 for credit toward an associate degree. An independent institution may
35 elect to enter into the agreement. The State currently has a Statewide
36 transfer agreement in accordance with legislation adopted in 2007 that
37 provides for the seamless transfer of academic credits to a
38 baccalaureate degree program from a completed associate of arts,
39 associate of science, or associate in technical studies degree program.

40 The bill provides that the annual report that is currently prepared by
41 the Secretary of Higher Education on the Statewide transfer agreement
42 must also include an analysis of each institution's compliance with the
43 Statewide reverse transfer agreement.

44 The bill also: 1) directs each public institution of higher education
45 to develop and implement incentives for students to obtain an associate
46 degree prior to enrolling in a four-year public institution; and 2)
47 provides that each four-year public institution dedicate a portion of its
48 institutional financial aid to provide assistance to resident

1 undergraduate students who transfer to the four-year institution with
2 an associate degree from a county college located in the State.

3 The bill also directs the Secretary of Higher Education, in
4 consultation with the public institutions of higher education, to create a
5 Statewide communication campaign to identify individuals who have
6 “nearly completed” college and to encourage them to re-enroll in an
7 institution of higher education. The campaign will focus on individuals
8 who earned a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a scale of 4.0
9 while enrolled in college; and earned at least 45 credits if enrolled in a
10 county college or at least 90 credits if enrolled in a four-year
11 institution. The secretary is also directed to develop and implement a
12 plan that provides an incentive for such individuals to re-enroll in
13 college, and for a public institution to identify and graduate them.

14 The bill directs the secretary to submit a report by July 1, 2017 to
15 the Governor and the Senate and Assembly Higher Education
16 Committees that outlines the details of the Statewide communication
17 campaign and the incentive plan.