

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 371

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 9, 2019

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 371 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill establishes in the Department of Education a five-year two-generational school readiness and workforce development pilot program. The purpose of the program is to foster family economic self-sufficiency in low-income households by delivering academic and job readiness support services across two generations in the same household. The Commissioner of Education will designate the municipalities that participate in the pilot program which must be municipalities that have a poverty rate that is at least twice the Statewide average poverty rate.

Under the bill, the pilot program will include services such as: early learning programs; adult education; child care; housing; job training; transportation; financial literacy; and other related support services such as health and mental health services.

The program will include a long-term plan to adopt a model for the delivery of these services on a Statewide basis. The pilot program will foster partnerships between State and national philanthropic organizations to provide technical assistance in the phase-in and design of the two-generational programs and practices model, an evaluation plan, and a Statewide replication and implementation of the program. The pilot program will include a workforce liaison to gauge the needs of employers and households in each community and help coordinate the two-generational program to meet the needs of these employers and households.

The bill establishes an interagency working group to oversee the pilot program that will include:

- the Commissioners of the Departments of Education, Labor and Workforce Development, Human Services, Children and Families, Community Affairs, Transportation, and Health and the Secretary of Higher Education, or their designees;
- four members of the New Jersey State Legislature;
- one public member representing a business or trade organization, appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate;

- one public member with expertise on issues concerning children and families, appointed by the Majority Leader of the General Assembly;
- not more than a total of six persons from low-income households from the pilot sites;
- representatives of nonprofit and philanthropic organizations and scholars; and
- other business and academic professionals as needed to achieve goals for two-generational systems planning, evaluations, and outcomes.

The coordinators of the program sites and any organization serving as fiduciary for the program will report on a quarterly basis to the working group on such information as the working group deems necessary.

Four years following the bill's effective date, the working group will submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature that includes information on program outcomes and a recommendation on program expansion.

As amended and reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 5827, which was amended and also reported by the committee on this same date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to provide that the annual amount of State funds appropriated to the pilot program will not exceed \$1.5 million.