

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 703

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 6, 2018

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 703 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill establishes a pilot program in the Department of Education, in which the Commissioner of Education will recruit eligible participants and match them to teaching opportunities for which they may apply in underperforming schools under the State's alternate route teacher preparation program.

The bill defines eligible participants as male residents of New Jersey who are from disadvantaged or minority backgrounds, are interested in pursuing a teaching career in New Jersey, and meet the eligibility criteria for enrolling in the alternate route teacher preparation program, including State Board of Education requirements for obtaining a certificate of eligibility. The purpose of the pilot program is to increase the access of disadvantaged or minority men to teaching opportunities and to provide needed high-quality teachers in underperforming schools in the State.

Under the bill, the commissioner will select six underperforming schools from throughout the State for participation in the pilot program. Underperforming schools are defined by the bill as public schools that meet one of the following criteria:

(1) among all students in the school to whom a State assessment was administered, the sum of the percent of students scoring in the not yet meeting expectations and partially meeting expectations categories in both language arts and mathematics exceeded 40% in each of the prior two school years; or

(2) among all students in the school to whom a State assessment was administered, the sum of the percent of students scoring in the not yet meeting expectations and partially meeting expectations categories in either language arts or mathematics exceeded 65% in each of the prior two school years.

The bill directs the commissioner to establish policies and procedures for the recruitment and selection of eligible participants for the program, and for matching the selected participants to teaching opportunities for which they may apply at the participating schools under the alternate route program.

The bill requires the commissioner to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature two years following the establishment of the pilot program. The report is required to contain information on the program's implementation and the commissioner's recommendation on the advisability of continuing or expanding the program.

The committee amended the bill to refer to "underperforming schools" rather than "chronically failing schools."

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2018-2019 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.