SENATE, No. 2535

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 10, 2018

Sponsored by:
Senator SANDRA B. CUNNINGHAM
District 31 (Hudson)
Senator JOSEPH P. CRYAN
District 20 (Union)

SYNOPSIS
Establishes process for county colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs in certain critical-need applied science fields.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/15/2018)
AN ACT concerning baccalaureate degree programs at county colleges and supplementing chapter 64A of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. a. The board of trustees of a county college established pursuant to chapter 64A of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, may submit a proposal to the New Jersey Presidents’ Council for the establishment of a baccalaureate degree program in an applied sciences field in which a critical shortage of qualified labor exists, or is projected to exist, in the region. The proposal shall include:
   (1) a brief description of the program, the unmet need for graduates of the program in the geographic region to be served by the program, and an estimated timeframe for implementation of the program;
   (2) identification of the facilities, equipment, and library and academic resources that will be used to deliver the program;
   (3) a cost analysis of establishing the program;
   (4) the program’s admission requirements, academic content, curriculum, faculty credentials, and accreditation plan; and
   (5) the program’s enrollment projections and funding requirements.

b. The New Jersey Presidents’ Council shall review the proposal, notify the board of trustees of any deficiencies in writing within 30 days following receipt of the proposal, and provide the board of trustees with an opportunity to correct the deficiencies.

c. Within 45 days of receipt of a completed proposal, the New Jersey Presidents’ Council shall forward the proposal, with its recommendation for approval or disapproval of the proposal, to the Secretary of Higher Education. The secretary shall consider the council’s recommendation and shall provide the county college with a written determination on the approval or disapproval of the proposal within 60 days of its receipt from the council.

d. The establishment of a baccalaureate degree program by a county college pursuant to the provisions of this act shall be dependent upon the county college receiving accreditation for the program by the appropriate accrediting body.

e. A county college shall offer no more than three baccalaureate degree programs in applied sciences pursuant to the provisions of this section.

f. Seven years following the establishment of a baccalaureate degree program, the board of trustees of a county college shall submit a report to the secretary, the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1). The report shall contain information on the implementation of the baccalaureate degree program, the number of students who have
enrolled in the program, and the number of students who have completed the program. The secretary shall make a recommendation to the Governor and to the Legislature on the advisability of continuing the program.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes a process for a county college to offer a baccalaureate degree in the area of applied sciences. Under the bill, the board of trustees of a county college may submit a proposal to the New Jersey Presidents’ Council for the establishment of a baccalaureate degree program in an applied sciences field in which a critical shortage of qualified labor exists, or is projected to exist, in the region.

Under the bill, the New Jersey Presidents’ Council is directed to review the proposal and notify the board of trustees of any deficiencies in writing, and the council must provide the board of trustees with an opportunity to correct the deficiencies. The New Jersey Presidents’ Council must forward the proposal, with its recommendation for approval or disapproval of the proposal, to the Secretary of Higher Education. The secretary is directed to provide the county college with a written determination on the approval or disapproval of the proposal. The bill provides that the establishment of a baccalaureate degree program by a county college will be dependent upon the county college receiving accreditation for the program by the appropriate accrediting body. A county college may offer no more than three baccalaureate degree programs through the bill’s provisions.

Seven years following the establishment of a baccalaureate degree program, the board of trustees of the county college must submit a report to the secretary, the Governor, and to the Legislature on the implementation and impact of its baccalaureate program. The secretary is directed to then make a recommendation to the Governor and to the Legislature on the advisability of continuing the program.