

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
ASSEMBLY, No. 4142

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

ADOPTED MAY 11, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman PAMELA R. LAMPITT

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Assemblywoman MILA M. JASEY

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

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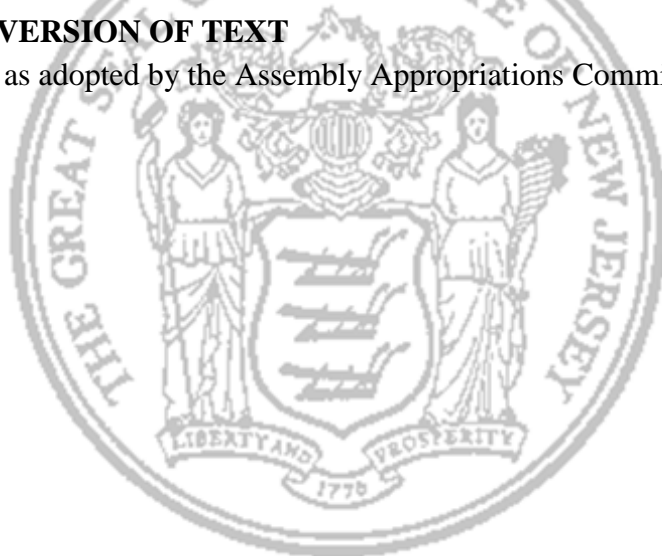
**Assemblywomen Schepisi, Speight, Assemblymen Giblin, McKeon,
Spearman, Benson and Assemblywoman Jimenez**

SYNOPSIS

Requires Commissioner of Education to establish three-year “Bridge Year Pilot Program” for certain students who were impacted by public health state of emergency caused by coronavirus disease 2019.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Substitute as adopted by the Assembly Appropriations Committee.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/18/2020)

1 AN ACT requiring the Commissioner of Education to establish the
2 Bridge Year Pilot Program.

3

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

6

7 1. As used in this act, “host high school” means the high school
8 that a student, who pursues a bridge year pursuant to the provisions
9 of this act, attended as a junior in high school.

10

11 2. a. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a three-
12 year “Bridge Year Pilot Program,” under which each school district
13 with a high school shall offer students in the graduating class of
14 2021 and the graduating class of 2022 the opportunity to pursue a
15 bridge year during the year immediately following their senior year
16 of high school, in accordance with the provisions of this act. The
17 purpose of the pilot program shall be to provide participating
18 students an additional year to address learning loss and missed
19 opportunities in extracurricular activities, including spring sports
20 programs, as a result of the public health state of emergency caused
21 by the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic.

22

23 A nonpublic school may elect to participate in the Bridge Year
24 Pilot Program.

25

26 Under the pilot program, each high school in a school district
27 shall designate a school staff member as a bridge year liaison to
28 serve as the school’s central point of contact for students interested
29 in pursuing a bridge year pursuant to this act and for students
30 participating in a bridge year. Nothing in this subsection shall be
31 construed to require a school district to hire an individual to serve
32 as a bridge year liaison.

33

34 b. A student in the graduating class of 2021 or the graduating
35 class of 2022 who has met all applicable high school graduation
36 requirements by the end of the senior year of high school may defer
37 graduation from high school to pursue a bridge year. A student who
38 intends to pursue a bridge year shall notify his host high school’s
39 bridge year liaison of that intent no later than the first day of the
40 second semester of the student’s senior year of high school. The
41 host high school shall permit students participating in the bridge
42 year to participate in graduation ceremonies with the graduating
43 class of 2021 or class of 2022, as applicable, but shall not issue
44 diplomas to those students until the conclusion of the bridge year.
45 Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a student to
46 pursue a bridge year. To be eligible to participate in the bridge year
47 program, a student shall be 19 years of age or younger and shall not
48 turn 20 years of age at any time during the bridge year, except that a
classified student shall be eligible to participate if the student will
turn 20 years of age during the bridge year due to services provided
pursuant to the student’s individualized education program.

1 c. (1) A student pursuing a bridge year shall remain enrolled in
2 the host high school while participating in the Bridge Year Pilot
3 Program. A bridge year liaison shall develop, in consultation with a
4 student pursuing a bridge year, an individual learning plan for the
5 student. The individual learning plan shall define academic and co-
6 curricular goals for the bridge year and detail activities and
7 strategies for accomplishing those goals including, but not limited
8 to, counseling, academic support, coursework, and co-curricular or
9 athletic participation. During the fall semester of the student's
10 bridge year, the student shall take between nine and 12 credits at the
11 host high school, the county college that serves the county of the
12 host high school, or a combination thereof. During the spring
13 semester of the student's bridge year, the student shall take between
14 nine and 12 credits at the county college that serves the county of
15 the host high school. The credits taken by a student pursuant to this
16 paragraph shall together form a coordinated sequence of academic
17 content that prepares the student for high-skill, high wage, or in-
18 demand occupations. At the conclusion of each semester of the
19 bridge year, the host high school shall update the student's high
20 school transcript to reflect any high school credits earned during the
21 bridge year. For the purpose of enrolling in college credits pursuant
22 to this paragraph, the student shall be considered a non-matriculated
23 student of the county college. A student who pursues a bridge year
24 and participates in a spring sport sanctioned by the New Jersey
25 State Interscholastic Athletic Association pursuant to section 3 of
26 this act shall enroll in less than 12 college credits, or otherwise be
27 enrolled in a number of college credits as to not be considered a
28 full-time college student, in each of the fall and spring semesters
29 during the student's bridge year.

30 (2) The student shall maintain a grade point average of 2.0 in
31 order to remain in the Bridge Year Pilot Program. The county
32 college or other institution of higher education which a student
33 pursuing a bridge year is attending shall report at least quarterly to
34 the bridge year liaison at a student's host high school, in a manner
35 specified by the student's individual learning plan developed
36 pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection, concerning the
37 student's academic progress and performance.

38 (3) A county college shall charge students participating in a
39 bridge year pursuant to this act a maximum of \$145 per credit
40 inclusive of all fees, except that fees associated with specific
41 courses or with the use of on-campus science laboratories may be
42 charged at a maximum of \$45 per course.

43 (4) During a semester of the bridge year, a student may take
44 three credits offered by a four-year institution of higher education at
45 any high school in the State or at any other location to fulfill the
46 student's credit requirement. The four-year institution shall charge
47 the student no more than is permitted pursuant to paragraph (3) of

1 this subsection and shall report to the student's bridge year liaison
2 as required pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection.

3 d. Notwithstanding the requirement established under the
4 Community College Opportunity Grant Program to be enrolled in a
5 course of study or a curriculum leading to a degree or certificate
6 and subject to the availability of funds in the annual appropriations
7 act, a student pursuing a bridge year shall be eligible for a financial
8 aid grant under the Community College Opportunity Grant Program
9 if the student meets all other applicable eligibility requirements.

10 e. A public institution of higher education shall, pursuant to
11 P.L.2007, c.175 (C.18A:62-46 et seq.), accept all applicable credits
12 that a student, who completed a bridge year pursuant to this act,
13 earned during the bridge year. An independent institution of higher
14 education in the State may elect to accept the credits that a student
15 earned during the bridge year.

16 f. In the event that a student initially decides to pursue a bridge
17 year in the fall semester but does not continue the bridge year in the
18 spring semester, the student's host high school shall release all final
19 transcripts and other records as necessary and as may be requested.
20 A student who decides not to continue the bridge year in the spring
21 semester shall not be eligible to participate in a spring sports
22 program or extracurricular activities pursuant to this act.

23
24 3. a. A student who pursues a bridge year pursuant to this act
25 shall be permitted to participate in a spring sport sanctioned by the
26 New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association and
27 extracurricular activities at the student's host high school. A
28 student pursuing a bridge year shall not be eligible to participate in
29 any fall or winter sport sanctioned by the association. A student
30 participating in a spring sport or extracurricular activity during his
31 bridge year shall pay applicable student athletics and activities fees
32 and be subject to the host high school's student code of conduct,
33 athletic code of conduct, and any other applicable codes, rules or
34 policies that other students participating in the spring sport or
35 extracurricular activity at the host high school are required to
36 follow. Notwithstanding the provisions of any law, rule, or
37 regulation to the contrary, an insurer doing business in the State and
38 issuing liability insurance policies to school districts shall provide
39 coverage for students participating in a spring sport or
40 extracurricular activity pursuant to this act, as part of a school
41 district's liability insurance policy.

42 This section shall not be construed to supersede the governance
43 or eligibility rules applicable to a particular extracurricular activity,
44 except as otherwise provided in subsection c. of this section. This
45 section shall also not be construed to supersede the governance or
46 eligibility rules, which are established by a local, state, or national
47 organization with bona fide authority over a particular

- 1 extracurricular activity, that are applicable to that activity, except as
2 otherwise provided in subsection c. of this section.
- 3 b. In order to participate in a spring sport during the bridge
4 year, the student shall meet the current age participation
5 requirements of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic
6 Association. The student shall participate in the spring sport at the
7 student's host high school and shall not be permitted to transfer to a
8 different high school, even in the event that the student experiences
9 a change in residence.
- 10 c. For students participating in a spring sport pursuant to this
11 act, the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association shall
12 be requested to waive the eight semester rule under which a student
13 is not eligible for high school athletics after the expiration of eight
14 consecutive semesters following the student's entrance into the
15 ninth grade.
- 16 d. The association shall confer with the National Collegiate
17 Athletic Association or any other athletic association, conference,
18 or group or organization with authority over intercollegiate athletics
19 to ensure that any student participating in a spring sport during a
20 bridge year will be eligible to declare as a college recruit during the
21 bridge year and participate in intercollegiate athletics.
- 22
- 23 4. a. The State Board of Education shall promulgate
24 regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
25 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), necessary to effectuate the
26 provisions of this act.
- 27 b. The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority shall
28 promulgate regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure
29 Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), necessary to effectuate
30 the provisions of subsection d. of section 2 of this act.
- 31
- 32 5. This act shall take effect immediately.