

SENATE, No. 3818

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 20, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes healthcare careers pilot program for certain institutions of higher education and proprietary schools.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing a healthcare careers pilot program for certain
2 institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions and
3 supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*
7

8 1. a. As used in this section:

9 “Employer engagement” means engagement in which employers
10 provide students with opportunities to learn and grow through real-
11 life learning experiences and opportunities to explore careers paths;

12 “Project-based learning” means learning in which students build
13 communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills through
14 long-term projects that often include local employers;

15 “Proprietary institution” means a postsecondary institution
16 licensed to confer academic degrees by the Secretary of Higher
17 Education;

18 “Trauma-informed instruction” means instruction that addresses
19 student stress and trauma to remove barriers to student success that
20 arise outside of school; and

21 “Underserved high school” refers to a high school with a
22 graduation rate of less than 85 percent.

23 b. There is established in the Department of Education a four-
24 year healthcare careers pilot program to encourage institutions of
25 higher education and proprietary institutions within the State to
26 partner with the Jobs for America’s Graduates New Jersey program,
27 a dropout prevention program of the New Jersey Chamber of
28 Commerce Foundation which promotes academic achievement and
29 employability skills attainment among at-risk youth. The purpose
30 of the pilot program shall be to help high school students in
31 underserved high schools complete high school and pursue career or
32 postsecondary education opportunities in the healthcare field.

33 c. The Commissioner of Education shall develop program
34 criteria defining which healthcare fields shall be included in the
35 program. In defining which healthcare fields shall be included, the
36 commissioner shall emphasize those that are critical to a COVID-19
37 recovery. The commissioner shall issue a request for proposals
38 within 30 days of the effective date of this section to all institutions
39 of higher education and proprietary institutions detailing the
40 purpose of the program, required documents, evaluation criteria,
41 and the submission timeline.

42 The commissioner shall award grants, within the limits of
43 available appropriations, to selected institutions of higher education
44 and proprietary institutions to be used to support the development
45 and implementation of a Jobs for America’s Graduates New Jersey
46 pilot program with a focus on healthcare in participating school
47 districts. The commissioner shall determine the amount of each
48 grant awarded under the program and may award multi-year grants.

1 An institution of higher education or proprietary institution that
2 wishes to participate in the program shall submit an application to
3 the commissioner on such forms and in such a manner as required
4 by the commissioner. The commissioner shall create the
5 application in consultation with Jobs for America's Graduates New
6 Jersey and establish application deadlines for each school year. The
7 application shall include:

8 (1) a memorandum of understanding between the institution of
9 higher education or proprietary institution, participating high
10 school, and the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation
11 including, at minimum, a description of the relationship between the
12 partners, roles and responsibilities, funding arrangements, and
13 expenses to be incurred by each partner;

14 (2) a description of the institution of higher education or
15 proprietary institution's current healthcare programs, or, if such
16 programs are not currently offered, a description of how the
17 institution will create such a program.

18 (3) demographic data and graduation rates of the students
19 enrolled in the participating high schools;

20 (4) a commitment from the institution to provide training and
21 technical support to the Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey
22 specialists who will provide the curriculum at participating high
23 schools;

24 (5) a description of the elective courses to be provided at the
25 participating high schools through the pilot program, including
26 information on how the curriculum will incorporate project based
27 learning, employer engagement, and trauma-informed instruction;

28 (6) information on the teaching certifications and other
29 qualifications of the Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey
30 specialists who will provide the curriculum at the participating high
31 schools;

32 (7) information on how the elective courses will prepare
33 participating students for careers in the healthcare field;

34 (8) the application process for students who want to enroll in the
35 pilot program and the number of students expected to be accepted
36 into the pilot program;

37 (9) a letter in support of the application from the New Jersey
38 Chamber of Commerce Foundation;

39 (10) any other information specified by the commissioner.

40 Priority status shall be given to institutions of higher education
41 and proprietary institutions that demonstrate grant funds will be
42 used to expand the Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey
43 program to more underserved high schools Statewide. Priority
44 status shall also be given to those institutions of higher education
45 and proprietary institutions that demonstrate they will provide
46 subject matter experts to participating high schools for classroom
47 instruction or to assist students in obtaining professional credentials
48 or certifications prior to graduation. To the maximum extent

1 possible, the department shall select institutions of higher education
2 and proprietary institution in each of the northern, central, and
3 southern regions of the State and shall seek a cross section of
4 institutions and proprietary institution in urban, suburban, and rural
5 areas.

6 d. An institution of higher education or proprietary institution
7 selected to participate in the pilot program shall hire an individual
8 or designate an existing employee to serve as a Jobs for America's
9 Graduates New Jersey liaison. The liaison shall work in
10 collaboration with Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey to
11 develop and train professionals in the Jobs for America's Graduates
12 model.

13 e. The program shall be funded using Basic State Grants
14 provided pursuant to the "Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical
15 Education Act of 2006" (20 U.S.C. s.2301 et seq.), along with any
16 other annual appropriation made to effectuate the purposes of this
17 section. Grants shall be awarded on an annual basis to institutions
18 of higher education and proprietary institutions selected to
19 participate in the program based on review of the applications and
20 subject to the limit of funds appropriated or otherwise made
21 available for the program. Eighty-five percent of all funds received
22 by institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions shall,
23 at minimum, be used for direct student services. Funds shall be
24 used by the recipient institution of higher education or proprietary
25 institution to:

26 (1) fund positions for Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey
27 specialists to provide elective classes for high school students and
28 offer guidance to recent graduates for twelve months following
29 graduation;

30 (2) subsidize a portion of the tuition for program graduates who
31 decide to pursue educational opportunities in healthcare at the
32 institution of higher education or proprietary institution;

33 (3) distribute stipends to the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce
34 Foundation to help implement the Jobs for America's Graduates
35 New Jersey program in high schools by providing administrative
36 support, program planning, and marketing of the program to
37 increase participation; and

38 (4) for such other resources, events, and purposes as may be
39 approved by the commissioner to meet the program's objectives.

40 f. The commissioner shall annually enter into a contract with
41 an independent entity to audit the implementation of the pilot
42 program. The audit for the prior school year shall be submitted to
43 the commissioner no later than December 1 of each year. A copy of
44 the audit shall be transmitted to institutions of higher education and
45 proprietary institutions receiving program funds.

46 g. Upon conclusion of the pilot program, the Commissioner of
47 Education shall report to the Governor, and to the Legislature

1 pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1),
2 concerning:

3 (1) the number of new and current partnerships created with
4 underserved high schools by each institution of higher education
5 and proprietary institution that participated in the pilot program;

6 (2) the total number of high school students that received
7 services under the pilot program;

8 (3) student graduation outcomes, along with the healthcare
9 specialties pursued by participating students after graduation;

10 (4) the amount of money used for direct student services;

11 (5) the amount of money used for tuition assistance at
12 institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions;

13 (6) the results of annual audits;

14 (7) the advisability of the establishment of similar programs on
15 a permanent basis; and

16 (8) any other information deemed relevant by the commissioner.
17

18 2. This act shall first take effect six months from the date of
19 enactment, but the Department of Education may take such
20 anticipatory administrative action in advance thereof as may be
21 deemed necessary for the timely implementation of this act.
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24 STATEMENT

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26 This bill would establish a four-year healthcare careers pilot
27 program to encourage institutions of higher education and
28 proprietary institution to partner with the Jobs for America's
29 Graduates (JAG) program. JAG is a nationwide dropout prevention
30 program which helps young people build professional skills, earn
31 credentials, gain employment, and enter postsecondary education.
32 Students are placed on pathways to academic and economic success
33 through classroom learning, coaching, leadership development, and
34 job placement. These student-centered services help young people
35 achieve their fullest potential and gain an advantage in today's
36 emerging workforce. Since 1980, Jobs for America's Graduates has
37 helped over 1.4 million students nationwide complete high school,
38 pursue a postsecondary education, and secure quality entry-level
39 jobs that provide opportunities for career advancement. Studies
40 have shown that those who graduate from high school are more
41 likely to earn more over the course of their lifetimes while greatly
42 benefitting the local economy. Currently, the New Jersey Chamber
43 of Commerce Foundation serves as the managing unit for the JAG
44 program here in the State and operates as "Jobs for America's
45 Graduates New Jersey" (JAGNJ).

46 The pilot program would help create programs that encourage
47 students in underserved high schools to pursue career opportunities
48 in the healthcare field. Funding would be used to fund JAGNJ

1 specialist positions to provide elective courses for high school
2 students and offer guidance to recent graduates for the twelve
3 months following graduation. Funds would also be used to
4 subsidize a portion of the tuition for program graduates who decide
5 to pursue educational opportunities in healthcare at the recipient
6 institution of higher education or proprietary institution, fund
7 stipends to help JAGNJ with certain implementation costs, and for
8 any other resources, events, and purposes approved by the
9 Commissioner of Education to meet program objectives. In
10 awarding grants, priority status would be given to institutions of
11 higher education and proprietary institution that demonstrate grant
12 funds will be used to expand the JAGNJ program to more
13 underserved high schools Statewide and to those that demonstrate
14 they will provide subject matter experts to participating high
15 schools for classroom instruction or to help students obtain
16 professional credentials or certifications prior to graduation. To the
17 maximum extent possible, the department will select institutions of
18 higher education and proprietary institution in the northern, central,
19 and southern regions of the State and shall seek a cross section of
20 institutions in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Upon conclusion of
21 the pilot program, the Commissioner of Education will report to the
22 Governor and Legislature regarding the program's effectiveness.