

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO

[First Reprint]
ASSEMBLY, No. 1864

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 23, 1996

Assembly Bill No. 1864 (1R) of 1996 establishes an Educational Technology Teacher Training Program in the Department of Education. The program is to be developed and administered by the Commissioner of Education. The purpose of the program is to provide grants to local school districts which have successfully integrated technology within their own educational programs to develop and offer educational technology training programs to the teachers and staff of other school districts. The grants are to be allocated on a competitive basis. The commissioner can also award grants to other applicants that exhibit the potential to develop and offer high quality educational technology training programs to school staff. Under the bill, an "Educational Technology Teacher Training Fund," is created to provide grants to school districts or other applicants. The grants shall be provided for a three year period after which the training programs are to be fee-for-service-supported. During the initial three year period the grants shall be supplemented on a fee-for-service-basis. Within 90 days of the effective date of the act, the commissioner shall forward a request for proposals from all interested parties which shall outline the applicant's plan and provide information about the ability of the program to become self-supporting at the end of the three year grant period. The bill provides that over the three year period, at least 21 teacher training sites shall be established to be phased in at seven sites per year until each county has at least one training site. The commissioner is to award \$200,000 per site. The bill requires the commissioner to annually evaluate the effectiveness of the program operated by the grant recipients. The bill also requires that three years following the effective date of the act, the commissioner shall report to the Governor and the Legislature on the progress of the training program.

The Office of Legislative Services estimates the cost of this bill at \$1,400,000 the first year following enactment. This is based on the cost to establish seven sites at \$200,000 each. During the second year costs are anticipated to increase to \$2,800,000 for 14 sites. The third year of the program, costs are estimated to increase to \$4,200,000 for 21 sites. After the third year, the cost to the State would decrease due to the three year grant award limit for the original seven sites. In the fourth year, the costs to the State would decline by \$1.4 million, the cost of the first seven sites, to \$2.8 million. In the succeeding years, costs to the State would further decline as the remaining sites reached

the end of the three year funding cycle. It is anticipated that the \$200,000 start-up costs for each site would pay for the salaries of personnel to staff the training sites, purchase of equipment, the development of a repository for educational technology information and resources including computer software programs, and research and curriculum materials. In the event some sites have equipment, the grants could be used to supplement existing equipment and staffing. OLS notes that although the bill specifies an amount to be spent on each site, it lacks an appropriation. Under the bill, the revenue generated by the fee-based services offered by the training centers supplement, not supplant, the State grant awards during the initial three year period. However, OLS is not able to estimate the amount of revenue that would be generated by the training centers for offering various fee-based services. Furthermore, in FY 1997, funding of \$500,000 was appropriated for Educational Technology Training Grants for three competitive grants of \$125,000 totaling \$375,000 to counties throughout the State. The remaining balance is used to pay for the salaries and other administrative costs associated with the program's operation at the departmental level. For FY 1997, the recipients of the grants are required to provide a 50 percent match from other sources.

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.