

[First Reprint]

**SENATE, No. 1857**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**219th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 24, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Senator Singleton**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes five-year community schools pilot program.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Senate Education Committee on March 9, 2021, with amendments.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 9/14/2020)**

1 AN ACT establishing a community schools pilot program and  
2 supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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, “community schools” means partnerships  
8 between public schools, nonprofit organizations, and local  
9 governments to provide an integrated focus on academics, health,  
10 and social services, youth and community development, expanded  
11 learning time and opportunities, actively engage families, and foster  
12 collaborative practices based on an individual community’s  
13 identified need.

14  
15 2. a. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a five-  
16 year “Community Schools Pilot Program” in the Department of  
17 Education. The objective of the pilot program shall be to facilitate  
18 the establishment of community schools. Under the pilot program,  
19 any school district or charter school shall be able to receive training  
20 regarding the establishment of a community school, and no more  
21 than 50 schools shall be assigned a site coordinator who shall assist  
22 in the establishment and operations of a community school.

23 b. No later than three months following the effective date of  
24 this act, the commissioner shall issue a request for proposals to  
25 identify a qualified nonprofit organization located in the State  
26 whose mission is to facilitate high quality community schools in  
27 New Jersey to manage the pilot program. Upon selecting an  
28 organization to manage the pilot program, the commissioner shall  
29 enter into a contract with that organization specifying its duties and  
30 responsibilities including, but not limited to, those identified in  
31 section 3 of this act.

32 c. No later than six months following the effective date of this  
33 act, the commissioner shall survey school districts and charter  
34 schools to assess the extent to which community schools have been  
35 established. The survey shall obtain information including, but not  
36 limited to: 1) identifying school districts and charter schools that  
37 have established community schools; 2) listing the entities with  
38 which the community school has entered into a partnership for the  
39 provision of services; and 3) detailing services that are provided at  
40 the community schools. The commissioner shall use the survey  
41 results to establish an inventory of community schools, which shall  
42 be updated annually.

43  
44 3. a. The organization selected by the commissioner to  
45 manage the pilot program shall make technical assistance available

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is  
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

<sup>1</sup>Senate SED committee amendments adopted March 9, 2021.

1 to school districts and charter schools that are participating in the  
2 pilot program. The organization shall also make group training  
3 sessions and materials about community school operations  
4 accessible to any school district or charter school that expresses an  
5 interest in developing a community school.

6 b. (1) The organization, in coordination with the department,  
7 shall develop an application procedure 'and specific criteria' for  
8 selecting schools, including charter schools, to 'participate in the  
9 pilot program and' receive direct support from a site coordinator  
10 assigned to the school. 'The selection criteria shall be posted on the  
11 department's website at least 20 days prior to each application  
12 period.' Schools shall be selected in three application periods 'by  
13 the department and the organization collaboratively'. In each of the  
14 first and second application periods, '[the organization shall  
15 select]' no more than 15 schools 'shall be selected' to receive a site  
16 coordinator. In the third application period, '[the organization shall  
17 select]' no more than 20 schools 'shall be selected' to receive a site  
18 coordinator. The organization 'in collaboration with the  
19 department' may increase the number of schools '[that it selects]  
20 selected' in a subsequent application period if '[it did not select]'  
21 the maximum number 'was not selected' in a prior application  
22 period. In no event shall the cumulative number of schools selected  
23 to receive a site coordinator exceed 30 after the second application  
24 period, or 50 after the third application period.

25 (2) In selecting schools to receive a site coordinator, '[the  
26 organization may give]' lower priority 'may be given' to a school  
27 district or charter school that is currently receiving federal funds to  
28 establish or operate a community school, or '[give]' higher priority  
29 'may be given' to a school located in a school district that does not  
30 have any schools in which a site coordinator has been assigned.

31 c. The organization shall employ and train individuals who  
32 shall be assigned to serve as a site coordinator in a school that has  
33 been selected to receive a site coordinator. Individuals selected to  
34 serve as site coordinators shall be employees of the organization,  
35 and not the school district or charter school to which they are  
36 assigned.

37 d. The organization may enter into an agreement with another  
38 nonprofit entity to assist it in fulfilling any of the responsibilities  
39 enumerated in subsections a. through c. of this section.

40  
41 4. a. The commissioner shall annually enter into a contract  
42 with an independent entity to perform an audit of the organization's  
43 accounts and financial transactions. The audit of the prior year's  
44 activities shall be completed no later than five months following the  
45 end of the organization's fiscal year. The audit shall be made  
46 available on the Department of Education's website.

1       b. The commissioner shall enter into a contract with an  
2 independent entity to conduct an evaluation of the pilot program.  
3 The entity shall have expertise in evaluating educational programs  
4 and the provision of a range of social services. The evaluator shall  
5 issue a final report on the implementation of the pilot program no  
6 later than six months prior to the pilot program's completion. The  
7 commissioner shall forward the final report to the Governor, and to  
8 the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-  
9 19.1).

10

11       5. There is established in the Department of Education a  
12 nonlapsing fund that shall be known as the Community Schools  
13 Pilot Program Fund. The fund shall consist of any funds that are  
14 appropriated by the Legislature for inclusion in the fund, investment  
15 earnings of the fund, and moneys contributed to the fund by private  
16 sources. The moneys in the fund shall be invested and reinvested  
17 by the Director of the Division of Investment in the Department of  
18 the Treasury. Expenditures from the fund shall be exclusively for  
19 the purpose of implementing the provisions of this act.

20

21       6. This act shall take effect immediately.