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SYNOPSIS

Establishes Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Education Committee on January 14, 2021, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/28/2021)

1 AN ACT establishing a Teacher Apprenticeship 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:

8 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Education.

9 “Field experience” means observing and assisting with student
10 learning which may include, but is not limited to, providing
11 operational support to public schools; assisting instructional staff
12 with data entry, grading, lesson planning, parental communication,
13 and assessment development; and conducting classroom instruction.

14 “Paraprofessional” means an individual who is employed in a
15 public school as a school aide or classroom aide who assists a
16 teaching staff member with the supervision of pupil activities.

17 “Program” means the Teacher Apprenticeship Program
18 established pursuant to section 2 of this act.

19 “Program participant” means a public high school student
20 entering grade 12 and a paraprofessional with an associate degree
21 who has been accepted into the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

22 “Public school” means a school district, charter school, and
23 renaissance school in the State.

24 “Secretary” means the Secretary of Higher Education.

25

26 2. The Commissioner of Education, in coordination with the
27 Secretary of Higher Education, shall establish a Teacher
28 Apprenticeship Program, the purpose of which shall be to offer
29 stipends and provide program participants with the education and
30 field experience necessary to obtain a New Jersey certificate of
31 eligibility with advanced standing.

32

33 3. a. A public school and an accredited four-year institution of
34 higher education with a Department of Education approved
35 educator preparation program that wish to offer the Teacher
36 Apprenticeship Program shall jointly apply to the Department of
37 Education in such manner as determined by the commissioner in
38 consultation with the secretary. The application shall include, but
39 not be limited to:

40 (1) a dual enrollment agreement between the public school and
41 institution of higher education;

42 (2) the number of teachers in the public school and faculty at the
43 institution of higher education available to provide college level
44 instruction in connection with the program; and

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:

¹Senate SED committee amendments adopted January 14, 2021.

1 (3) a program implementation plan which includes information
2 on the types of services in place to support students enrolled in the
3 program.

4 b. A public school and institution of higher education selected
5 to offer the program shall jointly enter into an agreement with the
6 department in which the public school and institution of higher
7 education agree to provide program participants with the education
8 and field experience necessary to obtain a certificate of eligibility
9 with advanced standing.

10

11 4. The Teacher Apprenticeship Program shall be comprised of
12 three stages during which a program participant shall complete the
13 coursework and field experience necessary to obtain a certificate of
14 eligibility with advanced standing.

15 a. Stage one of the program shall be open to high school
16 students entering grade 12. A program participant who completes
17 stage one of the program shall be awarded a School Apprentice
18 credential. In order to complete stage one, a program participant
19 shall:

20 (1) earn 30 college credits in accordance with State Board of
21 Education regulations;

22 (2) author a literature review on a topic approved by the
23 program participant's academic advisor;

24 (3) perform 200 hours of field experience; and

25 (4) pass a commissioner-approved paraprofessional general
26 aptitude exam.

27 b. Stage two of the program shall be open to individuals with a
28 School Apprentice credential and paraprofessionals with an
29 associate degree. A program participant who completes stage two
30 of the program shall be awarded a Teacher Apprentice I credential.
31 In order to complete stage two, a program participant shall:

32 (1) earn a cumulative total of 90 college credits in accordance
33 with State Board of Education regulations;

34 (2) perform 1500 hours of field experience per year; and

35 (3) pass an appropriate State test of subject matter knowledge.

36 c. Stage three of the program shall be open to individuals with
37 a Teacher Apprentice I credential. A program participant who
38 completes stage three of the program shall be awarded a Teacher
39 Apprentice II credential. In order to complete stage three, the
40 program participant shall:

41 (1) earn a cumulative total of 120 college credits in accordance
42 with State Board of Education regulations;

43 (2) perform 1500 hours of field experience per year;

44 (3) complete all necessary requirements for and obtain a
45 bachelor's degree; and

46 (4) pass a commissioner-approved performance-based
47 assessment.

1 d. An individual who possesses a Teacher Apprentice II
2 credential awarded pursuant to the provisions of this act and meets
3 the general certification requirements including, but not limited to,
4 citizenship, age, and examination requirements, established by the
5 State Board of Education shall be eligible for a certificate of
6 eligibility with advanced standing.

7
8 5. To be eligible to participate in the program, an applicant
9 shall:

10 a. be a resident of New Jersey;

11 b. if a high school student:

12 (1) pass a background check administered by the Department of
13 Education; and

14 (2) have a minimum cumulative grade point average of a 3.0 on
15 a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent, at the time of application to the
16 program; and

17 c. if a paraprofessional with an associate degree, have
18 graduated from a county college with a minimum cumulative grade
19 point average of a 3.0 on a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent.

20
21 6. a. A high school student who wishes to participate in the
22 program shall submit an application to the public school in which
23 the student is enrolled and to the institution of higher education that
24 has partnered with the public school to offer the program. The
25 application, which shall be submitted by the end of the fall semester
26 of the applicant's junior year of high school, shall include:

27 (1) an official high school transcript;

28 (2) a personal statement detailing the applicant's reasons for
29 applying to the program;

30 (3) two letters of recommendation; and

31 (4) any other information the commissioner and secretary deem
32 appropriate.

33 b. A paraprofessional with an associate degree who wishes to
34 participate in the program shall submit an application to the public
35 school in which the paraprofessional is employed or to a public
36 school located in the school district in which the paraprofessional
37 resides and to the institution of higher education that has partnered
38 with the public school to offer the program. The application shall
39 include:

40 (1) official transcripts from each county college the
41 paraprofessional has attended;

42 (2) a personal statement detailing the applicant's reasons for
43 applying to the program;

44 (3) three letters of recommendation, one of which shall be from
45 a current supervisor, principal, or employing public school's human
46 resource officer; and

47 (4) any other information the commissioner and secretary deem
48 appropriate.

1 c. The public school and the institution of higher education that
2 has partnered with the public school shall jointly select the
3 applicants for participation in the program.

4
5 7. a. A program participant shall receive a yearly stipend
6 award which shall be distributed in such manner as determined by
7 the commissioner and secretary. The total amounts awarded shall
8 be:

9 (1) \$2,000 during stage one of the program;

10 (2) \$10,000 per year during stage two of the program; and

11 (3) \$15,000 during stage three of the program.

12 b. In order to receive the full amount of the stipend award
13 during stages two and three of the program, a program participant
14 shall be enrolled full-time in a course of study at the four-year
15 institution of higher education that has partnered with the public
16 school under the program and complete all required hours of field
17 experience.

18 c. Pursuant to criteria established by the commissioner, in
19 consultation with the secretary, a partial distribution of the stipend
20 award may be authorized when a program participant is unable to
21 enroll full-time in a course of study or fails to complete the required
22 hours of field experience.

23
24 8. A program participant, as a condition of participation, shall
25 be required to adhere to performance standards established by the
26 commissioner in coordination with the secretary. The standards
27 shall include, but not be limited to, requirements that a program
28 participant:

29 a. maintain residency in the State;

30 b. maintain a cumulative grade point average of a 3.0 or higher
31 on a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent, while enrolled in the program;
32 and

33 c. maintain satisfactory performance of field experience
34 services rendered during the program.

35
36 9. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the
37 Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, shall adopt, in
38 accordance with the "Administrative Procedures Act," P.L.1968,
39 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be
40 necessary to implement the provisions of this act.

41
42 ¹10. This act shall take effect on the first day of the 13th month
43 next following the date of enactment, except the Commissioner of
44 Education, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education,
45 may take any anticipatory administrative action in advance as shall
46 be necessary for the timely implementation of this act.¹