

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3684

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 13, 2021

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 3684 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill directs the Department of Education (DOE) to establish and maintain a central, searchable registry of individuals and organizations interested in offering free tutoring services to students throughout the State. The registry will contain the name, contact information, subject matter expertise, and a tutoring availability schedule of each registrant. The DOE will make the registry publicly available to all New Jersey residents on its Internet website.

Under the bill, the following individuals and organizations may apply to the DOE for inclusion on the central registry: (1) a teacher who holds a New Jersey provisional or standard instructional certificate; (2) a retired New Jersey teacher who was in good standing at the time of retirement; (3) a student enrolled in a two- or four-year institution of higher education in the State; (4) an industry professional with relevant subject matter expertise; (5) an organization with relevant subject matter expertise; and (6) any other person or organization the department deems appropriate. Registrants may not charge or receive any fee for services provided in connection with the registry.

Under the bill, an individual applying for inclusion on the registry, other than a teacher who holds a New Jersey provisional or standard instructional certification who has undergone a prior criminal history record check as required by law, must undergo a criminal history record check prior to inclusion on the registry. Under the bill, an organization applying for inclusion on the registry must submit a statement of assurances to the DOE affirming that an individual providing tutoring services on behalf of, or as a representative of the organization, has undergone a criminal history record check. An organization that willfully provides false information specific to this requirement will be subject to a fine of not more than \$500. The DOE may reimburse an individual for the cost of the criminal history record check.

The DOE is required to inform users of the registry that the information provided on individuals and organizations listed on the

registry has not been independently verified and is not meant to be an endorsement or recommendation by the department as to the quality of the tutoring services offered.

The purpose of the bill is to address some of the difficulties students and families experience when utilizing remote instruction, including limited opportunities for one on one engagement, interference in an educator's ability to identify and address individual student needs, and additional instructional responsibilities for parents who may be unable to navigate children's coursework.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) require that an individual applying for inclusion on the registry, other than a teacher who holds a New Jersey provisional or standard instructional certification who has undergone a prior criminal history record check as required by law, must undergo a criminal history record check and will not be included on the registry prior to completion of this criminal history record check;

(2) require an organization applying for inclusion on the registry to submit a statement of assurances to the department affirming that an individual providing tutoring services on behalf of, or as a representative of, the organization has undergone a criminal history record check;

(3) provide that an organization that willfully provides false information on the statement of assurances will be subject to a fine of not more than \$500; and

(4) permit the DOE to reimburse an individual for the cost of the criminal history record check performed in connection with the provisions of this bill.