

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 165
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
220th LEGISLATURE

DATED: MAY 30, 2023

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Establishes “New Jersey STEM Scholars Grant Pilot Program” in Department of Education.
- Types of Impact:** Four-year State expenditure increase.
Potential four-year revenue and expenditure increases to school districts, renaissance schools, and charter schools.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Education; school districts, renaissance schools, and charter schools.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Four-Year Duration of Pilot Program</u>
State Cost Increase	Indeterminate
Potential School District Revenue Increase	Indeterminate
Potential School District Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that this bill would result in an indeterminate State expenditure increase during the competitive four-year New Jersey STEM Scholars Grant Pilot Program. Additional expenditures would be incurred from the establishment and administration of the pilot program as well as the awarding of any grants.
- To the extent that grants would be awarded following the establishment of the program, they would also represent revenue increases to the awardee school districts and schools as well as expenditure increases to these entities for the activities for which the grants would be awarded.
- The bill grants substantial discretion to the Department of Education in administering and developing the pilot program, including the determination of the number of grant awards and the grant amounts. The bill envisions that the pilot program would be funded, at an amount to be determined, separately from the enactment of this bill. Consequently, at this time, the OLS cannot determine the future expenditures of the largely discretionary pilot program.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill establishes a competitive four-year New Jersey STEM Scholars Grant Pilot Program in the Department of Education to assist school districts, renaissance schools, and charter schools in creating or expanding STEM (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) education programs along three areas of concentration: project-based learning, afterschool STEM, and out-of-school STEM. The bill grants discretion to the department regarding the determination of grant amounts and the number of competitive grants to be awarded.

In addition, the bill establishes within the department the STEM Scholars Grant Fund, to be used to provide grants to school districts, renaissance schools, and charter schools under the pilot program. The fund is to be credited with moneys to be appropriated by the Legislature, in addition to any other moneys received by the State from donations or private support and any available federal funds. The department is authorized to seek funds or other resources from the federal government, private nonprofit, and private for-profit sources to support the pilot program.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The Department of Education has not responded to a request for a fiscal note.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that this bill would result in an indeterminate State expenditure increase to the Department of Education during the competitive four-year New Jersey STEM Scholars Grant Pilot Program. Additional expenditures would be incurred from the establishment and administration of the pilot program as well as the awarding of any grants. To the extent that grants would be awarded following the establishment of the program, they would also represent revenue increases to the awardee school districts and schools as well as expenditure increases to these entities for the activities for which the grants would be awarded.

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Section: *Education*
Analyst: *Abigail Chambers*
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Approved: *Thomas Koenig*
 Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

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 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).