

# ASSEMBLY SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO ASSEMBLY, No. 165

with committee amendments

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 11, 2023

The Assembly Science, Innovation and Technology Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 165.

As reported and amended, this bill establishes the four-year “New Jersey STEM Scholars Grant Pilot Program,” which provides grants to assist school districts, renaissance schools, and charter schools in enhancing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education programs for students and increasing access to STEM education programs.

Applications for grant awards under this pilot program are submitted to the Commissioner of Education, who allocates the awards on a competitive basis. The grant awards are distributed so that school districts, renaissance schools, and charter schools can build upon existing STEM education programs or create new education programs along three distinct areas of concentration: project-based learning, afterschool STEM, and out-of-school STEM.

This bill also establishes within the Department of Education a fund to be known as the “STEM Scholars Grant Fund,” for provision of grants to school districts, renaissance schools, and charter schools under the pilot program. The fund is to be annually credited with money appropriated by the Legislature, any moneys received by the State from corporate donors or other private sector support, and any federal funds which may become available for STEM-related activities. No State funds may be used to support a grant under the pilot program unless there is an appropriation for the pilot program in the annual appropriations act for the respective fiscal year.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As amended and reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments make renaissance schools and charter schools eligible to apply for the pilot program and make grammatical corrections.