

ASSEMBLY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1287

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 19, 2022

The Assembly Higher Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1287 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill establishes a competitive grant program in the Department of Education to provide funding to no less than two eligible organizations that recruit, train, place, and retain new teachers for long-term-employment in underserved school districts. The selected organizations would receive a grant equal to the amount of private contributions that the organizations receive, not to exceed \$1 million each year, for three years. For the purposes of the grant program, an underserved school district is one in which at least 40 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, and which is experiencing a teacher workforce shortage as determined by the Commissioner of Education.

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

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to provide that the grant program will provide funding to no less than two eligible organizations that recruit, train, place, and retain new teachers for long-term employment in certain school districts.

The committee amendments replace the defined term “high poverty school district” with “underserved school district.” The amendments also revise the definition of “underserved school district” to stipulate that underserved school districts are those that are experiencing a teacher workforce shortage as determined by the commissioner.

The committee amendments also provide that the commissioner will consider, as a factor in awarding a grant to an organization, whether the organization’s strategy ensures that new teachers selected to teach in an underserved school district are committed to long-term employment, and will consider the organization’s existing partnerships with school districts and the demonstrated success of those partnerships with respect to teacher retention.

Finally, the committee amendments require that the first grants to be provided under the grant program will be provided no later than six months after the effective date of the bill.