

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5060

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 18, 2023

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5060.

This bill expands the scope of allowable uses of sick leave for school district employees.

Under current law, sick leave for a school district employee may be used due to personal disability due to illness or injury, or because an employee has been excluded from school by the school district's medical authorities on account of a contagious disease or of being quarantined for such a disease in the employee's immediate household. This bill amends current law to allow school district employees to use sick leave for the following reasons: for the care of a seriously ill member of the employee's immediate family including, but not limited to, parent or guardian, spouse or domestic partner, sibling, and child, for a reasonable period of time; for the diagnosis, care, or treatment of, or recovery from, a mental or physical illness, injury, or other adverse health condition, or for preventative medical care; to aid or care for a family member of the employee during diagnosis, care, or treatment of the family member's mental health, physical illness, injury, or other adverse health condition; due to circumstances relating to domestic or sexual violence; for seven days because of a death in the employee's immediate family; to attend a school-related conference, meeting, function, or other event for a child; or in connection with a closure of the school or place of care of a child of the employee. This bill provides that its provisions do not supersede any collective bargaining rights.

Additionally, current law allows a board of education to require a physician's certificate to be filed with the secretary of the board of education in order to obtain sick leave. This bill amends this law to allow a board of education to require a physician's certificate to be filed with the secretary of the board of education in order to obtain sick leave only when sick leave is used for personal injury or illness. Finally, the bill provides various conditions for when a board of education may request advance notice or reasonable documentation for use of sick leave.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) determines that this bill may lead to an annual expenditure increase for a local school district to

the extent that the school district would incur an increase in direct classroom instruction costs due to increased use of substitute teachers when sick leave is taken by school district employees for reasons permitted in the bill.

Under a hypothetical scenario in which a school district has the average number of teaching staff members, pays substitute teachers the average salary of \$134 per day, and all teachers use one sick day that would not otherwise have been used, the increase in expenditures for that school district would be \$28,944. Under a hypothetical scenario in which a school district has the average number of teaching staff members, pays substitute teachers the average salary of \$134 per day, and all teachers use ten days of sick leave which is the minimum amount of sick leave a district is required to provide under current law, that would not otherwise have been used, the increase in expenditures for that school district would be \$289,440.

There is no information available to indicate the number of teachers who would utilize additional sick leave days that would not otherwise have been used or how many additional sick leave days each teacher may use; thus, a specific estimate of the potential increased expenditures for each local school district cannot be made at this time.

The bill may lead to an indeterminate long-term decrease in expenditures for local school districts due to potential reductions in sick leave supplemental compensation upon retirement.