

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5420

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 11, 2023

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No 5420.

This bill establishes the New Jersey Student Educator Stipend Program in the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority to reduce financial barriers to teacher certification.

Under the bill, the program is to provide stipends of \$7,200 to students completing required clinical practice through a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing educator preparation program at a public institution of higher education. A student is eligible to receive the stipend for a maximum of two academic semesters.

To be eligible for a stipend, an applicant is required to: be a United States citizen, permanent resident alien, or any student eligible to complete the New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application; be a resident of the State; be enrolled full time in an approved program of study; and complete any steps required by the approved program of study to be eligible to apply for clinical practice. The bill requires the authority to establish an application process for the program.

The authority, in coordination with the Department of Education, may establish additional eligibility requirements and minimum qualifications for the program. Additionally, the authority, in coordination with the department, is to annually collect data on the program.

Finally, the bill stipulates that a student's stipend will be terminated if the student: is dismissed from the program of study for academic or disciplinary reasons, is disqualified from employment by a school district due to the detection of criminal history record information under current law, or becomes ineligible to receive a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing for any other reason. The bill also stipulates that the stipend will be terminated if the student withdraws due to illness, but the student would not be required to repay the stipend.