

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5420

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 18, 2023

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 5420.

As amended, 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 amended bill, the program is to provide stipends to students completing required clinical practice through a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing educator preparation program at an institution of higher education in the State. A student is eligible to receive a stipend of up to \$7,200 for each semester of full-time clinical practice completed in a school in the State.

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 details reasons for which a student's stipend may be terminated. 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.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- extend the program to eligible students enrolled in independent institutions of higher education in the State;
- restrict eligibility to students who complete their clinical practice at a school in the State;

- provide that the stipend awards be in an amount of up to \$7,200 for each semester of full-time clinical practice completed by a student; currently, the bill provides that the stipend is to be in the exact amount of \$7,200; and
- provide that the executive director of the authority may increase the maximum award amount established pursuant to the bill to include a cost of living adjustment.

FISCAL IMPACT

Fiscal information for this bill is currently unavailable.