

**SENATE, No. 3101**

---

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**220th LEGISLATURE**

---

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

**Sponsored by:**  
**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**  
**District 29 (Essex)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes healthcare careers pilot program for certain institutions of higher education and proprietary schools.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing a healthcare careers pilot program for certain  
2 institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions and  
3 supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.  
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
6 *of New Jersey:*  
7

8 1. a. As used in this section:

9 “Employer engagement” means engagement in which employers  
10 provide students with opportunities to learn and grow through real-  
11 life learning experiences and opportunities to explore careers paths;

12 “Project-based learning” means learning in which students build  
13 communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills through  
14 long-term projects that often include local employers;

15 “Proprietary institution” means a postsecondary institution  
16 licensed to confer academic degrees by the Secretary of Higher  
17 Education;

18 “Trauma-informed instruction” means instruction that addresses  
19 student stress and trauma to remove barriers to student success that  
20 arise outside of school; and

21 “Underserved high school” refers to a high school with a  
22 graduation rate of less than 85 percent.

23 b. There is established in the Department of Education a four-  
24 year healthcare careers pilot program to encourage institutions of  
25 higher education and proprietary institutions within the State to  
26 partner with the Jobs for America’s Graduates New Jersey program,  
27 a dropout prevention program of the New Jersey Chamber of  
28 Commerce Foundation which promotes academic achievement and  
29 employability skills attainment among at-risk youth. The purpose  
30 of the pilot program shall be to help high school students in  
31 underserved high schools complete high school and pursue career or  
32 postsecondary education opportunities in the healthcare field.

33 c. The Commissioner of Education shall develop program  
34 criteria defining which healthcare fields shall be included in the  
35 program. In defining which healthcare fields shall be included, the  
36 commissioner shall emphasize those that are critical to a COVID-19  
37 recovery. The commissioner shall issue a request for proposals  
38 within 30 days of the effective date of this section to all institutions  
39 of higher education and proprietary institutions detailing the  
40 purpose of the program, required documents, evaluation criteria,  
41 and the submission timeline.

42 The commissioner shall award grants, within the limits of  
43 available appropriations, to selected institutions of higher education  
44 and proprietary institutions to be used to support the development  
45 and implementation of a Jobs for America’s Graduates New Jersey  
46 pilot program with a focus on healthcare in participating school  
47 districts. The commissioner shall determine the amount of each  
48 grant awarded under the program and may award multi-year grants.

1       An institution of higher education or proprietary institution that  
2 wishes to participate in the program shall submit an application to  
3 the commissioner on such forms and in such a manner as required  
4 by the commissioner. The commissioner shall create the  
5 application in consultation with Jobs for America's Graduates New  
6 Jersey and establish application deadlines for each school year. The  
7 application shall include:

8       (1) a memorandum of understanding between the institution of  
9 higher education or proprietary institution, participating high  
10 school, and the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation  
11 including, at minimum, a description of the relationship between the  
12 partners, roles and responsibilities, funding arrangements, and  
13 expenses to be incurred by each partner;

14       (2) a description of the institution of higher education or  
15 proprietary institution's current healthcare programs, or, if such  
16 programs are not currently offered, a description of how the  
17 institution will create such a program.

18       (3) demographic data and graduation rates of the students  
19 enrolled in the participating high schools;

20       (4) a commitment from the institution to provide training and  
21 technical support to the Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey  
22 specialists who will provide the curriculum at participating high  
23 schools;

24       (5) a description of the elective courses to be provided at the  
25 participating high schools through the pilot program, including  
26 information on how the curriculum will incorporate project based  
27 learning, employer engagement, and trauma-informed instruction;

28       (6) information on the teaching certifications and other  
29 qualifications of the Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey  
30 specialists who will provide the curriculum at the participating high  
31 schools;

32       (7) information on how the elective courses will prepare  
33 participating students for careers in the healthcare field;

34       (8) the application process for students who want to enroll in the  
35 pilot program and the number of students expected to be accepted  
36 into the pilot program;

37       (9) a letter in support of the application from the New Jersey  
38 Chamber of Commerce Foundation;

39       (10) any other information specified by the commissioner.

40       Priority status shall be given to institutions of higher education  
41 and proprietary institutions that demonstrate grant funds will be  
42 used to expand the Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey  
43 program to more underserved high schools Statewide. Priority  
44 status shall also be given to those institutions of higher education  
45 and proprietary institutions that demonstrate they will provide  
46 subject matter experts to participating high schools for classroom  
47 instruction or to assist students in obtaining professional credentials  
48 or certifications prior to graduation. To the maximum extent

1 possible, the department shall select institutions of higher education  
2 and proprietary institution in each of the northern, central, and  
3 southern regions of the State and shall seek a cross section of  
4 institutions and proprietary institution in urban, suburban, and rural  
5 areas.

6 d. An institution of higher education or proprietary institution  
7 selected to participate in the pilot program shall hire an individual  
8 or designate an existing employee to serve as a Jobs for America's  
9 Graduates New Jersey liaison. The liaison shall work in  
10 collaboration with Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey to  
11 develop and train professionals in the Jobs for America's Graduates  
12 model.

13 e. The program shall be funded using Basic State Grants  
14 provided pursuant to the "Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical  
15 Education Act of 2006" (20 U.S.C. s.2301 et seq.), along with any  
16 other annual appropriation made to effectuate the purposes of this  
17 section. Grants shall be awarded on an annual basis to institutions  
18 of higher education and proprietary institutions selected to  
19 participate in the program based on review of the applications and  
20 subject to the limit of funds appropriated or otherwise made  
21 available for the program. Eighty-five percent of all funds received  
22 by institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions shall,  
23 at minimum, be used for direct student services. Funds shall be  
24 used by the recipient institution of higher education or proprietary  
25 institution to:

26 (1) fund positions for Jobs for America's Graduates New Jersey  
27 specialists to provide elective classes for high school students and  
28 offer guidance to recent graduates for twelve months following  
29 graduation;

30 (2) subsidize a portion of the tuition for program graduates who  
31 decide to pursue educational opportunities in healthcare at the  
32 institution of higher education or proprietary institution;

33 (3) distribute stipends to the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce  
34 Foundation to help implement the Jobs for America's Graduates  
35 New Jersey program in high schools by providing administrative  
36 support, program planning, and marketing of the program to  
37 increase participation; and

38 (4) for such other resources, events, and purposes as may be  
39 approved by the commissioner to meet the program's objectives.

40 f. The commissioner shall annually enter into a contract with  
41 an independent entity to audit the implementation of the pilot  
42 program. The audit for the prior school year shall be submitted to  
43 the commissioner no later than December 1 of each year. A copy of  
44 the audit shall be transmitted to institutions of higher education and  
45 proprietary institutions receiving program funds.

46 g. Upon conclusion of the pilot program, the Commissioner of  
47 Education shall report to the Governor, and to the Legislature

1 pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1),  
2 concerning:

3 (1) the number of new and current partnerships created with  
4 underserved high schools by each institution of higher education  
5 and proprietary institution that participated in the pilot program;

6 (2) the total number of high school students that received  
7 services under the pilot program;

8 (3) student graduation outcomes, along with the healthcare  
9 specialties pursued by participating students after graduation;

10 (4) the amount of money used for direct student services;

11 (5) the amount of money used for tuition assistance at  
12 institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions;

13 (6) the results of annual audits;

14 (7) the advisability of the establishment of similar programs on  
15 a permanent basis; and

16 (8) any other information deemed relevant by the commissioner.  
17

18 2. This act shall first take effect six months from the date of  
19 enactment, but the Department of Education may take such  
20 anticipatory administrative action in advance thereof as may be  
21 deemed necessary for the timely implementation of this act.  
22  
23

24 STATEMENT  
25

26 This bill would establish a four-year healthcare careers pilot  
27 program to encourage institutions of higher education and  
28 proprietary institution to partner with the Jobs for America's  
29 Graduates (JAG) program. JAG is a nationwide dropout prevention  
30 program which helps young people build professional skills, earn  
31 credentials, gain employment, and enter postsecondary education.  
32 Students are placed on pathways to academic and economic success  
33 through classroom learning, coaching, leadership development, and  
34 job placement. These student-centered services help young people  
35 achieve their fullest potential and gain an advantage in today's  
36 emerging workforce. Since 1980, Jobs for America's Graduates has  
37 helped over 1.4 million students nationwide complete high school,  
38 pursue a postsecondary education, and secure quality entry-level  
39 jobs that provide opportunities for career advancement. Studies  
40 have shown that those who graduate from high school are more  
41 likely to earn more over the course of their lifetimes while greatly  
42 benefitting the local economy. Currently, the New Jersey Chamber  
43 of Commerce Foundation serves as the managing unit for the JAG  
44 program here in the State and operates as "Jobs for America's  
45 Graduates New Jersey" (JAGNJ).

46 The pilot program would help create programs that encourage  
47 students in underserved high schools to pursue career opportunities  
48 in the healthcare field. Funding would be used to fund JAGNJ

1 specialist positions to provide elective courses for high school  
2 students and offer guidance to recent graduates for the twelve  
3 months following graduation. Funds would also be used to  
4 subsidize a portion of the tuition for program graduates who decide  
5 to pursue educational opportunities in healthcare at the recipient  
6 institution of higher education or proprietary institution, fund  
7 stipends to help JAGNJ with certain implementation costs, and for  
8 any other resources, events, and purposes approved by the  
9 Commissioner of Education to meet program objectives. In  
10 awarding grants, priority status would be given to institutions of  
11 higher education and proprietary institution that demonstrate grant  
12 funds will be used to expand the JAGNJ program to more  
13 underserved high schools Statewide and to those that demonstrate  
14 they will provide subject matter experts to participating high  
15 schools for classroom instruction or to help students obtain  
16 professional credentials or certifications prior to graduation. To the  
17 maximum extent possible, the department will select institutions of  
18 higher education and proprietary institution in the northern, central,  
19 and southern regions of the State and shall seek a cross section of  
20 institutions in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Upon conclusion of  
21 the pilot program, the Commissioner of Education will report to the  
22 Governor and Legislature regarding the program's effectiveness.