LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
ASSEMBLY, No. 192
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JUNE 15, 2021

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Establishes "New Jersey STEM Scholars Grant Pilot Program" in Department of Education.

Type of Impact: Four-year State expenditure increase; four-year local school district revenue increase.

Agencies Affected: Department of Education; Local School Districts.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Four-Year Fiscal Impact	
State Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate
Local School District Revenue Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that this bill may result in an indeterminate increase in annual State expenditures over a four-year period to establish the program and provide grants to local school districts. The bill does not specify the number of grants that will be awarded annually or the amount of the grants, and it is unknown how many applications will be received and approved. The increase in State expenditures, excluding administrative costs, would correspond to a revenue gain for local school districts selected for grants under the bill.

- The bill does not appropriate any State funds for the pilot program. The bill contains a provision stipulating that no State funds may be used to support a grant under the pilot program unless there is an appropriation for the pilot program in the annual appropriations act for that fiscal year.

- The bill establishes within the Department of Education (DOE) the STEM Scholars Grant Fund to provide grants to school districts under the program. Under the bill, the fund will be annually credited with money appropriated by the Legislature, any money received by the State from corporate donors or other private sector support, and any federal funds that may become available for STEM-related activities. It is unknown what State, federal, corporate, and private sector funding will become available for the program's purposes.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill establishes the four-year New Jersey STEM Scholars Grant Pilot Program, which would provide grants to assist school districts in enhancing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education programs for students and increasing access to STEM education programs.

Applications for grant awards under the pilot program would be submitted to the Commissioner of Education, who would allocate the awards on a competitive basis.

The grant awards would be distributed so that school districts can build upon existing STEM education programs or create new education programs along three distinct areas of concentration, namely project-based learning, afterschool STEM, and out-of-school STEM.

This bill also establishes within the DOE a fund to be known as the STEM Scholars Grant Fund, which would be used to provide grants to school districts under the pilot program. The fund would be annually credited with money appropriated by the Legislature, any money received by the State from corporate donors or other private sector support, and any federal funds that may become available for STEM-related activities.

The bill specifies that no State funds may be used to support a grant under the pilot program unless there is an appropriation for the pilot program in the annual appropriations act for that fiscal year.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

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Section:	*Education*
Analyst:	*Adrian Crook* *Lead Research Analyst*
Approved:	*Thomas Koenig* *Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).