

ASSEMBLY, No. 5071

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 7, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman NANCY J. PINKIN

District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Requires closure of four-year public institution of higher education that fails to achieve six-year graduation rate of at least 50 percent for full-time undergraduate students.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** concerning the graduation rates of four-year institutions of
2 higher education and supplementing chapter 3B of Title 18A of
3 the New Jersey Statutes.

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

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8 1. a. Except as otherwise provided in subsection b. of this
9 section, if a four-year public institution of higher education fails to
10 achieve a six-year graduation rate of at least 50 percent for full-time
11 undergraduate students by the completion of the first full academic
12 year that occurs six years following the effective date of this act, the
13 Secretary of Higher Education shall develop and implement
14 procedures for the closure of the institution.

15 b. The secretary shall review the graduation rates of four-year
16 public institutions of higher education at the completion of the fifth
17 full academic year that occurs following the effective date of this
18 act. If the secretary determines that an institution is not on track to
19 achieve a six-year graduation rate of at least 50 percent for full-time
20 undergraduate students but is making sufficient progress toward
21 achieving that rate, the secretary at his discretion may allow the
22 institution additional time to achieve the rate before being subject to
23 closure pursuant to this act.

24 c. The closure procedures developed by the secretary pursuant to
25 subsection a. of this section shall include a timeline for the closure
26 of the institution. The procedures shall also include, but need not
27 be limited to, plans for managing the existing funds, liabilities, and
28 assets of the institution, including the distribution or transfer of
29 fixed tangible assets, real property, buildings, facilities, equipment,
30 and fixtures.

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32 2. a. Except as otherwise provided in subsection b. of this
33 section, the secretary shall recommend to the Middle States
34 Association of Colleges and Schools that the association revoke the
35 regional accreditation of a four-year independent institution of
36 higher education in New Jersey that fails to achieve a six-year
37 graduation rate of at least 50 percent for full-time undergraduate
38 students by the completion of the first full academic year that
39 occurs six years following the effective date of this act.

40 b. If, at the completion of the fifth full academic year that occurs
41 following the effective date of this act, a four-year independent
42 institution of higher education in New Jersey is not on track to
43 achieve a six-year graduation rate of at least 50 percent for full-time
44 undergraduate students but is making sufficient progress toward
45 achieving that rate, the secretary at his discretion may delay the
46 recommendation that the Middle States Association of Colleges and
47 Schools revoke the institution's accreditation until the secretary
48 deems the recommendation to be appropriate.

1 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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6 This bill provides that if a four-year public institution of higher
7 education fails to achieve a six-year graduation rate of at least 50
8 percent for full-time undergraduate students by the completion of the
9 first full academic year that occurs six years following the bill's
10 effective date, the Secretary of Higher Education will develop
11 procedures for the closure of the institution. However, if after five
12 years the secretary finds that a four-year public institution of higher
13 education is not on track to achieve a six-year graduation rate of at
14 least 50 percent but is making sufficient progress toward achieving
15 that goal, the secretary at his discretion may allow the institution
16 additional time to achieve the rate before being subject to closure.
17 Under the bill, the closure procedures developed by the secretary will
18 include a timeline for the institution's closure, as well as plans for
19 managing the existing funds, liabilities, and assets of the institution.

20 In addition, the bill provides that the secretary will recommend to
21 the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools that the
22 association revoke the regional accreditation of a four-year
23 independent institution of higher education in New Jersey that fails to
24 achieve a six-year graduation rate of at least 50 percent for full-time
25 undergraduate students. However, if after five years, a four-year
26 independent institution of higher education is not on track to achieve a
27 six-year graduation rate of at least 50 percent but is making sufficient
28 progress toward achieving that goal, the secretary at his discretion may
29 delay the recommendation that the Middle States Association of
30 Colleges and Schools revoke the institution's accreditation until the
31 secretary deems the recommendation to be appropriate.