SENATE, No. 2157

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE
District 19 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes process for county colleges to offer baccalaureate degree nursing programs.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning nursing education at county colleges and supplementing chapter 64A of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. In October of 2010, the Institute of Medicine released its landmark report, "The Future of Nursing," which recommended increasing the proportion of baccalaureate degree nurses in the workforce to 80% by 2020;

b. The committee charged with preparing the report's recommendations indicated that in order to meet the demands of an evolving health care system and meet the changing needs of patients, nurses must achieve higher levels of education;

c. In May of 2010, the Tri-Council for Nursing also indicated in its statement, "Education Advancement of Registered Nurses," that a more highly educated nursing workforce is critical to meeting the nation's nursing needs and delivering safe, effective patient care;

d. In New Jersey, there is not the capacity in baccalaureate degree nursing programs at the four-year institutions of higher education that is necessary to meet this identified critical need; and

e. One mechanism that would be cost effective for both the State and its students would be to authorize county colleges to establish baccalaureate degree nursing programs, which will thus expand the number of seats in baccalaureate degree programs, increase the pool of highly-trained nurses, and provide greater access to quality health care for State residents.

2. a. The board of trustees of a county college established pursuant to chapter 64A of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, may submit a proposal to the New Jersey Presidents' Council for the establishment of a baccalaureate degree nursing program. The proposal shall include:

(1) a brief description of the program, the unmet need for graduates of the program in the geographic region to be served by the program, and an estimated timeframe for implementation of the program;

(2) identification of the facilities, equipment, and library and academic resources that will be used to deliver the program;

(3) a cost analysis of establishing the program;

(4) the program's admission requirements, academic content, curriculum, faculty credentials, and accreditation plan; and

(5) the program's enrollment projections and funding requirements.

b. The New Jersey Presidents' Council shall review the proposal, notify the board of trustees of any deficiencies in writing within 30 days following receipt of the proposal, and provide the board of trustees with an opportunity to correct the deficiencies.

c. Within 45 days of receipt of a completed proposal, the New Jersey Presidents' Council shall forward the proposal, with its recommendation for approval or disapproval of the proposal, to the Secretary of Higher Education. The secretary shall consider the council's recommendation and shall provide the county college with a written determination on the approval or disapproval of the proposal within 60 days of its receipt from the council.

d. The establishment of a baccalaureate degree nursing program by a county college pursuant to the provisions of this act shall be dependent upon the county college receiving accreditation for the program by the New Jersey Board of Nursing.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes a process under which a county college may receive approval to offer a baccalaureate degree nursing program. Under the bill's provisions, the board of trustees of a county college may submit a proposal to the New Jersey Presidents' Council to offer such a four-year degree program. The proposal must include:

1) a description of the program, the unmet need for graduates of the program in the geographic region to be served by the program, and the timeframe for implementation of the program;

2) identification of the facilities, equipment, and library and academic resources that will be used to deliver the program;

3) a cost analysis of establishing the program;

4) the program's admission requirements, academic content, curriculum, faculty credentials, and accreditation plan; and

5) the program's enrollment projections and funding requirements.

The New Jersey Presidents' Council is to review the proposal, notify the board of trustees of any deficiencies in writing within 30 days following receipt of the proposal, and provide the board with an opportunity to correct the deficiencies.

Within 45 days of receipt of a completed proposal, the council will forward the proposal, with its recommendation for approval or disapproval, to the Secretary of Higher Education. The secretary will provide the county college with a written determination on the approval or disapproval of the proposal within 60 days of its receipt from the council.

The establishment of a baccalaureate degree nursing program by a county college is dependent upon the county college receiving accreditation for the program by the New Jersey Board of Nursing.