

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2698

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: AUGUST 20, 2020

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 2698 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill requires the State to enter into contracts and coordinate with certain cooperative purchasing systems to assist public schools (i.e., school districts, charter schools, and renaissance schools) and county colleges in the purchase of COVID-19 related goods and services.

Under the bill, the Director of the Division of Purchase and Property in the Department of the Treasury, in consultation with the Commissioner of Education and the Secretary of Higher Education, would be required to award contracts for the procurement of COVID-19 related goods and services by public schools and county colleges. The bill also requires the director to coordinate with the lead agency of any State-approved cooperative purchasing system that includes a public school or county college to provide for the procurement of COVID-19 related goods and services. The bill permits the State to award contracts to more than one bidder.

Additionally, the bill permits public schools and county colleges to purchase COVID-19 related goods and services, without advertising for bids, through any contract that is (1) entered into by the Division of Purchase and Property, or (2) made available through a State-approved cooperative purchasing system of which the school or college is a member. The bill also requires the Department of Education and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to coordinate the purchase of COVID-19 related goods and services by public schools and county colleges, respectively.

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) clarify that charter schools and renaissance schools are included in the bill's definition of "board of education" and "school district";

(2) require the director to coordinate with the lead agency of any State-approved cooperative purchasing system that includes one or more public schools to provide for the procurement of COVID-19 related goods and services;

(3) authorize public schools to purchase COVID-19 related goods and services using any contract that is made available through a State-

approved cooperative purchasing system of which the school is a member;

(4) require the director to award a contract or contracts, and coordinate with the lead agency of any State-approved cooperative purchasing system that includes one or more county colleges, to provide for the procurement of COVID-19 related goods and services by county colleges;

(5) authorize county colleges to purchase COVID-19 related goods and services through any contract that is entered into by the division or made available through a State-approved cooperative purchasing system of which the college is a member; and

(6) require the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to coordinate the purchase of COVID-19 related goods and services by county colleges under the bill.