

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2835

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 8, 2021

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2835.

This bill establishes certain reporting requirements concerning the current and projected teacher workforce in the State. The bill requires school districts to annually submit to the Commissioner of Education, no later than October 15, information for the current school year on teaching positions, including the number of vacant teaching positions, the number of new teaching positions, the number of teaching positions that were eliminated, and the anticipated teacher retirements. Under the bill, this information would be submitted through the NJ SMART Education Data System.

The bill also requires school districts to annually submit to the commissioner, no later than September 1, information on public school teacher retention that includes:

- (1) the number of teachers who left employment with the district during the prior school year;
- (2) the reason why those teachers left employment with the district, including dismissal, non-renewal of a contract, a reduction in force, employment in another school district or a nonpublic school, employment in another field, relocation to another state, or retirement;
- (3) the characteristics of the teachers who left the district, including age, sex, race, and tenure status; and
- (4) such other information the commissioner deems appropriate.

Under the bill, the commissioner would annually compile the data submitted by school districts into a report that details the Statewide, county, and district trends in teacher retention and includes any recommendations that the commissioner may have on State actions that may be initiated to improve teacher retention among various demographic groups. The commissioner would also submit the report to the Governor and to the Legislature.

Within six months of the bill's effective date, the New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System would be required to issue a report on teacher workforce projections for the State for the following two years using data provided by the New Jersey Department of Education. The bill requires the department to provide any data necessary for the report within three months of the bill's effective date.

Following the issuance of this initial report, the bill requires the Education to Earnings Data System to issue, by March 1 of each year,

a report on teacher workforce projections for the State. The report would include, but not be limited to, information on:

(1) the teaching jobs in high demand in the State and where vacancies are located;

(2) the number of bilingual teachers needed to provide adequate limited English proficiency programming to students in the State;

(3) the number of computer science teachers needed to provide access to computer science coursework to all students in the State;

(4) the classes and programs that may be eliminated within the next three years; and

(5) the areas in which teachers and school leaders should be trained so they can prepare students for the future economy.

The bill also requires the Executive Leadership Council of the New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System to report to the Legislature on January 15 and July 15 of each year on the progress of the annual teacher workforce projection report.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services finds that this bill will lead to indeterminate, likely marginal, increases in cost to the Department of Education (DOE) and to school districts. The bill requires that information related to teacher retention and the teacher workforce be submitted by school districts to the DOE through the existing NJ SMART Education Data System.

The bill requires the DOE to annually compile data submitted by school districts in a report that details the Statewide, county, and district trends in teacher retention. The DOE may incur additional costs to the extent that this report would require additional work hours, assuming that the development of the report is subsumed within the roles of existing staff.

The bill also requires the New Jersey Education to Earnings Data System (NJEDS) to issue certain reports on teacher workforce projections for the State. The NJEDS may incur additional costs to the extent that these reporting requirements require additional staff or work hours.