

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3471

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 6, 2021

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 3471.

This bill provides that, beginning with the 2022-2023 grade 11 class, the State Board of Education will require that the local graduation requirements adopted by a board of education or a board of trustees of a charter school include the requirement that a student complete and submit a financial aid application in a form prescribed by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority. A student will be exempt from the graduation requirement if the student submits to the school district:

(1) a form signed by the parent or guardian, or by the student if he is at least 18 years of age, requesting the exemption; or

(2) a form signed by the school counselor authorizing the exemption for good cause as defined by the State board.

The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Executive Director of the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, will provide a list of resources for school districts, parents, and students that include instructions on how to complete a financial aid application prescribed by the authority. The executive director of the authority will make available such resources as are necessary directly to school counselors or other school employees who assist students in completing the financial aid application.

Each school district will annually notify students and the parents or guardians of the requirement established by the bill. The Department of Education will verify which students have met the requirement established by the bill with the authority and will include that information in the student's record. The department will also include information on the number of students who have met the requirement in the School Report Card issued under current law.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill is not certified as requiring a fiscal note.