

SENATE, No. 3475

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 22, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Turner

SYNOPSIS

Establishes summer transition pilot program for rising kindergarten students who meet certain criteria.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/11/2021)

1 **AN ACT** establishing a summer transition pilot program for certain
2 rising kindergarten students and supplementing chapter 6 of Title
3 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. a. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a four-
9 year summer transition pilot program for certain rising kindergarten
10 students in participating school districts. The purpose of the
11 program shall be to provide high-quality academic instruction over
12 the summer for eligible students who will attend kindergarten in the
13 fall in order to reduce the achievement gap and provide supportive
14 resources to targeted high-needs populations.

15 b. A school district that is selected to participate in the pilot
16 program shall develop and implement a six-week summer transition
17 program for eligible rising kindergarten students. The summer
18 transition program shall provide high-quality instruction with a
19 focus on language, literacy, and mathematics and shall provide
20 additional family support and resources, as applicable, to assist the
21 students participating in the program.

22 c. In order to be eligible to attend the summer transition
23 program in a participating school district, a student must be age-
24 eligible, and registered to attend kindergarten in the September that
25 immediately follows the summer transition program, and the
26 student's family income must be at or below 85 percent of the State
27 median income as adjusted for household size. In addition, the
28 student must meet one of the following criteria:

29 (1) the student did not attend a preschool program funded
30 pursuant to section 12 of P.L.2007, c.260 (C.18A:7F-54) or through
31 any other State appropriation, during the preceding school year; the
32 student did attend such a program during the preceding school year
33 but did not attend for the entire school year; or the student did
34 attend such a program during the entire preceding school year but
35 has been identified as needing additional academic support before
36 entering kindergarten; or

37 (2) the student is a member of at least one of the following
38 priority groups: (a) the student is an English language learner; (b)
39 the student has an individualized education program (IEP); (c) the
40 student is in a resource family home; or (d) the student is a
41 homeless child as determined pursuant to section 19 of P.L.1979,
42 c.207 (C.18A:7B-12).

43 d. A school district that wishes to participate in the pilot
44 program shall submit an application to the commissioner, which
45 includes a description of the district's proposal for creating and
46 implementing a summer transition program for rising kindergarten
47 students, the estimated number of students who will be eligible to
48 participate in the summer transition program, and any other
49 information as prescribed by the commissioner.

1 e. The commissioner shall select up to 15 school districts for
2 participation in the pilot program, subject to the expression of
3 interest and the availability of funds. To the maximum extent
4 possible, the commissioner shall select school districts in the
5 northern, central, and southern regions of the State and shall seek a
6 cross section of school districts from urban, suburban, and rural
7 areas.

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9 2. a. At the conclusion of the pilot program, each participating
10 school district shall submit a report to the commissioner. The
11 report from each district shall include, at a minimum, information
12 on: the number of students who were served by the summer
13 transition program; the number of teachers who provided instruction
14 under the program; feedback from teachers of the summer transition
15 program and from kindergarten teachers who taught students who
16 had attended the program; any voluntary feedback collected from
17 parents of students who attended the program; and the school
18 district's views on the success and benefits of the program.

19 b. After receiving the reports from each participating school
20 district, the commissioner shall submit a report to the Governor, and
21 to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
22 (C.52:14-19.1), on the implementation and effectiveness of the pilot
23 program. The report shall include the commissioner's
24 recommendation on the advisability of the program's continuation
25 and expansion to additional school districts in the State.

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27 3. a. There is established within the Department of Education a
28 fund to be known as the "Summer Transition Program Fund." The
29 fund shall be used to provide grants to participating school districts
30 to develop and implement a summer transition program pursuant to
31 section 1 of this act. The fund shall be annually credited with the
32 moneys appropriated by the Legislature, and any federal or private
33 funds that may be available for purposes of the summer transition
34 pilot program.

35 b. The commissioner shall award grants, within the limit of
36 State appropriations and other available funding for the program, to
37 participating school districts to be used to support the development
38 and implementation of a summer transition program. The
39 commissioner shall determine the amount of each grant awarded
40 under the program and may award multi-year grants.

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42 4. This act shall take effect immediately.
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45 STATEMENT

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47 This bill requires the Commissioner of Education to establish a
48 four-year summer transition pilot program for certain rising
49 kindergarten students in participating school districts. The purpose

1 of the program is to provide high-quality academic instruction over
2 the summer for students in targeted high-needs populations who
3 will attend kindergarten in the fall in order to reduce the
4 achievement gap and provide supportive resources.

5 A school district that is selected to participate in the pilot
6 program is required to develop and implement a six-week summer
7 transition program for eligible rising kindergarten students. The
8 summer transition program will provide high-quality instruction
9 with a focus on language, literacy, and mathematics and will
10 provide additional family support and resources, as applicable, to
11 assist the students participating in the program.

12 In order to be eligible to attend the summer transition program in
13 a participating school district, a student must be age-eligible, and
14 registered to attend kindergarten in the September that immediately
15 follows the summer transition program. The student's family
16 income must be at or below 85 percent of the State median income
17 as adjusted for household size. In addition, the student must meet
18 one of the following criteria:

19 (1) the student did not attend a preschool program funded
20 pursuant to section 12 of P.L.2007, c.260 (C.18A:7F-54) or through
21 any other State appropriation, during the preceding school year; the
22 child did attend such a program during the preceding school year
23 but did not attend for the entire school year; or the child did attend
24 such a program during the entire preceding school year but has been
25 identified as needing additional academic support before entering
26 kindergarten; or

27 (2) the student is a member of at least one of the following
28 priority groups: (a) the student is an English language learner; (b)
29 the student has an individualized education program (IEP); (c) the
30 student is in a resource family home; or (d) the student is a
31 homeless child.

32 To participate in the pilot program a school district must submit
33 an application to the commissioner, which includes a description of
34 the district's proposal for creating and implementing a summer
35 transition program and the estimated number of students who will
36 be eligible to participate in the summer transition program. The
37 commissioner will select up to 15 school districts for participation
38 in the pilot program, subject to the expression of interest and the
39 availability of funds. The commissioner will determine the amount
40 of each grant awarded under the program to participating school
41 districts to develop and implement the summer transition program.

42 At the conclusion of the pilot program, each participating school
43 district will submit a report to the commissioner. After receiving
44 these reports, the commissioner will submit a report to the Governor
45 and to the Legislature on the implementation and effectiveness of
46 the pilot program and will include in the report his recommendation
47 on the advisability of the program's continuation and expansion to
48 additional school districts in the State.

S3475 RUIZ, BEACH

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1 Finally, there will be established in the Department of Education
2 the “Summer Transition Program Fund” which will be used to
3 provide grants to participating school districts. The fund will be
4 annually credited with the moneys appropriated by the Legislature,
5 and any federal or private funds that may be available for purposes
6 of the summer transition pilot program.