SENATE, No. 3747

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 11, 2021

Sponsored by:
Senator MICHAEL L. TESTA, JR.
District 1 (Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland)

SYNOPSIS

Requires Commissioner of Education to provide professional development resources for guidance counselors on scholarship and grant programs and develop informational pamphlet on these programs.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning guidance counselors and supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. a. The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education, shall provide professional development resources to each school district in the State on all federal and State scholarship and grant programs available to students interested in pursuing a postsecondary education. The resources shall include, but not be limited to, information on the "New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program" established pursuant to P.L.2004, c.59 (C.18A:71B-81 et seq.), the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship II (NJ STARS II) Program established pursuant to P.L.2005, c.359 (C.18A:71B-86.1 et seq.), programs for students who speak English as a second language, and programs for students with disabilities.

b. The commissioner, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education, shall develop and provide to each school district in the State an informational pamphlet that offers a brief overview of the federal and State scholarship and grant programs available to students interested in pursuing a postsecondary education.

c. Each school district shall disseminate the informational pamphlet developed pursuant to subsection b. of this section to all students enrolled in a high school of the district, and their parents and guardians.

d. Each school district shall ensure that its guidance counselors employed in high schools annually review the resources provided pursuant to subsection a. of this section and acquire a working familiarity with the major scholarship and grant programs, their eligibility requirements, application procedures, and benefits.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill directs the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education, to provide professional development resources to each school district in the State on all federal and State scholarship and grant programs available to students interested in pursuing a postsecondary education. The resources will include, but not be limited to, information on the NJ STARS I and II programs, programs for students who speak English as a second language, and programs for students with disabilities.

The bill also directs the commissioner, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education, to develop and provide to each school district in the State an informational pamphlet that lists and provides a brief overview of the federal and State scholarship and grant programs available to students interested in pursuing a postsecondary education. The bill requires each school district to disseminate the pamphlet to all students enrolled in a high school of the district, and their parents and guardians.

Finally, the bill directs each school district to ensure that its guidance counselors employed in high schools annually review the resources provided pursuant to the bill's provisions and acquire a working familiarity with the major scholarship and grant programs, their eligibility requirements, application procedures, and benefits.