

SENATE, No. 4073

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 8, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Turner

SYNOPSIS

Provides supplemental appropriation of \$20 million for loan redemption program and tuition reimbursement program for certain teachers of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/8/2021)

1 A SUPPLEMENT to the annual appropriations act for the fiscal year
2 ending June 30, 2022, P.L.2021, c.133.

3
4 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and the General Assembly of the
5 State of New Jersey:

6
7 1. In addition to the amounts appropriated under P.L.2021,
8 c.133, the annual appropriations act for the fiscal year ending June
9 30, 2022, there is appropriated from the General Fund the following
10 amount for the purpose specified:

11
12 74 DEPARTMENT OF STATE
13 30 Educational, Cultural, and Intellectual Development
14 36 Higher Educational Services
15 2405 Higher Education Student Assistance Authority

16
17 GRANTS-IN-AID
18 45-2405 Student Assistance Programs \$20,000,000
19 Total Grants-in-Aid appropriation,
20 Higher Educational Services \$20,000,000

21 Grants-in-Aid:
22 45 STEM Teachers Loan Redemption Program
23 and Tuition Reimbursement Program
24(\$20,000,000)
25

26 Notwithstanding any provision of P.L.2019, c.401 (C.18A:71C-
27 74 et seq.) to the contrary, the amount hereinabove appropriated
28 for STEM Teachers Loan Redemption Program and Tuition
29 Reimbursement Program is appropriated for the purpose of
30 providing loan redemption payments and tuition reimbursement
31 payments to certain individuals who agree to teach science,
32 technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) classes in New
33 Jersey public schools for four full school years and who are
34 completing certain educational degree requirements during the
35 2021-2022 academic year. Notwithstanding the provisions of
36 section 2 of P.L.2019, c.401 (C.18A:71C-75) to the contrary, an
37 individual shall be eligible for an upfront, lump sum payment
38 providing for the redemption of all eligible student loan expenses
39 as defined in section 1 of P.L.2019, c.401 (C.18A:71C-74) if the
40 individual: is graduating from a certificate of eligibility with
41 advanced standing educator preparation program in the 2021-
42 2022 academic year and has been initially hired by a school
43 district as a novice teacher to teach a STEM subject or is
44 enrolled in a certificate of eligibility educator preparation
45 program and has been initially hired as a novice teacher by a
46 school district to teach a STEM subject; is eligible pursuant to

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 State Board of Education regulations to teach a STEM subject in
2 a New Jersey public school immediately following graduation
3 from a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing educator
4 preparation program or while enrolled in a certificate of
5 eligibility educator preparation program; and executes a contract
6 with the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority in
7 which the individual agrees to teach STEM classes at a public
8 school in New Jersey for four full school years following
9 acceptance into the program. A contract executed for the
10 redemption of loans shall specify: the program participant's dates
11 of required service; the total amount of student loan debt to be
12 redeemed by the State; and performance standards established by
13 the authority for the program participant to adhere to in the
14 participant's course of service, which performance standards
15 shall include maintaining an appropriate certificate to teach in
16 the State and reporting to the authority on a form and in a
17 manner prescribed by the authority, and attested to by the public
18 school, on the program participant's performance of teaching
19 services rendered. The contract shall also stipulate that, in the
20 event that a program participant does not complete four full
21 school years of service or otherwise violates any other provision
22 of the contract relating to service requirements in exchange for
23 loan redemption, the loan redemption provided to the participant
24 shall be paid back to the Higher Education Student Assistance
25 Authority as a loan, subject to terms and conditions to be
26 prescribed by the authority. The redemption of loans shall equal
27 25 percent of the participant's eligible student loan expenses, but
28 the redemption of loans shall not exceed \$20,000. The
29 redemption of loans shall be issued to an eligible individual as an
30 upfront, lump sum payment. Notwithstanding the provisions of
31 section 6 of P.L.2019, c.401 (C.18A:71C-79) to the contrary, an
32 individual shall be eligible for an upfront, lump sum payment
33 providing for the reimbursement of all eligible tuition expenses
34 as defined in section 4 of P.L.2019, c.401 (C.18A:71C-77) if the
35 individual: is graduating in the 2021-2022 academic year from a
36 master's degree or Ph.D. program in STEM or is completing 30
37 credits in a coherent sequence of courses in STEM; is eligible
38 pursuant to State Board of Education regulations to teach in New
39 Jersey public schools immediately following graduation or
40 completion; and executes a contract with the Higher Education
41 Student Assistance Authority in which the individual agrees to
42 teach STEM classes at a public school in New Jersey for four full
43 school years following graduation or completion of the required
44 credits. A contract executed for the reimbursement of tuition
45 shall specify: the program participant's dates of required service;
46 the total amount of reimbursement of eligible tuition expenses to
47 be received by the participant in return for service; and
48 performance standards established by the authority for the

1 program participant to adhere to in the participant's course of
2 service, which performance standards shall include maintaining
3 an appropriate certificate to teach in the State, remaining current
4 with payments on any student loans, and reporting to the
5 authority on a form and in a manner prescribed by the authority,
6 and attested to by the public school, on the program participant's
7 performance of teaching services rendered. The contract shall
8 also stipulate that, in the event that a program participant does
9 not complete four full years of service or otherwise violates any
10 other provisions of the contract relating to service requirements
11 in exchange for tuition reimbursement, the tuition reimbursement
12 provided to the participant shall be paid back to the Higher
13 Education Student Assistance Authority as a loan, subject to
14 terms and conditions to be set by the authority. The
15 reimbursement of tuition shall equal 25 percent of the
16 participant's eligible tuition expenses, but the reimbursement of
17 tuition shall not exceed \$20,000. The reimbursement of tuition
18 shall be issued to an eligible individual as an upfront, lump sum
19 payment.

20
21 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

22 23 24 STATEMENT

25
26 This bill provides a supplemental appropriation totaling \$20
27 million for a modified version of the loan redemption program and
28 tuition reimbursement program established for certain teachers of
29 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
30 established under P.L.2019, c.401.

31 Under this bill, an individual would be eligible for loan
32 redemption or tuition reimbursement if that person:

- 33 • in the case of the loan redemption program, is graduating
34 from a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing
35 educator preparation program in the 2021-2022 academic
36 year and has been initially hired by a school district as a
37 novice teacher to teach a STEM subject or is enrolled in a
38 certificate of eligibility educator preparation program and
39 has been initially hired by a school district as a novice
40 teacher to teach a STEM subject. In the case of the tuition
41 reimbursement program, an individual is required to be
42 graduating in the 2021-2022 academic year from a master's
43 degree or Ph.D. program in STEM or is completing 30
44 credits in a coherent sequence of courses in STEM;
- 45 • is eligible pursuant to State Board of Education regulations
46 to teach a STEM subject in a New Jersey public school; and
- 47 • executes a contract with the Higher Education Student
48 Assistance Authority in which the individual agrees to teach

1 STEM classes at a public school in New Jersey for four full
2 school years.

3 A contract executed for the redemption of loans or the
4 reimbursement of eligible tuition expenses would specify: the
5 program participant's dates of required service; the total amount of
6 student loan debt to be redeemed by the State or the total amount of
7 reimbursement of eligible tuition expenses to be received by a
8 program participant; and certain performance standards established
9 by the authority for the program participant to adhere to in the
10 participant's course of service. A contract would also stipulate that,
11 in the event that a program participant does not complete four full
12 school years of service or otherwise violates any other provisions of
13 the contract relating to service requirements, the loan redemption or
14 tuition reimbursement payment provided to the participant would be
15 paid back to the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority as
16 a loan.

17 The amount of loan redemption or tuition reimbursement for a
18 program participant would equal 25 percent of the participant's
19 eligible student loan or tuition expenses. The loan redemption or
20 tuition reimbursement payments, however, would not exceed
21 \$20,000 for any eligible individual. The bill stipulates that the loan
22 redemption and tuition reimbursement payments would be issued as
23 upfront, lump sum payments.