

SENATE, No. 1663

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 14, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “Summer Earn and Learn Pilot Program.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



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2

1 **AN ACT** establishing a “Summer Earn and Learn Pilot Program” in
2 the Department of Education and supplementing chapter 6 of
3 Title 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. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. School closures and the transition to virtual instruction as a
10 result of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic have
11 impacted students and families across the State both inside the
12 classroom and within the home;

13 b. Students have had to adapt to new learning challenges, while
14 also lending additional support to their families in various ways,
15 including providing support to younger siblings and taking on
16 additional employment responsibilities;

17 c. As a result of these added responsibilities, students are often
18 faced with having to decide between attending school and obtaining
19 employment to supplement wages to help support their families;

20 d. The lack of access to in-person instruction and the added
21 responsibilities shouldered by students over the course of the
22 COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in student learning loss across
23 subject matter and grade level;

24 e. While the summer vacation period typically offers students
25 the opportunity to obtain employment both for financial
26 compensation and exposure to different jobs and industries,
27 providing students with access to supplemental learning assistance
28 over summer vacation will allow students and school districts,
29 charter schools, and renaissance schools to address COVID-19-
30 related learning loss; and

31 f. The “Summer Earn and Learn Pilot Program” will provide
32 students with access to supplemental learning assistance and help
33 students obtain career-building employment opportunities so that
34 students need not choose between financial security and attending
35 school.

36
37 2. As used in this act:

38 “Career-building employment opportunity” means employment
39 with a private or governmental agency or entity, taking place over
40 summer vacation during the time-periods in which a student is not
41 engaged in supplemental learning assistance under the “Summer
42 Earn and Learn Pilot Program” established pursuant to section 3 of
43 this act.

44 “Good academic standing” means a grade point average of a 3.0
45 or higher on a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent.

46 “Pilot program” means the “Summer Earn and Learn Pilot
47 Program” established pursuant to section 3 of this act.

48 “Supplemental learning assistance” means a course of
49 instruction, taking place for at least three hours, five days a week

1 over the summer vacation, both virtually or in-person, designed to
2 help address COVID-19-related learning loss.

3

4 3. a. There is established in the Department of Education a
5 three-year “Summer Earn and Learn Pilot Program.” The purpose
6 of the pilot program shall be to ensure that school districts, charter
7 schools, and renaissance schools have the ability to provide students
8 access to supplemental learning assistance and paid career-building
9 employment opportunities.

10 b. The Department of Education, in consultation with the
11 Department of Labor and Workforce Development, shall develop
12 guidelines governing the implementation of the pilot program and
13 shall distribute the guidelines to each school district, charter school,
14 and renaissance school in the State. The guidelines shall include
15 information concerning:

16 (1) the student application procedure for admittance into the
17 pilot program that includes the eligibility criteria required pursuant
18 to section 5 of this act;

19 (2) the subject matter to be included as part of the supplemental
20 learning assistance;

21 (3) the type of work that may be performed as part of a career-
22 building employment opportunity, which shall include, but need not
23 be limited to, providing tutoring services to students throughout the
24 State. A student that seeks to obtain a career-building employment
25 opportunity that involves providing tutoring services to students
26 throughout the State shall be in good academic standing while
27 enrolled in the pilot program;

28 (4) the agencies and entities with which a student may engage in
29 career-building employment opportunities;

30 (5) performance standards related to the career-building
31 employment opportunities, including the total number of hours of
32 employment a student may perform as part of the pilot program;

33 (6) the total stipend amount to be provided to a student and the
34 process by which the stipend shall be paid to a student over the
35 course of the pilot program. Such stipend amount shall be based
36 upon student age and shall be at a rate of not less than the State
37 minimum wage rate as of January 1 of each year in which the pilot
38 program is offered; and

39 (7) any other information the Commissioner of Education, in
40 consultation with the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce
41 Development, deems necessary.

42 c. (1) The Department of Education, in consultation with the
43 Department of Labor and Workforce Development, shall establish
44 partnerships with private and governmental agencies and entities in
45 order to assist students in obtaining career-building employment
46 opportunities under the pilot program.

47 (2) The Department of Education shall establish and maintain a
48 list of the agencies and entities with which the department has
49 partnered pursuant to the provisions of paragraph (1) of this

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1 subsection. The Departments of Education and Labor and
2 Workforce Development shall make the list publicly available on
3 the departments' Internet websites.

4 (3) A student may seek a career-building employment
5 opportunity with an agency or entity not contained on the list
6 established pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection. A student
7 seeking a career-building employment opportunity pursuant to the
8 provisions of this paragraph shall obtain the approval of the
9 principal or other chief administrative officer of the school in which
10 the student is enrolled prior to beginning any work under the pilot
11 program.

12
13 4. A school district, charter school, or renaissance school that
14 wishes to participate in the pilot program shall submit
15 documentation to the Department of Education alerting the
16 department of the school district's, charter school's, or renaissance
17 school's intent to participate in the pilot program. The
18 documentation shall include the following:

19 a. the number of students who applied to participate in the
20 program;

21 b. the subject matter of the instruction to be provided to
22 students as part of the supplemental learning assistance;

23 c. a list of agencies and entities with which participating
24 students will engage in career-building employment opportunities;
25 and

26 d. any other documentation the Commissioner of Education
27 deems necessary.

28
29 5. To be eligible to participate in the pilot program, a student
30 shall submit documentation verifying the student:

31 a. is a resident of New Jersey;

32 b. has reached the minimum age for employment in the State;
33 and

34 c. is enrolled in a school district, charter school, or renaissance
35 school in the State.

36
37 6. The stipend provided to students pursuant to the provisions
38 of this act shall, to the extent permitted by federal law, be paid from
39 the monies received by the State or a school district under the
40 federal "Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES)
41 Act," Pub.L.116-136, the federal "Coronavirus Response and Relief
42 Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, 2021," Pub.L.116-260,
43 the federal "American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act," Pub.L.117-2, or
44 any other federal funding provided to address the impact of the
45 COVID-19 pandemic as it becomes available.

46
47 7. Two years following the establishment of the pilot program,
48 the Commissioner of Education shall submit a report to the
49 Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991,

1 c.164 (C.52:14-19.1). The report shall contain information on the
2 implementation of the pilot program and the commissioner's
3 recommendation on the advisability of continuing or expanding the
4 program.

5
6 8. a. A school district, charter school, or renaissance school
7 that offers supplemental learning assistance to students during
8 summer vacation pursuant to the provisions of this act, shall not be
9 considered in-session for purposes of P.L.1940, c.153 (C.34:2-21.1
10 et. seq.).

11 b. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 8 of P.L.1940,
12 c.153 (C.34:2-21.8), section 9 of P.L.1940, c.153 (C.34:2-21.9),
13 section 10 of P.L.1940, c.153 (C.34:2-21.10), or any other law, rule,
14 or regulation to the contrary, for purposes of participation in the
15 pilot program established pursuant to section 3 of this act, the
16 issuing officer of a school district may, for a student required to
17 obtain an employment certificate, age certificate, or special permit
18 pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1940, c.153 (C.34:2-21.1 et seq.)
19 in order to obtain employment in the State, issue an employment
20 certificate, age certificate, or special permit to a student or parent,
21 as applicable, who submits all paperwork required pursuant to the
22 provisions of P.L.1940, c.153 (C.34:2-21.1 et seq.) through the mail
23 or electronically.

24
25 9. This act shall take effect immediately.

26

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28 STATEMENT

29

30 This bill establishes the "Summer Earn and Learn Pilot Program"
31 in the Department of Education. The purpose of the pilot program
32 is to ensure that school districts, charter schools, and renaissance
33 schools have the ability to provide students access to supplemental
34 learning assistance and paid career-building employment
35 opportunities.

36 Under the bill, the Department of Education (DOE), in
37 consultation with the Department of Labor and Workforce
38 Development (DOLWD) will develop, and distribute to each school
39 district, charter school, and renaissance school in the State, program
40 guidelines that include, but are not limited to: (1) a student
41 application procedure; (2) the subject matter to be included as part
42 of the supplemental learning assistance; (3) the type of work that
43 may be performed as part of a career-building employment
44 opportunity; (4) the agencies and entities with which a student may
45 engage in career-building employment opportunities; (5) career-
46 building employment opportunity related performance standards;
47 and (6) total stipend amounts.

48 The bill requires the DOE, in consultation with the DOLWD, to
49 establish partnerships with private and governmental agencies and

1 entities in order to assist students in obtaining career-building
2 employment opportunities. The DOE will establish and maintain a
3 list of these partnerships, which list will be posted on the DOE's
4 and DOLWD's Internet websites. A student can obtain a career-
5 building employment opportunity with an agency or entity not
6 contained on the list, but is required to obtain the approval of the
7 principal or other chief administrative officer of the school in which
8 the student is enrolled prior to beginning any work with such an
9 agency or entity.

10 Under the bill, a school district, charter school, or renaissance
11 school that wishes to participate in the pilot program must submit
12 documentation to the DOE alerting the department of the school
13 district's, charter school's, or renaissance school's intent to
14 participate in the pilot program. To be eligible to participate in the
15 pilot program, a student must: (1) be a resident of New Jersey, (2)
16 have reached the minimum age for employment under the laws of
17 the State, and (3) be enrolled in a school district, charter school, or
18 renaissance school in the State.

19 The bill requires, to the extent permitted by federal law, that the
20 stipends provided pursuant to the provisions of the bill be paid from
21 monies received by the State or a school district, under the federal
22 "Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act,"
23 the federal "Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental
24 Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, 2021," the federal "American Rescue
25 Plan (ARP) Act," or any other federal funding provided to address
26 the impact of the coronavirus pandemic as it becomes available.

27 Under the bill, two years following the implementation of the
28 pilot program, the Commissioner of Education must submit a report
29 to the Governor and to the Legislature on the implementation of the
30 pilot program and include information on the commissioner's
31 recommendation as to the advisability of continuing or expanding
32 the program.

33 The bill provides that a school district, charter school, or
34 renaissance school that offers supplemental learning assistance to
35 students during summer vacation pursuant to the provisions of the
36 bill is not considered in-session for purposes of certain areas of
37 current law governing child labor. The bill also provides that, for a
38 student required to obtain an employment certificate, age certificate,
39 or special permit in order to obtain employment in the State, the
40 issuing officer of a school district may, for purposes of participation
41 in the pilot program established under the bill, issue the
42 employment certificate, age certificate, or special permit to a
43 student or parent, as applicable, when the documentation needed for
44 such a certificate or permit is submitted through the mail or
45 electronically.