

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5576

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 22, 2023

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5576.

This bill establishes the Office of Community Schools in the Department of Education. The purpose of the office is to address student needs through community-based educational, developmental, family, health, and other comprehensive services.

Under the bill, the Commissioner of Education is to establish the office, which is to consist of individuals qualified by training and experience related to community-based learning.

The duties of the office include, but are not limited to: (1) providing training and support for public schools interested in adopting community school strategies; (2) increasing the knowledge and skills of school staff and community partners to aid in the implementation, management, and sustainability of community schools; (3) providing grants to public schools for the purposes of adopting community school strategies; (4) providing a list of school districts, renaissance schools, and charter schools that have established community schools, to be published on the department's Internet website; (5) increasing Statewide capacity to support effective community school strategies; and (6) identifying and evaluating community schools' needs in order to provide tailored technical assistance and professional development opportunities

The bill also requires the office to submit an annual report to the Governor and to the Legislature that includes a summary of the services provided. The bill appropriates \$10 million to the department to establish the office.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that this bill would result in a State expenditure increase of up to \$10 million in the first year the bill is in effect and that the continued cost to maintain the Office of Community Schools during subsequent years is indeterminate.

The bill provides a \$10 million appropriation to the Department of Education, of which \$2 million will be appropriated from the General Fund and \$8 million, to the extent permitted by federal law, will be appropriated from funds allocated to the State from the State's flexible \$6.24 billion federal Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund grant under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.