

# SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE, No. 724

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 7, 2022

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 724.

This bill directs the Commissioner of Education to establish a three-year pilot program that will provide general education students who are not reading at grade level by the end of the second grade in selected school districts with summer school instruction. The commissioner, in consultation with recognized experts in reading literacy will identify appropriate reading level assessment tools that a school district may use to evaluate student reading levels for the purposes of determining which students will receive summer school instruction under the program.

A school district that seeks to participate in the program will submit an application to the commissioner that includes, but is not limited to: (1) the number of elementary schools in the district; (2) the number of second grade students enrolled in each elementary school within the district; (3) information on summer school instruction provided by the elementary schools in the district during the previous three years; and (4) the number of elementary school students who enrolled in summer school instruction during the previous three years.

Under the bill, the commissioner will select two school districts in each of the northern, central, and southern regions of the State and attempt to seek a cross section of school districts from urban, suburban, and rural areas of the State. At the conclusion of the three-year pilot program, the commissioner will submit a report to the Governor and Legislature evaluating the effectiveness of the program and providing recommendations on the feasibility of implementing the program on a Statewide basis.

The bill appropriates \$1 million from the General Fund to the Department of Education to establish and implement the pilot program.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.