

SENATE, No. 1536

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
212th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 2, 2006

Sponsored by:

Senator WAYNE R. BRYANT

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

SYNOPSIS

Requires certain inmates to participate in educational program.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



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1 AN ACT concerning education programs for inmates and
2 supplementing Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

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

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7 1. a. As used in this act, "eligible inmate" means an inmate who
8 has received an assessment pursuant to subsection b. of this section
9 and whom the commissioner has determined would benefit from
10 participating in one of the educational programs set forth in section
11 2 of this act.

12 b. The commissioner shall assess each inmate's level of
13 educational achievement and basic skills in order to determine
14 whether the inmate could benefit from participating in an education
15 program pursuant to section 2 of this act.

16 c. The commissioner shall develop an implementation plan that
17 requires, within a five year period, all eligible inmates to participate
18 in an educational program, with inmates who are within three years
19 of a parole eligibility date initially being selected to participate in a
20 program.

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22 2. The commissioner may require the inmate to participate in
23 one of the following programs:

24 a. A curriculum which, depending upon the term of
25 imprisonment, shall either enable the inmate to attain a level of
26 educational achievement comparable to high school graduation and
27 prepare him to secure the high school equivalency certificate that
28 may be obtained through the Department of Education or enable
29 him to progress toward that level of achievement;

30 b. A vocational skills training program which is designed to
31 improve the inmate's basic vocational skills or develop specialized
32 labor skills, depending upon the inmate's vocational training and
33 skills and term of imprisonment; or

34 c. A curriculum which, depending upon the term of
35 imprisonment and level of education previously achieved by the
36 inmate, shall enable the inmate to attain a level of educational
37 achievement comparable to an associate's degree.

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39 3. If an inmate is deemed eligible to participate in an education
40 program pursuant to section 1 of this act but does not satisfactorily
41 participate, the inmate's future parole eligibility date shall not be
42 reduced by commutation time for good behavior pursuant to
43 R.S.30:4-140 or credits for diligent application to work and other
44 institutional assignments pursuant to R.S.30:4-92.

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46 4. In accordance with the provisions of the "Administrative
47 Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the
48 Commissioner of Corrections, in consultation with the

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1 Commissioner of Education, shall promulgate rules and regulations
2 to effectuate the purposes of this act.

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4 5. This act shall take effect on the first day of the sixth month
5 after enactment; provided however, the Commissioner of
6 Corrections may take any anticipatory action prior to the effective
7 date necessary to implement its provisions.

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STATEMENT

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12 Under the provisions of this bill, the Commissioner of
13 Corrections would require certain eligible inmates to participate in
14 an educational program. The bill requires the commissioner to
15 develop an implementation plan that requires, within a five year
16 period, all eligible inmates to participate in an educational program,
17 with inmates who are within three years of a parole eligibility date
18 initially being selected to participate in a program.

19 The bill requires the commissioner to assess an inmate's basic
20 skills and level of educational achievement in order to determine
21 whether the inmate could benefit from participating in an education
22 program. The bill authorizes the commissioner to require the inmate
23 to progress toward completing an educational requirement. The
24 inmate would have the opportunity to attain a General Equivalency
25 Diploma (GED), an associate's degree, or to acquire basic
26 vocational skills or develop specialized ones.

27 An eligible inmate who does not satisfactorily participate in the
28 educational program required pursuant to the bill's provisions would
29 not receive commutation time or work credits.

30 The Commissioner of Corrections, in consultation with the
31 Commissioner of Education, would promulgate rules and
32 regulations governing the educational programs.