



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: January 21, 2021
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter and Renaissance School Project Leads, Nonpublic School Administrators
From: Lisa J. Gleason, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Academics and Performance

Bridge Year Pilot Program

On June 26, 2020, Governor Murphy signed into law [P.L. 2020 c. 41](#), establishing the Bridge Year Pilot Program. The purpose of this program is to provide students in the graduating classes of 2021 and 2022 with the opportunity to offset disruptions to learning opportunities and participation in extracurricular activities that might have resulted from the closure of schools to in-person instruction in Spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the Bridge Year Pilot Program, certain students in the classes of 2021 or 2022 who have met all their state and local graduation requirements may defer graduation from high school for one year to participate in an additional year of academic courses and extracurricular activities immediately following their senior year. This additional year will be known as the "Bridge Year." During the student's Bridge Year, the student must remain enrolled in the high school they attended as a junior.

Key steps/actions

- Each public high school in a school district must designate a school staff member as a Bridge Year Liaison to serve as the school's central point of contact for students interested in pursuing a Bridge Year.
- To participate in a Bridge Year, eligible students must notify their host high school's Bridge Year Liaison of their intent to participate by **February 15** of their senior year.

Please see the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) [Bridge Year webpage](#) for additional information.

Contact information

Please email any questions that you may have regarding the implementation of the Bridge Year legislation to bridgeyear@doe.nj.gov. The NJDOE shortly intends to release supplemental guidance to address additional frequently asked questions.

c: Members, State Board of Education
Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D., Acting Commissioner of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group