

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 4525

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 23, 2023

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments, Assembly Bill No. 4525 (1R).

As amended, this bill permits teacher candidates who meet all criteria for a certificate of eligibility (CE), other than the requirement to meet certain minimum testing thresholds Praxis Core, to receive an alternative certificate of eligibility. Upon completion of four years of continuous employment using an alternative certificate, the teacher is eligible to receive a standard certificate, provided that the teacher meets all applicable requirements for the standard certificate. The holder of an alternative certificate is able to use time employed using the certificate towards tenure requirements.

The amended bill directs the State Board of Education to authorize the issuance of an alternative certificate of eligibility to a teacher candidate who meets all other eligibility requirements to receive a certificate of eligibility, except for the requirement to achieve a minimum score on a Commissioner of Education-approved test of basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills and all other alternative basic skills requirements or exceptions.

Under the amended bill, the holder of an alternative certificate of eligibility is eligible to receive a standard certificate from the State Board of Education upon completion of four years of continuous employment as a teacher in a public school or an approved private school for students with disabilities.

The amended bill further provides that a teaching staff member who receives an alternative certificate pursuant to the bill's provisions is able to apply employment accrued while using the alternative certificate towards tenure eligibility in the same manner as a teaching staff member who holds a standard teaching certificate. The bill prohibits the imposition of additional qualifications towards the acquisition of tenure on holders of alternative certificates.

Under current State Board of Education regulations, a candidate applying to become a teacher may be issued a CEAS under the traditional route to teacher certification or a CE under the alternate route to teacher certification. The CEAS and CE, issued by the State

Board of Examiners, authorize an individual to seek and accept employment as a teacher in New Jersey public schools.

As amended and reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 1533 (3R), also amended and reported by the committee on this same date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to remove all references to certificates of eligibility with advanced standing, including the requirement that the State Board of Education authorize the issuance of an alternative certificate of eligibility with advance standing to a teacher candidate who meets all other eligibility requirements except for certain testing requirements. The committee also amended the bill to remove the provision that a teacher candidate may be issued an alternative certificate of eligibility if the candidate meets all other requirements except for a minimum passing score on an appropriate test of subject matter knowledge.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill is not certified as requiring a fiscal note.