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Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblyman Sauickie, Assemblywomen Swain and Mosquera

SYNOPSIS
Establishes teacher certification route for candidates with Montessori teaching credentials.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As reported by the Assembly State and Local Government Committee on January 4, 2024, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/8/2024)
AN ACT concerning teacher certification and supplementing chapter 26 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. a. As used in this section,"Certificate of eligibility" means a certificate with lifetime validity issued by the State Board of Examiners to candidates who meet degree, academic, and applicable test requirements for teacher certification.

"Provisional certificate" means a certificate issued by the State Board of Examiners to candidates who hold either a certificate of eligibility or a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing and are employed as part of a State-approved district training program or residency leading to standard certification.

"Standard instructional certificate" means a permanent certificate issued to a person who has met all teacher certification requirements.

b. The State Board of Education shall authorize a route to teacher certification for candidates seeking a certificate of eligibility with a preschool through grade three endorsement or an elementary school (kindergarten through grade six) endorsement who possess a Montessori teaching credential. To be eligible for this route to teacher certification, a candidate shall:

(1) hold a Montessori teaching credential issued by the American Montessori Society, the Association Montessori Internationale, or an institution accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education;

(2) hold a bachelor’s degree in any field from an accredited institution of higher education; and

(3) meet the applicable test requirements for a certificate of eligibility.

In order to obtain a provisional or standard instructional certificate, a candidate seeking a certificate of eligibility with a preschool through grade three endorsement or an elementary school (kindergarten through grade six) endorsement who meets the criteria established pursuant to this section shall not be required to complete:

(1) 50 hours of pre-professional experience or credits of preschool through grade three pedagogy at a Department of Education-approved institution of higher education;

(2) 350 hours of credits or coursework after employment; or

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

Senate floor amendments adopted June 20, 2023.

Assembly ASL committee amendments adopted January 4, 2024.
(3) 24 credits after employment.

c. The State Board of Examiners shall issue a certificate of eligibility to a candidate who meets the criteria established pursuant to this section. A candidate eligible for a certificate of eligibility pursuant to this section shall not be required to complete a State approved educator preparation program, but shall be required to complete a Montessori teacher preparation program that:

(1) is affiliated with the American Montessori Society, the Association Montessori Internationale, or is accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education; and

(2) requires a minimum of 200 academic hours and 400 practicum hours.

d. The State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), necessary to effectuate the provisions of this section.

2. The Department of Education shall conduct a study on the route to teacher certification for candidates with a Montessori teaching credential established pursuant to subsection b. of section 1 of this act. In conducting the study, the department shall collect, at a minimum information on the:

a. number of candidates with a Montessori teaching credential issued a certification through the route; and

b. Montessori program the candidate completed in order to be eligible for the certification route.

3. A board of education shall report annually to the Commissioner of Education, for a period of five years after the effective date of this act, or as long as the commissioner deems necessary, the number of teachers hired by the board who possess a Montessori teaching credential and a certificate of eligibility with a preschool through grade three endorsement or an elementary school (kindergarten through grade six) endorsement established pursuant to subsection b. of section 1 of this act. This act shall take effect immediately.