

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5291

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 9, 2021

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5291 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill requires each educator preparation program to annually report to the Department of Education on the first-time and overall test pass rates of candidates for an instructional certificate, for each test required for instructional certification. Under the bill, each educator preparation program must:

- annually publish the first-time and overall test pass rates of its students on its website;
- annually disseminate information to its students on the availability of fee waivers for tests required for instructional certification; and
- include in its tuition and fees bill an optional lab fee that a student may opt to pay and which will be applied towards the cost of the student completing the tests required for instructional certification.

The bill also requires the department to annually compile the test pass rates of candidates for an instructional certificate submitted pursuant to the bill's provisions into a comparative profile of all educator preparation programs. The profile must be made available for public inspection on the department's website.

The bill further requires that the test pass rates submitted to the department pursuant to the bill's provisions be included within the documentation required for the Commissioner of Education's periodic review of educator preparation programs.

Finally, the bill requires that any policy or contract entered into after the effective date of the bill by the State, or any political subdivision thereof, regarding a test required for instructional certification must provide for the dissemination of fee waivers to low-income students.

As amended and reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 2830 (1R), which was also amended and reported by the committee on this same date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to require that each educator preparation program include in its tuition and fees bill an optional lab

fee that a student may opt to pay and which will be applied towards the cost of the student completing the tests required for instructional certification. The committee also amended the bill to remove the requirement that testing fees for a student preparing for employment as an educator in a subject area in which there is a teacher shortage be paid for by an educator preparation program. The committee further amended the bill to require that any policy or contract entered into after the bill's effective date by the State, or any political subdivision thereof, regarding a test required for instructional certification must provide for the dissemination of fee waivers to low-income students. Lastly, the committee amended the bill to provide definitions of "low income student" and "annual adjusted gross income."