

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5295

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 17, 2021

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5295 with committee amendments.

State Board of Education regulations at N.J.A.C.6A:9B-7.3 require a candidate for a substitute teacher credential to have at least 60 semester-hour credits completed at a regionally accredited institution of higher education at the time of applying for the substitute credential. As amended, this bill allows a candidate for a substitute teacher credential who is enrolled in a regionally accredited institution of higher education and applying between the effective date of the bill and June 30, 2023, to have a minimum of 30 semester-hour credits completed at the institution at the time of applying for the substitute credential. The candidate would also be required to be at least 20 years of age. Nothing in the bill would be construed to restrict school districts from establishing additional criteria for the employment of substitute teachers.

The bill also requires the Commissioner of Education to examine issues and develop recommendations as to whether the application timeline should be extended to allow candidates for a substitute teacher credential to continue presenting a minimum of 30 semester-hour credits after June 30, 2023. The commissioner would then issue a final report of findings and recommendations to the Governor, Legislature, and State Board of Education.

In addition, this bill also amends existing law to provide that the position of a teacher who is absent for an extended time period will not be filled by one or more individuals holding a substitute credential for more than 20 school days. The bill further amends existing law to provide that, during a public health emergency declared by the Governor, a vacant or absent position may be filled by a holder of a substitute credential for up to 40 school days and for an additional 20 school days upon written application to the Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee, demonstrating the district's inability to hire an appropriately certified teacher within the 40-day time limit and that the individuals are periodically monitored and supported by the credential holder's supervisor.

This bill also amends existing law to provide that the position of a teacher who is absent for an extended time period would not be filled

in any school year by one or more individuals employed as substitute teachers and holding a certificate of eligibility or a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing issued by the State Board of Examiners and working in an area not authorized by their credentials for more than 20 school days. The bill further amends existing law to provide that, during a public health emergency declared by the Governor, a vacant or absent position may be filled by a holder of a certificate of eligibility or a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing and working in an area not authorized by their credentials for up to 40 school days and for an additional 20 school days upon written application to the Commissioner of Education demonstrating the district's inability to hire an appropriately certified teacher within the 40-day time limit and that the individuals are periodically monitored and supported by the credential holder's supervisor.

As amended and reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 2832 (2R), which was reported by the committee on this date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- provide that a candidate for a substitute teacher credential is required to present a minimum of 30 semester-hour credits completed at a regionally accredited institution of higher education if applying for the credential between the effective date of the bill and June 30, 2023;
- specify that a candidate applying for a substitute teacher credential under this bill be at least 20 years of age;
- clarify that nothing in this bill would be construed to restrict school districts from establishing additional criteria for the employment of substitute teachers;
- require the Commissioner of Education to examine issues and develop recommendations as to whether the timeline established under this bill should be extended to allow candidates for a substitute teacher credential to continue presenting a minimum of 30 semester-hour credits after June 30, 2023;
- require the commissioner to issue a final report of findings and recommendations to the Governor, Legislature, and State Board of Education no later than one year after the application period expires on June 30, 2023;
- amend existing law to provide that the position of a teacher who is absent for an extended time period shall not be filled in any school year by one or more individuals holding a substitute credential for more than 20 total school days;
- amend existing law to provide that , during a public health emergency declared by the Governor, a vacant or absent position may be filled by a holder of a substitute credential

for up to 40 school days and for an additional 20 school days upon written application to the Commissioner of Education demonstrating the district's inability to hire an appropriately certified teacher within the 40-day time limit and that the individuals are periodically monitored and supported by the credential holder's supervisor;

- amends existing law to provide that the position of a teacher who is absent for an extended time period would not be filled in any school year by one or more individuals employed as substitute teachers and holding a certificate of eligibility or a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing issued by the State Board of Examiners and working in an area not authorized by their credentials for more than 20 school days; and
- amends existing law to provide that, during a public health emergency declared by the Governor, a vacant or absent position may be filled by a holder of a certificate of eligibility or a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing and working in an area not authorized by their credentials for up to 40 school days and for an additional 20 school days upon written application to the Commissioner of Education demonstrating the district's inability to hire an appropriately certified teacher within the 40-day time limit and that the individuals are periodically monitored and supported by the credential holder's supervisor.