

SENATE BILL NO. 2834

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 2834 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

Senate Bill No. 2834 provides that, beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, all candidates for teaching certification who have completed an educator preparation program at a Commissioner of Education-approved educator preparation program provider must have satisfactorily completed a course or training on culturally responsive teaching. The bill defines "culturally responsive teaching" as a pedagogy that: 1) recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning; and 2) uses research-based teaching strategies that make meaningful connections between what students learn in school and their cultures, languages, and experiences.

The bill further requires that all Commissioner of Education-approved educator preparation program providers review and update their educator preparation programs to implement the bill's requirements and submit the revisions to the Department of Education for approval.

I applaud and support the Legislature's efforts to ensure that the educator workforce is equipped to meet the needs of New Jersey's diverse student population. Research has shown that culturally responsive teaching results in improved student outcomes, from attendance to grade point average to classroom behavior. However, the development, Department of Education approval, deployment, and completion of culturally responsive teaching training programs necessarily take time. The bill presently requires all teacher candidates who have completed an educator preparation program to complete culturally responsive

teaching training, beginning with the 2021-2022 school year. Given that the 2021-2022 school year is already several months underway, such a mandate would exacerbate the current teacher shortage by requiring teacher candidates that are otherwise ready to enter the classroom to instead return to educator preparation programs to complete culturally responsive training programs that, at this time, have yet to be developed.

Therefore, I am recommending revising the bill to require completion of culturally responsive teaching training beginning with the 2022-2023 school year rather than the 2021-2022 school year. This revision preserves the laudable goals of the bill without negatively impacting the existing teacher certification candidate pool.

Thus, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 2834 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 2, Section 1, Line 8:

Delete "2021-2022" and insert "2022-2023"

[seal]

Respectfully,

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Parimal Garg

Chief Counsel to the Governor