

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5421

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 11, 2023

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No 5421.

This bill directs the State Board of Education to authorize the issuance of new endorsements in the areas of special education, elementary and middle school education, and bilingual and bicultural education.

The bill directs the State Board of Education to authorize the issuance of a Students with Disabilities Preschool through Grade 12 endorsement to the instructional certificate. The endorsement authorizes the holder to teach students with disabilities, with the exception of students who are blind or visually impaired or deaf or hard of hearing, in all public schools and in all grade levels.

Under the bill, the holder of a Students with Disabilities Preschool through Grade 12 endorsement may provide consultative services and supportive resource programs to students with disabilities in general education programs. The bill further provides that the holder of a current students with disabilities endorsement issued administratively prior to the bill's effective date may be granted the new endorsement upon application to the board. Under current law, special education teachers may teach students classified with disabilities in only the grade levels specified on their other endorsements.

The bill directs the State Board of Education to authorize the issuance of a Kindergarten through Grade 8 endorsement to the instructional certificate. The endorsement will permit the holder to teach:

- students in all public schools in grades kindergarten through six; and
- the specialty subjects on the face of the certificate to students in grades seven and eight in all public schools.

Under current law, numerous endorsements limit the holder to teaching either only to students in elementary level grades or only to students in middle school grades.

Finally, the bill authorizes the State Board of Education to issue a Bilingual and Bicultural Preschool through Grade 12 endorsement to the instructional certificate. The endorsement will authorize the holder to teach bilingual and bicultural education in all public schools and in all grade levels. Under the bill, a candidate for the

endorsement is required to demonstrate oral and writing competence in English and the target language; complete an approved bilingual and bicultural education program; and meet any other requirements established by the board. Under current law, candidates for the Bilingual and Bicultural endorsement are required to have an additional endorsement for subject or grade level to be taught.