

ASSEMBLY REGULATED PROFESSIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4954

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 10, 2026

The Assembly Regulated Professions Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4954.

This bill modifies certain provisions of law concerning special education and related services in connection with speech-language services.

This bill removes statutory references to speech correctionist and replaces those references with speech-language specialist or speech-language pathologist. The bill also replaces reference to certain expired State Board of Education regulations concerning special education with general references to State board regulations concerning special education.

Under current law, the classification of a child with a communication impairment is required to be made by the basic child study team and an approved speech-language specialist or speech-language pathologist, without child study consultation. This bill requires child study team consultation for the classification of these students. The bill also requires a basic child study team to include a speech-language specialist for students with a classification of preschool child with a disability, communication impairment, or eligible for speech-language services.

Finally, the bill amends current law to permit a board of education to contract with a private agency or clinic approved by the Department of Education for speech-language services to supplement existing district staff for a temporary vacancy only when a school is unable to hire sufficient staff to provide these services.