

## CHAPTER 51

**AN ACT** establishing a pilot program in the Department of Education to address the shortage of teachers in mathematics and science.

**BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:
  - a. Economic development focused on twenty-first century skills in areas related to mathematics and the sciences is critically important to the future of the State;
  - b. Documented shortages of mathematics and science teachers exist in New Jersey and this shortage will negatively impact the State's efforts to provide a work force well prepared in such fields as engineering, research, and computer technology;
  - c. Some New Jersey residents with work-related backgrounds in science or mathematics have been displaced due to the current economic environment and require assistance and retraining to re-enter the job market; and
  - d. It would be in the State's interest to address the shortage of teachers of mathematics and the sciences in part through retraining of displaced workers who possess appropriate skills and background in these subject areas.
  
2.
  - a. In accordance with the provisions of subsections b. and c. of this section, the Commissioner of Education shall establish a pilot program to recruit and issue teaching certificates to individuals with mathematics or science skills and work-related backgrounds demonstrating a requisite level of proficiency in and utilization of such skills. The program shall focus on displaced New Jersey workers, and certificated teaching staff members authorized to work in New Jersey public schools who do not currently have a subject area endorsement in mathematics or in the sciences.
  - b. Under the pilot program, and notwithstanding any provision of law or regulation to the contrary, the State Board of Examiners shall issue a certificate of eligibility to an individual who:
    - (1) holds a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
    - (2) passes the appropriate State test of subject matter knowledge; and
    - (3) meets such other criteria as the commissioner shall set forth in regulation. The commissioner shall have the authority under the pilot program to establish different criteria for certification based on factors such as the subject area in which the individual intends to teach and whether or not the individual participating in the program currently holds a teaching certificate.
  - c. In the case of a certificated teaching staff member who participates in the pilot program, the State Board of Examiners shall issue a subject area endorsement in mathematics or science, as appropriate, upon successful completion of the program.
  - d. The commissioner shall not implement the pilot program for persons other than displaced workers until the State Treasurer certifies to the Joint Budget Oversight Committee that sufficient non-State revenue is available to fully support the cost of the participation of those persons in the program. In the case of displaced workers, the commissioner shall implement the program in accordance with the effective date of this act.
  
3. Notwithstanding any provision of P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) to the contrary, the Commissioner of Education may adopt, immediately upon filing with the Office of Administrative Law, such rules and regulations as the commissioner deems necessary to

effectuate the purposes of this act which shall be effective for a period not to exceed 18 months following the effective date of this act.

4. This act shall take effect two months following the date of enactment, but the Commissioner of Education may take such anticipatory administrative actions in advance thereof as shall be necessary for the implementation of this act; and this act shall expire 18 months after the effective date.

Approved May 4, 2009.