



photo: view of NJ Trenton DOM

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Paving New Career Pathway in Education for New Jersey Veterans

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TRENTON – Governor Murphy today signed [S2764/A4361](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S3000/2764_R1.PDF) (https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S3000/2764_R1.PDF) to establish a four-year “VETeach Pilot Program” within the Department of Education. The pilot program aims to facilitate the teacher certification of veterans to address the high rate of unemployment amongst veterans while ensuring a high-quality teacher workforce. Under the bill, up to four public universities will be selected to enroll veterans of the United States Armed Forces who served on or after September 11, 2001 in a 36-month teacher preparation program.

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“The legislation I am signing today will not only create a new avenue to gainful employment for the men and women who have made great sacrifices in service to our country and our state, but it will also promote the recruitment of teachers into New Jersey’s public schools,” **said Governor Murphy**. “By encouraging veterans to enter the teacher workforce and supporting them through the certification process, we can enhance the learning experience of our students by staffing our classrooms with qualified educators from our state’s veterans community.”

“Our veterans bring a wealth of experience, leadership, and resilience acquired through military service,” **said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education**. “The VETeach Pilot Program not only recognizes the unique contributions of veterans, but also harnesses their skills to address the ongoing need for passionate and dedicated educators. This program underscores the commitment to supporting our veterans while simultaneously strengthening our education system with the diverse talents they bring to the classroom.”

“The establishment of the VETeach Pilot Program is a win for all of New Jersey. This initiative provides an incentive for our Veterans to answer the call by giving them the opportunity to showcase their talents and produce a positive impact in the lives of our youth,” **said Brig. Gen. Lisa J. Hou, D.O., Commissioner of The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and The Adjutant General of New Jersey**. “By providing education, certification, and employment opportunities for our Veterans, this program helps them contribute from their previous experiences and virtues of service, honor, teamwork and dedication to all the communities in need of educators and the State of New Jersey.”

“As a proud veteran and former educator, I celebrate the VETeach pilot program which will empower veterans to embark on teaching careers across New Jersey. This initiative not only honors our service members but enriches our education system and helps our students. I thank Governor Murphy and our tremendous legislative team of Senator Nellie Pou and Assemblymembers Benjie Wimberly and Shavonda Sumter for helping make this program possible. It’s a great day for our students, our veterans, and our state,” **said U.S. Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr.**

“A major priority for me on the federal level is creating new economic opportunities for New Jersey families, and for our nation’s veterans. The transition from active duty to civilian life can be difficult. But expanding access to job training programs for service members can make a real difference in their lives long-term. It is wonderful to see New Jersey taking action on the state level to not only help our veterans but also strengthen our education workforce and improve our already leading public school system,” **said Navy veteran and Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill**.

The legislation was sponsored by Senators Troy Singleton and James Beach, former Assemblyman Dan Benson, and Assemblymembers Shama Haider and Raj Mukherji.

“As New Jersey and the rest of the country continue to face educator shortages, we must look for innovative ways to broaden our alternative route options,” **said Senator Troy Singleton**. “Many veterans can bring a unique perspective to the classroom. This legislation will not only address the teacher shortage, but will benefit students and the veteran community alike.”

“Veterans often struggle to find their footing when they return from service and this program will provide them with a



concrete pathway to a meaningful career," **said Senator James Beach**. "I look forward to seeing the impact it has on both our veterans and our students who have the privilege of learning from them."

"This bill not only helps our schools fill vacancies with quality talent but ensures a smooth transition for our veterans into civilian life," **said former Assemblyman Dan Benson**. "Encouraging veterans to enroll helps us ensure that our students get even more opportunities to learn about diverse experiences and backgrounds present in our society."

"The pilot program and competitive bidding process demonstrates our commitment to helping veterans receive the best education possible so they can excel in their role as teachers," **said Assemblywoman Shama Haider**. "These are men and women who have already dedicated their time to better the future of our country and now they are bringing that dedication to our children, helping shape a better future for them."

"Given the criticality of our teacher shortage, which is projected to intensify in the coming years, this bill presents an opportunity to leverage the skills and experience of our qualified veteran workforce by expediting their transition into teaching roles," **said Assemblyman Raj Mukherji, a former Sergeant in the U.S. Marines**. "This legislation will streamline the path to teacher preparation, certification, and employment, enabling our veterans to extend their service commitment and continue to shape our future by educating the children they once risked their lives to protect."

"Thank you, Governor Murphy, for your continued commitment to our nation's heroes. By signing S2764 into law, you not only support veterans in obtaining higher education and employment but also have the potential to enhance diversity in the teaching profession. It's a positive step towards addressing critical needs in education and supporting those who have served our country. Once again, the Garden State leads the way in welcoming home veterans, as we not only plant the seed but ensure continued growth for veterans," **said Luddie H. Austin, Legislative Director at the Department of NJ VFW**.

Governor Phil Murphy

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