

January 10, 2022

SENATE BILL NO. 4074

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am herewith returning Senate Bill No. 4074 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

Senate Bill No. 4074 eliminates the requirement that teaching candidates pass a test that assesses basic skills in mathematics, reading, and writing as a condition of eligibility for a standard instructional certificate in a career and technical education ("CTE") endorsement. Under this bill, provisional CTE teacher candidates will be permitted to demonstrate basic skills proficiency through an alternate measure approved by the Department of Education ("Department") instead of taking the basic skills test. The bill defines "alternate measure" as any demonstration of basic skills proficiency, other than a test, that is approved by the Department, including, but not limited to, work product portfolios, obtainment of an occupational license or certification, or an industry certificate or registration.

Under current State Board of Education regulations, a provisional CTE teacher candidate seeking a standard instructional certificate in a CTE endorsement is required to demonstrate basic skills proficiency in mathematics, reading, and writing. The Department currently uses the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators test as the sole measure of basic skills proficiency.

Quite often, CTE teacher candidates are individuals who have had successful careers in a CTE profession and likely have not taken a written assessment of basic skills in many years. Despite possessing expertise in their field that would be of great value to students, the basic skills test often stands as an unnecessary barrier for these individuals in their pursuit of a standard certificate.

I applaud and support the Legislature's efforts to simplify the pathway for CTE educators to transition from the field into the classroom. These individuals possess unique experiences and

knowledge that can prove invaluable to students on the path to college and a career. Expediting the certification of these individuals will also serve to address the educator shortage which has been exacerbated during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

However, the identification and the Department approval of appropriate alternative measures as prescribed by the bill will necessarily take time. As drafted, the bill would take effect immediately, meaning that individuals would be eligible for standard certificates through the alternate measure route before such alternative measures can be identified and approved by the Department.

In order to give the Department sufficient time to identify appropriate alternate measures to demonstrate candidate proficiency, I am recommending revisions to make the bill effective beginning with the first full school year following enactment. This revision will ensure that the Department is able to implement the bill's provisions without compromising the quality of the State's CTE programs.

Therefore, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 4074 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 2, Section 2, Line 35:

Delete "immediately" and insert "in the first full school year following enactment"

[seal]

Respectfully,

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Parimal Garg

Chief Counsel to the Governor