

## **Public Notice**

### **Education**

#### **State Board of Education**

##### **Notice of Receipt of Petition for Rulemaking**

##### **New Jersey Educator Preparation Programs**

##### **Certificate of Eligibility Educator Preparation Programs for Documented Areas of Teacher Shortage**

##### **N.J.A.C. 6A:9A**

Petitioner: Robert Goodman, Ed.D., Executive Director, New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning Inc. (NJCTL)

**Take notice** that on January 6, 2026, the State Board of Education (State Board) received a petition for rulemaking from the above petitioner, requesting the State Board adopt new rules at N.J.A.C. 6A:9A to restore rules as they existed at N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.6 prior to being readopted with amendments in 2023.

N.J.A.C. 1:30-4.1(b) and 6A:6-4.1(b) require a petition for rulemaking to state the substance or nature of the rulemaking that is requested, the reasons for the request and the petitioner's interest in the request, and references to the authority of the agency to take the requested action.

The petitioner seeks to adopt former N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.6, which allowed certificate of eligibility (CE) educator preparation programs to be developed to serve school districts to place teachers in documented areas of teacher shortage. The former section also allowed CE educator preparation programs to be established by New Jersey colleges and universities, educational organizations, or other entities approved by the Commissioner of Education (Commissioner). The former section further established the requirements for CE educator preparation programs for documented areas of teacher shortage to be approved by the Commissioner and for candidates seeking admission into the programs.

The section was amended effective May 1, 2023 (see 55 N.J.R. 843(a)) to replace the section heading with “Add-on endorsement programs for mathematics and science.” The Department of Education (Department) stated in the notice of proposal (see 54 N.J.R. 2242(a)) that the former heading did not capture the intent of the specialized programs, which were designed for certified teachers to gain content knowledge in high-need subject areas and not new teachers seeking a CE through the existing pathway. As part of the 2023 readoption with amendments at N.J.A.C. 6A:9A, the Department changed the purpose of N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.6 to allow existing approved educator preparation programs within New Jersey colleges and universities, educational organizations, or other entities approved by the Commissioner to establish add-on endorsement programs designed to prepare current certified teachers to earn a CE in mathematics and/or science.

The petitioner indicated that NJCTL is approved, pursuant to former N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.6, to operate educator preparation programs in the shortage areas of mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology through December 31, 2027, and has current educators in the program.

The petitioner requests that the former rules be reinstated – as a section at N.J.A.C. 6A:9A of the Department’s choosing – to allow NJCTL to continue to operate its programs beyond December 31, 2027. The petitioner indicates that 78 teachers or prospective teachers have participated in NJCTL’s programs, including 25 individuals who have earned CEs and are currently teaching in a subject that is a shortage area, and 53 individuals who are making progress toward earning a CE.

The petitioner states that reinstating the former rules will enable NJCTL to create additional programs and will encourage other institutions of higher education to develop documented shortage area educator preparation programs. The petitioner also states that NJCTL’s programs provide a professional pathway to becoming a teacher that, otherwise, is unavailable to participants.

As the reference to the agency's authority to take the requested action, the petitioner's request indicated that NJCTL is simply requesting readoption of a previously deleted provision and that the Department has the authority to readopt a previously deleted section as it continues to maintain authority and licensing over New Jersey's public school educators. Upon request for clarification, the petitioner provided N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15, which is the statute providing the State Board general rulemaking authority.

The petitioner's requested new rules are as follows:

N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.8 CE educator preparation programs for documented areas of teacher shortage

- (a) CE educator preparation programs may be developed to serve school districts to place teachers in documented areas of teacher shortage and may be established by New Jersey colleges and universities, educational organizations, or other entities approved by the Commissioner.
- (b) The Commissioner may approve educator preparation programs for:
  - 1. Middle school with subject-matter specialization in any documented area of teacher shortage for which an endorsement is available. Each endorsement shall be valid for a teaching assignment area in grades five through eight; or
  - 2. Preschool through grade 12 in any documented area of teacher shortage for which an endorsement is available.
- (c) The Commissioner may approve CE educator preparation programs that meet all requirements described in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-3.
  - 1. In addition to the documentation in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-3(b) demonstrating alignment to and compliance with this chapter, programs approved pursuant to this section also shall demonstrate to the Commissioner evidence the program provides content-specific courses and content-based pedagogy that prepare a candidate to teach in the subject that he or she is or will be teaching.

- (d) The Commissioner may approve CE educator preparation programs that meet all requirements in this subchapter.
1. The endorsement requirement within the admission criteria for candidates admitted to the program shall be met in the following ways:
    - i. Candidates for CE educator preparation programs for documented teacher shortage areas approved pursuant to this section shall complete the content-based subject test but may not complete all course requirements for an endorsement in a shortage area.
    - ii. In addition to the pre-professional requirements in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.3, candidates shall complete alternative program coursework in lieu of the courses required for an endorsement.

- (e) Subject-specific coursework hours provided by a preparation program pursuant to this section may be applied to the minimum 50 hours of pre-professional and/or 350 formal instructional hours required pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.4.

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 1:30-4.2, the Department of Education shall subsequently mail to the petitioner, and file with the Office of Administrative Law, a notice of action on the petition.