



New Jersey Center for
Teaching and Learning
www.njctl.org

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New Law to Address Shortage of Teachers in Math and Sciences

TRENTON – June 5, 2012 – A pilot program pioneered by the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning to help reduce teacher shortages primarily in math and science was made permanent under legislation recently signed into law.

The bill, A-2311/S1718, permits already certified New Jersey teachers to enroll in a program to become credentialed to teach high school math and science, or any other area where there is a shortage of teachers.

The New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), in collaboration with Kean University, has run the only pilot program in the state that has led to an endorsement for teachers in physics and chemistry.

“We are thrilled that Gov. Christie has signed this bill into law,” said Bob Goodman, the director of CTL. “This program will lead to an immediate increase in the number of teachers in physics and chemistry, where we are facing a shortage of qualified teachers.”

Since 2009, more than 100 experienced teachers completed the coursework to become certified to teach physics and chemistry in New Jersey through CTL’s professional development program. In the five years between 2004 and 2009, New Jersey averaged only 10 new physics teachers per year through the traditional route programs.

“Our goal is to take the best teachers, and give them the tools they need to become the best science teachers,” Goodman said.

Goodman said CTL has physics endorsement programs in scheduled to begin this summer in Teterboro, Perth Amboy and the Camden area. For more information visit www.njctl.org or email courses@njctl.org.

CTL runs two programs – the Progressive Science Initiative (PSI) and the Progressive Mathematics Initiative (PMI) – that offer a more rational approach to math and science

education. The programs reverse the sequence of high school science instruction, beginning with physics, then chemistry and finally biology. In addition, PSI and PMI represents a shift in pedagogy, making science and math more accessible.

The use of PSI and PMI has led to a marked increase in the number of students sitting for and passing Advanced Placement exams, even in urban schools, where high levels of academic performance would not be expected.

The legislation, which was signed by Governor Christie May 10, was sponsored by Assemblymen Albert Coutinho, Daniel Benson, Ralph Caputo and Assemblywoman Mila Jasey and Sens. Jim Whelan, Teresa Ruiz and Shirley Turner.

"The initial pilot program produced demonstrable results in filling some of our most pressing gaps in education," said Jasey (D-Essex/Morris), a member of the Assembly Education Committee. "This legislation has helped us better prepare our students to compete in the new global economy while also providing a productive means of employment for those hit hard by the recession. It has truly been a win-win, one that we should replicate to fill the continued shortages we face in science, technology, engineering and math."

CTL is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing teachers the tools they need to significantly improve student performance. CTL was founded in 2006 by the New Jersey Education Association, which serves on its board and continues to provide financial support.

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