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Commissioner of Education Proposal to State Board of Education Addresses Shortage of School Principals and Administrators

Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. has proposed to the State Board of Education amendments to the Professional Licensure and Standards code that would address the statewide shortage of school leaders in New Jersey. The board discussed these amendments for the first time today and will continue to consider them at future meetings.

The proposed amendments address the issue of a limited supply of qualified superintendents and principals and will implement strategies that are aimed at expanding the pool of high quality candidates. Among the changes proposed today are reciprocity for out-of-state principal and school administrator candidates, acceptance of appropriate experience instead of the required academic degree for in-state school administrator applicants and alternative preparation programs for experienced New Jersey supervisors who want to become principals.

"The success of our schools depends on dedicated and talented school leaders. Clearly, we have a shortage of qualified superintendents and principals in New Jersey," said Commissioner Gagliardi. "These amendments that I am proposing to the board will go a long way toward expanding the pool of qualified candidates for these leadership positions in the future."

The amendments to the licensure code would increase the availability of eligible candidates for school administrators and principals in several ways. For school administrators it would:

- Allow out-of-state applicants with less than five years of experience to substitute a passing score on the School Leadership Licensure Assessment/School Superintendent Assessment for the test currently required in New Jersey.
- Eliminate the written examination for individuals who can present five years of successful full-time experience, and reduce the mentoring requirement from one year to three to six months.
- Allow five years of successful experience as a New Jersey certified principal in a public school in lieu of a master's degree in leadership and management. These individuals would be eligible for a school administrator's certificate of eligibility. All other requirements currently in effect would apply to these candidates: written examination, offer of employment in an appropriate position, and a residency under provisional certification.

For principals the code changes would:

- Allow out-of-state applicants with less than five years experience to substitute a passing score on the SLLA for the examination currently required by New Jersey.
- Eliminate the written examination for individuals who can present five years of successful full-time experience, and reduces the mentoring requirement from a year to three to six months.
- Permit individuals with a master's degree and five years of successful full-time experience as a New Jersey certified supervisor of an instructional area of department related to the Core Curriculum Content Standards, to complete a state-approved certification program offered by department approved providers. All other requirements currently in effect would apply to these candidates including written examination; offers of employment in an appropriate position; performance assessment and a residency under provisional certification.