

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1374

As Reported By House Committee On:

Education

Title: An act relating to alternate teacher certification.

Brief Description: Establishing alternate teacher certification.

Sponsors: Representatives Smith, Johnson, Hickel, Talcott, B. Thomas and Thompson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/6/97, 2/24/97 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Johnson, Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Cole, Ranking Minority Member; Keiser, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Linville; Quall; Smith; Sterk; Sump; Talcott and Veloria.

Staff: Pat Shelledy (786-7149).

Background: Teachers in public or private schools must hold certificates authorized by the State Board of Education (SBE). The SBE establishes and enforces the rules determining eligibility for, and certification of, teachers in the common schools. Applicants for teacher certification must have completed state-approved college or university teacher preparation program and hold appropriate degrees, licenses, and complete additional course work as required by the SBE.

There are two types of certificates: initial and continuing. An initial certificate is valid for four years. Candidates for initial certification must have a baccalaureate degree from an approved college or university. Teachers may obtain certain endorsements to teach certain subject areas and grade levels. To obtain an endorsement to teach certain classes or grade levels, an aspiring teacher must complete a certain number of hours in pertinent course work.

A person who does not have a teaching certificate may teach in public schools under limited circumstances. The SBE issues instructional specialist certificates to persons of unusual distinction or exceptional talent in a particular field, who are highly

qualified and experienced in the subject matter to be taught, or temporary permits to individuals who are waiting for documentation of proof of completing normal certification requirements. Each of these certificates are temporary and carry restrictions.

The Legislature establishes for each school year in the Appropriations Act, a statewide salary allocation schedule for certificated employees. The schedule is for allocation purposes only. The Superintendent of Public Instruction calculates salary allocations for certificated staff by determining the district average salary for basic education staff using the salary allocation schedule. The superintendent may adjust the allocation based on the education and experience of the district's certificated staff.

The SBE awards clock hours for certificated staff who participate in internships with business or government. An individual may not receive more than the equivalent of two college quarter credits for an internship during the calendar year. The total number of credits that may be earned to advance on the salary schedule is 15 college quarter credits.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Legislature intends to facilitate a conditional opportunity for members of the community to bring their expertise and work experiences into the classroom.

A school district may apply on behalf of a candidate to the Superintendent of Public Instruction to issue the person an alternate teacher certificate. The superintendent must issue an alternate certificate if the person:

- possesses a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
- has at least five years' work experience relevant to the subject areas that the person wants to teach;
- has sufficient knowledge or experience to teach particular subjects. The superintendent of the school district will make that determination and make a recommendation to the school board;
- passes the state certification assessment of basic skills when it becomes available;
- takes the certification assessment of teaching knowledge when it becomes available and the results are used to develop a written supervision plan;
- meets established age and character requirements; and
- possesses a contract for employment in a school district of the state.

Until the state assessment of basic skills is available, the person must complete a test of basic skills recommended by the SBE. The school board will determine passing grades until the SBE adopts rules governing minimum passing scores. The candidate and the school district must develop a written plan for training and supervising the candidate before the candidate starts teaching. The person must be supervised for the first 10 weeks of teaching.

The alternate teaching certificate allows the holder full authority to teach as a part-time or full-time teacher for not more than two years. The person may only teach subjects approved by the school board. If a person holding the certificate wants to continue to teach after the certificate expires, the candidate must apply for initial certification. Initial certification is conditioned upon two years of successful teaching under the alternative certificate, and successfully passing the state certification assessments of subject and teaching knowledge when they become available. The state board may not require any other conditions for the initial certification.

Alternate teaching certificates must be available beginning with the 1997-98 school year.

Salaries for holders of alternative certificates must be based on the statewide salary allocation schedule for individuals with zero years of service and the individual's degree. The two years of teaching under the alternative certificate must be included in the calculation of the individual's years of service when the individual is issued an initial certificate.

A certificated staff in an internship with business or government may receive more than two college quarter credits for the internship. The maximum number of credits that can be applied to the salary schedule is increased to 45 college quarter credits.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Provisions are added: the school district must apply to the superintendent of public instruction on behalf of the candidate; candidates must pass the state certification of basic skills when it becomes available; the holder of the certificate may only teach subjects approved by the school board; the person must pass the state certification of teaching knowledge when it becomes available; the lid on clock hour credits for certificated employees is raised to 45 hours; and the salary provision is changed to provide that the person's salary will be based on the person's degree and zero years of service.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill declares an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: Many members of the community may have experience and special skills that could make them wonderful teachers for certain classes. Currently, those people are foreclosed from teaching unless they are certificated. This bill is intended to have a narrow application to embrace members of the community whose passion for a subject or skill can be shared with school students.

Testimony Against: Being an expert in a certain subject matter or field does not make a person a good teacher. Knowing how to teach is equally, if not more, important. The certification classes are necessary to help people become good teachers, learn about the developmental stages and needs of children and their different learning styles, and develop effective learning plans. The classes are also important because they protect students and teachers, especially those classes that cover issues of child abuse reporting and confidentiality.

Testified: Representative Smith, prime sponsor; Jack Lambert, teacher (con); Allyson Gallagher, teacher (con); Theresa Rudacille, Evergreen Freedom Foundation (pro); Chuck Hall, Superintendent, Yelm School District (pro); Holly Isamen, parent (pro); Barbara Mertins, Washington Association of School Administrators (con); Dan Steele, Washington State School Directors' Association (con); Rainer Houser, Association of Washington School Principals (con); Larry Davis, State Board of Education (con); Neal Supplee, SBE (con); Ted Andrews, SBE (con); Michael Vavrus, Washington Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (con); Cynthia Flynn, Central Washington University (con); Lee Ann Prielipp, Washington Education Association (con); Lloyd Gardner, citizen, (pro); Ron Taber, citizen, (pro); and Lois McMahan, citizen (pro).