

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1374

FULL VETO

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Establishing alternate teacher certification.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Smith, Johnson, Hickel, Talcott, B. Thomas and Thompson).

House Committee on Education
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Education

Background: Teachers in public or private schools must hold teaching certificates authorized by the State Board of Education (SBE). The SBE establishes and enforces the rules that govern certification of teachers in the common schools. Applicants for teacher certification must have completed a state-approved college or university teacher preparation program, hold appropriate degrees, and licenses, and complete any additional course work 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. The SBE also issues conditional certificates to persons who are highly qualified and experienced in the subject matter to be taught, and temporary permits to individuals who are waiting for documentation of proof that they have completed normal certification requirements. Each of these certificates is temporary and carries restrictions.

In the Appropriations Act, the Legislature establishes 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.

Summary: 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 ask the Superintendent of Public Instruction to issue an alternate teacher certificate to a person that the district wishes to hire to teach a particular subject. 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 will teach;
- has sufficient knowledge or experience to teach particular subjects as determined by the school board at the recommendation of the district's superintendent;
- passes the state certification assessment of basic skills when it becomes available;
- takes the certification assessment of teaching knowledge when it becomes available. The results of the assessment will be 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 SBE will ensure that candidates for alternative certification are permitted to challenge required professional preparation courses offered by colleges and universities.

The alternate teaching certificate allows the holder full authority to teach as a part-time or full-time teacher for up to two years in a middle school or higher grade. 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 an initial or residency certificate. 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 1998-99 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. When the individual is granted an initial or continuing certificate, the two years of teaching under the alternative certificate will not count as years of service for salary allocation purposes.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 84 14

Senate 27 21 (Senate amended)

House 87 10 (House concurred)