

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## E2SHB 1374

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Education, February 24, 1998

**Title:** An act relating to alternate teacher certification.

**Brief Description:** Establishing alternate teacher certification.

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

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Education: 3/25/97, 4/4/97 [DPA]; 2/19/98, 2/24/98 [DP, DNP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hochstatter, Chair; Finkbeiner, Vice Chair; Johnson and Zarelli.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator McAuliffe.

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** The State Board of Education (SBE) establishes and enforces the rules governing certification of school personnel. Generally, teachers who teach in public or private schools must hold teaching certificates.

Currently there are two types of teaching certificates: initial and continuing. An initial teaching certificate requires an individual to hold an approved baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university, and for certain academic fields, to acquired additional college credits. A continuing teaching certificate requires an individual to have at least one year of satisfactory teaching experience and additional college course work or credits.

SBE is field-testing performance-based certification requirements and intends to change the types of teaching certificates. After August 31, 2000, there will be two types of teaching certificates: residency and professional. A residency teaching certificate will require an individual to meet the same requirements as for the current initial teaching certificate. A professional teaching certificate will require an individual to have at least two years of teaching experience, complete an approved professional certificate program, and acquire at least two subject area endorsements.

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

who are highly qualified and experienced in the subject matter to be taught, and temporary permits to individuals who are waiting for documentation to show compliance with the certification requirements. Each of these certificates are temporary and carry restrictions.

The salaries of teachers are determined at the local school district level, within certain state-established constraints. The state allocates funds to school districts for teachers' salaries based on a salary allocation schedule contained in the state Appropriations Act. The salary allocation schedule is based on a beginning teacher or base salary with annual increases for years of service and educational attainment.

**Summary of Bill:** Alternative teaching certification must be available beginning in the 1998-99 school year. A school district may apply to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to obtain an alternative teaching certificate for an individual. SPI must issue an alternative certificate if the individual meets the following criteria:

- holds a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
- has at least five years of 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 superintendent who must recommend the individual to the school board of directors;
- passes the state certification assessment of basic skills and teaching knowledge when they become available and uses the results of the assessment of teaching knowledge 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 individual must complete a test of basic skills recommended by SBE. The school board determines passing grades until the SBE adopts rules governing minimum passing scores. The individual and the school district must develop a written plan for training and supervising the individual before the individual starts teaching. The individual must be supervised for the first 10 weeks of teaching. SBE ensures that candidates for alternative certification are permitted to challenge required professional preparation courses offered by colleges and universities.

The alternative teaching certificate permits the holder to teach part- or full-time at the middle, junior and high school levels 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 or residency certification. Such 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. SBE may not require any other conditions for the initial or residency certification.

State allocations for the salaries of holders of alternative teaching certificates is based on the salary allocation schedule's amount for the individual's degree and zero years of service. The two years of teaching under the alternative certificate does not count as years of service for the purposes of the salary allocation schedule.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** Alternative teaching certification would give professionals in the "real world" an opportunity to share their skills with students in the classroom. There would still be requirements that each person would have to meet to obtain an alternative certificate.

**Testimony Against:** This legislation is unnecessary. Some colleges of education are currently providing an abbreviated program for individuals with rich career experiences to enter the teaching field while they take classes in pedagogy, and there are also limited teaching certificates available for persons of unusual competence. It is not enough to have sufficient content knowledge to be a teacher. A teacher preparation program gives individuals skills to motivate, to discipline, and to plan appropriately for the different needs of each student. The current certification program establishes standards and requires a demonstration of knowledge and skills of effective teaching. These standards should not be ignored. There is a difference between wanting to teach and being a quality teacher. There is no shortage of teachers in our state that would necessitate this action.

**Testified:** Rep. Smith, prime sponsor (pro); Carol Merz, University of Puget Sound, Washington Association of Colleges for Teacher Prep (con); Shirley Frare, Pasco School District, Washington School Counselor Association (con); Mary Clift, Shelton School District teacher (con); Steve Wilson, North Elementary Moses Lake teacher (con); Jonathan Bill, Peninsula School District teacher (con); Martha Lindley, CWU (con); Sue Karahalios, parent, teacher.