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## Education Committee

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### HB 1770

**Brief Description:** Changing explicit alternative routes to teacher certification program requirements to expectations for program outcomes.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Bergquist, Magendanz, Pollet, Lytton, Muri and Goodman; by request of Professional Educator Standards Board.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Repeals the statute that describes the design of each of the Alternative Route programs in detail, and instead provides the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) with expected outcomes for Alternative Route programs and rulemaking authority with respect to program design.
- Requires a report from the PESB with respect to the Alternative Route programs on December 1, 2015, and every two years thereafter, and specifies the data that the report must include.

**Hearing Date:** 2/12/15

**Staff:** Cece Clynch (786-7195).

#### Background:

In 2001 the Legislature first authorized a program where one or more school districts and a college of education could develop and offer an alternative route program to teacher certification. These programs are intended for districts, or districts in cooperation with educational service districts (ESDs), to operate partnerships with both public and private colleges and universities, other non higher education entities, and community colleges or consortia of higher education teacher preparation programs. There are various alternative routes intended to attract different possible candidates, and these are all spelled out in statute:

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Route 1: Alternative Routes for classified staff (Paraprofessionals).

Alternative route programs operating Route 1 enroll currently employed classified instructional employees (paraprofessionals) with transferable associate degrees seeking residency teacher certification with endorsements in special education, bilingual education, English Language Learner or other shortage areas. Candidates enrolled in Route 1 complete both their baccalaureate degree and requirements for residency certification in two years or less, including a mentored internship to be completed in the final year. In addition, Alternative Route 1 programs uphold entry requirements for candidates that include:

- District or building validation of qualifications, including one year of successful student interaction and leadership as a classified instructional employee.
- Successful passage of the WEST-B statewide basic skills exam and.
- Meeting the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements adopted by rule for teachers.

Route 2: Alternative Routes for classified staff who hold a minimum of a bachelor of arts degree from a regionally accredited institution.

Alternative Route programs operating Route 2 enroll currently employed school district classified staff with baccalaureate degrees from regionally accredited institutions. Route 2 candidates are seeking residency teacher certification in subject matter shortage areas and areas with shortages due to geographic location. Candidates enrolled in Route 2 must complete a mentored internship complemented by flexibly scheduled training and coursework offered at a local site, such as a school or educational service district, or online or via video-conference over the K-20 network. In addition, Alternative Route 2 programs uphold entry requirements for candidates that include:

- District or building validation of qualifications, including one year of successful student interaction and leadership as classified staff.
- A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education. The individual's college or university grade point average may be considered as a selection factor.
- Successful completion of the WEST-E subject matter assessment.
- Meeting the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements adopted by rule for teachers.
- Successful passage of the WEST-B statewide basic skills exam.

Route 3: Alternative Routes for individuals with subject-matter expertise in shortage areas currently employed outside the school system.

Alternative route programs operating Route 3 enroll individuals with baccalaureate degrees from regionally accredited institutions, who are not employed in the district at the time of application. When selecting candidates for certification through Route 3, districts and approved program providers give priority to individuals who are seeking residency teacher certification in subject matter shortage areas or shortages due to geographic locations. Cohorts of candidates for Route 3 attend an intensive summer teaching academy, followed by a full year employed by a district in a mentored internship, followed, if necessary, by a second summer teaching academy. In addition, Alternative Route 3 programs uphold entry requirements for candidates that include:

- A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education. The individual's grade point average may be considered as a selection factor.

- Successful completion of the WEST-E subject matter assessment.
- External validation of qualifications, including demonstrated successful experience with students or children, such as reference letters and letters of support from previous employers.
- Meeting the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements adopted by rule for teachers.
- Successful passage of the WEST-B statewide basic skills exam.

Route 4: Alternative Routes for individuals teaching with conditional certificates.

Alternative route programs operating Route 4 programs enroll individuals with baccalaureate degrees from regionally accredited institutions, who are employed in the district at the time of application, or who hold conditional teaching certificates. Cohorts of candidates for Route 4 attend an intensive summer teaching academy, followed by a full year employed by a district in a mentored internship. In addition, Alternative Route 4 programs uphold entry requirements for candidates that include:

- A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education. The individual's grade point average may be considered as a selection factor.
- Successful completion of the WEST-E subject matter assessment.
- External validation of qualifications, including demonstrated successful experience with students or children, such as reference letters and letters of support from previous employers.
- Meeting the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements adopted by rule for teachers.
- Successful passage of the WEST-B statewide basic skills exam.

### **Summary of Bill:**

The statute that spells out, in detail, each of the Alternative Routes is repealed.

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) has the duty to establish policies for the approval of nontraditional preparation programs and to provide oversight and accountability related to the quality of these programs. The PESB is directed to establish rules with respect to Alternative Route programs that:

- Uphold criteria for alternative route program design that is innovative and reflects evidence-based practice.
- Ensure that approved partnerships reflect district engagement in their resident alternative route program as an integral part of their future workforce development, as well as school and student learning improvement strategies.
- Provide for the issuance of preservice certification necessary to serve as substitute teachers in classrooms within the residency school for up to ten days per school year.
- Continue to prioritize program designs tailored to the needs of experienced paraeducators and candidates of high academic attainment in the subject area they intend to teach, taking into account the particular school district demand for certain credentials.
- Expand access and opportunity.
- Give preference in admissions to applicants who are eligible veterans or national guard members and who meet the entry requirements.

Beginning December 1, 2015, and each odd-numbered year thereafter, the PESB shall report to the Legislature regarding outcomes of the alternative route programs. In considering rules, and reporting outcomes, the PESB must examine the historical record of the data, and report on:

- the number and percentage of completers hired;
- the percentage of completers from underrepresented populations;
- three and five year retention rates of completers;
- the average hiring dates of completers; and
- the percentage of completers hired in districts where their program was completed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.