

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5941

As Passed Senate, March 4, 2015

Title: An act relating to certification of adjunct faculty as common school substitute teachers.

Brief Description: Concerning certification of adjunct faculty as common school substitute teachers.

Sponsors: Senators Rivers, Rolfes, Litzow, Dammeier and Angel.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/16/15, 2/19/15 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/04/15, 48-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Billig, Fain, Hill, Mullet, Rivers and Rolfes.

Staff: Matthew Lemon (786-7405)

Background: Substitute Certification. The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) is responsible for establishing and enforcing rules determining eligibility for and certification of personnel employed in the common schools, including certification for emergency, temporary, provisional, or substitute duty. PESB established rules that allow for the following three types of substitute teacher certification:

- *Substitute Certificate.* This certificate enables an individual who is fully qualified for a regular teaching certificate to serve as a substitute teacher in any grade level or subject for up to 30 consecutive school days. The certificate is valid for life.
- *Emergency Substitute Certificate.* This certificate enables someone who is not fully qualified for a regular teaching certificate to serve as a substitute teacher, provided the school has exhausted or will exhaust its list of qualified substitutes. The certificate is initiated by school districts and is valid for up to three years.
- *Intern Substitute Teacher Certificate.* This certificate enables a student teacher to substitute in the classroom to which they are assigned for student teaching.

Substitute Shortages. The Office of the State Actuary, assisted by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), recently surveyed districts across the state

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regarding substitute teachers. Of 295 districts, 89 responded, representing roughly 43 percent of students enrolled statewide. Preliminary results found that 74 of 89 districts reported that there is a shortage of certified substitutes in their district.

Summary of Bill: PESB must amend or adopt rules by December 1, 2015, that provide for the issuance of the certification necessary to serve as a substitute teacher to adjunct faculty that meet the following criteria:

- currently employed in an adjunct position at the state and regional universities, The Evergreen State College, the community and the technical colleges, or an accredited private nonprofit college offering at least a baccalaureate degree;
- a minimum of a master's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
- three or more years of successful experience instructing students; and
- meeting the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements adopted by rule for teachers.

Individuals that meet the criteria above are not required to have completed an approved teacher preparation program or possess a regular teaching certificate.

The certification issued under the adopted or amended rules must be separate from the emergency substitute certification currently available.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There is a substitute shortage and districts are facing difficult circumstances because of it. The shortage may get worse with the implementation of class size reductions. Additional pathways to help people enter the profession may help alleviate some of that burden.

OTHER: Adjunct faculty can become substitute teachers through the emergency substitute certification route. The substitute shortage is more a feature of former substitutes taking full-time jobs to fill positions due to increased teacher retirement as economic conditions improve. There is also a downturn in new teacher production. Adjunct faculty has not been vocal about wanting to be substitute teachers, but there may be some who would like the opportunity. Many adjuncts are looking for full-time work in higher education and are already working at multiple schools teaching both day and evening classes, so the feasibility and cost effectiveness of becoming a substitute in K–12 may not be there for them. The bill could be improved by limiting the certification to secondary grades only.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Rivers, prime sponsor; Ken Kanikeberg, OSPI.

OTHER: David Brenna, PESB; Wendy Rader-Konofalski, WA Education Assn.