
HOUSE BILL 1983

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session

By Representatives Pollet, Zeiger, S. Hunt, Haler, and Bergquist

Read first time 02/04/15. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to a pilot project on financial assistance for
2 teachers taking basic skills and content tests for teacher
3 certification programs; adding a new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW;
4 creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The purpose of the teacher endorsement
7 and certification help pilot project, known as the TEACH pilot, is to
8 develop an expandable program that provides grants to teachers taking
9 basic skills and content tests for teacher certification programs. It
10 is the legislature's intent to incentivize underrepresented students
11 to obtain certain endorsements and to increase access and
12 affordability for underrepresented students to obtain teacher
13 certifications and endorsements in areas with significant needs. The
14 current endorsement shortage areas include special education; early
15 childhood education; and science, technology, engineering, and
16 mathematics (STEM).

17 (2) The legislature intends for the student achievement council
18 and the professional educator standards board to make financially
19 needy students aware of the TEACH pilot.

1 (3) It is the intent of the legislature that the professional
2 educator standards board update its list of endorsement shortage
3 areas in response to school district demands.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) Subject to funds specifically appropriated for this purpose,
7 the teacher endorsement and certification help pilot project, known
8 as the TEACH pilot, is created. The scale of the TEACH pilot is
9 dependent on the level of funding appropriated.

10 (2) The student achievement council, after consultation with the
11 professional educator standards board, shall have the power and duty
12 to develop and adopt rules as necessary under chapter 34.05 RCW to
13 administer the pilot project described in this section. The rules,
14 which must be adopted by August 1, 2015, must include:

15 (a) A TEACH pilot grant application process;

16 (b) A financial need verification process;

17 (c) The order of priority in which the applications will be
18 approved; and

19 (d) A process for disbursing TEACH pilot grant awards to selected
20 applicants.

21 (3) A student seeking a TEACH pilot grant to cover the costs of
22 basic skills and content tests required for teacher certification and
23 endorsement shall submit an application to the student achievement
24 council, following the rules developed under this section.

25 (4) To qualify for financial assistance, an applicant must meet
26 the following criteria:

27 (a) Be enrolled in, have applied to, or have completed a teacher
28 preparation program approved by the professional educator standards
29 board;

30 (b) Show a financial need, as demonstrated by the student's
31 eligibility to receive the state need grant under RCW 28B.92.080;

32 (c) Apply for a TEACH pilot grant under this section; and

33 (d) Register for an endorsement competency test in endorsement
34 shortage areas.

35 (5) Beginning September 1, 2015, the student achievement council,
36 in collaboration with the professional educator standards board,
37 shall award a TEACH pilot grant to a student who meets the
38 qualifications listed in this section and in rules developed under
39 this section. The TEACH pilot grant award must cover the costs of

1 basic skills and content tests required for teacher certification.
2 The council shall prioritize TEACH pilot grant awards first to
3 applicants registered for competency tests in endorsement shortage
4 areas and second to applicants with greatest financial need. The
5 council shall scale the number of TEACH pilot grant awards to the
6 amount of funds appropriated for this purpose.

7 (6) The student achievement council and the professional educator
8 standards board shall include information about the TEACH pilot in
9 materials distributed to schools and students.

10 (7) By December 31, 2018, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036,
11 the student achievement council, in collaboration with the
12 professional educator standards board, shall submit a preliminary
13 report to the appropriate committees of the legislature that details
14 the effectiveness and costs of the pilot project. The preliminary
15 report must (a) compare the numbers and demographic information of
16 students taking and passing tests in the endorsement shortage areas
17 before and after implementation of the pilot project, and (b)
18 determine the amount of TEACH pilot grant award financial assistance
19 awarded each pilot year and per student.

20 (8) By December 31, 2020, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036,
21 the student achievement council, in collaboration with the
22 professional educator standards board, shall submit a final report to
23 the appropriate committees of the legislature that details the
24 effectiveness and costs of the pilot project. In addition to updating
25 the preliminary report, the final report must (a) compare the numbers
26 and demographic information of students obtaining teaching
27 certificates with endorsement competencies in the endorsement
28 shortage areas before and after implementation of the pilot project,
29 and (b) recommend whether the pilot project should be modified,
30 continued, and expanded.

31 (9) This section expires June 30, 2021.

--- END ---