

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1341

As Reported by House Committee On: Education

Title: An act relating to professional certification for teachers and school administrators.

Brief Description: Concerning professional certification for teachers and school administrators.

Sponsors: Representatives Bergquist, McCaslin, Stonier, Muri and Pollet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/7/17, 2/16/17 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes the Professional Certification Collaborative to review the integration of, and smooth the transitions between, educator certificates, and to make recommendations on how to improve and strengthen the pathways that lead to highly effective educators at each level of the public school system.
- Requires the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to adopt rules that provide teachers with three options to become professionally certified: meet performance standards on the ProTeach Portfolio, earn a National Board Certificate, or earn 75 approved professional development credits.
- Requires the PESB to adopt rules for professional administrator certification that are substantially similar to the professional development credit option for professional teacher certification.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Stonier, Vice Chair; Harris, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Hargrove, Johnson, Kilduff, Lovick, McCaslin, Ortiz-Self, Senn, Slatter, Springer, Steele and Volz.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Professional Educator Standards Board.

Established by the Legislature in 2000, the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) is a 12-member board that adopts rules and creates policies for the preparation and certification of educators. The PESB's statutory duties include:

- establishing policies and practices for the approval of programs of courses, requirements, and other activities leading to educator certification, such as for teachers and school administrators; and
- specifying the types and kinds of educator certificates to be issued and the conditions for certification.

Administrator Certificates.

Washington has two levels of certification for administrators (principals and program administrators): residency and professional. To obtain a residency administrator certificate, applicants must complete an approved administrator preparation program, have documented successful school-based experience in an instructional role with students, and hold, or have held, a valid residency or professional teacher or educational staff associate certificate. To obtain a professional administrator certificate, applicants must hold a residency administrator certificate, complete an approved professional administrator certificate program, and complete coursework in issues of abuse. In addition, principals must have documentation of three contracted school years of employment as a principal or assistant principal.

There is currently no national principal certificate.

Teacher Certificates.

Washington also has two levels of certification for classroom teachers: residency and professional. To obtain a residency teacher certificate, applicants must complete an approved teacher preparation program and pass a basic skills test and a content knowledge test. To obtain a professional teacher certificate, applicants must either: (1) have at least two years of successful teaching experience and complete the ProTeach Portfolio, an external, uniform assessment adopted by the PESB; or (2) have at least three years of experience and become certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (National Board), which offers a voluntary advanced teaching credential.

Educational service districts (ESDs) may offer programs leading to professional certification. The PESB must encourage institutions of higher education and ESDs to partner with school districts to provide instruction for teachers seeking professional certification. However, the PESB may not require teachers to enroll in a professional certification program to become eligible for the professional certificate.

ProTeach Portfolio. Legislation adopted in 2007 required the PESB to set performance standards and develop, pilot, and implement a uniform and externally administered professional-level certification assessment based on demonstrated teaching skill. The assessment, called the ProTeach Portfolio, was developed by a team of Washington educators

facilitated by a nonprofit with expertise in assessment development, implementation, and administration.

The ProTeach Portfolio measures the three standards and 12 criteria for professional certification established by the PESB. The portfolio consists of three entries: professional growth and contributions, building a learning community, and curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Teachers must submit evidence for each entry, in the form of artifacts and student work samples, and must include written commentary to explain the interactions with the students by whom the student work was generated. A 2016 report from the PESB states that about 83 percent of teachers pass the ProTeach.

Professional Certificate Renewal.

There are a variety of options available for professional certificate renewal, depending on the type of certificate and when it was issued. Some teachers and administrators have the option, or are required, to create four annual Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) over a five-year period. The PGPs are a plan that an educator intends to implement for growth over the coming year. Some teachers can use the PGP option, accumulate 150 continuing education clock hours in five years, or combine the options to renew the professional certificate. Teachers who earned a professional certificate by obtaining a National Board Certificate may renew the certificate by renewing the National Board Certificate.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Professional Teacher Certificate.

The PESB must provide teachers with three options to become professionally certified: (1) meet performance standards on the ProTeach Portfolio, (2) earn a National Board Certificate, or (3) earn 75 approved professional development credits, as described below.

By September 1, 2017, the PESB must adopt rules that allow an applicant to qualify for the professional teacher certificate by earning 75 approved professional development credits within five years following the year that the teacher first completes provisional status.

Professional Development Credits and Activities. A professional development credit means a credit earned by attending 60 minutes of approved professional development activity. A professional development activity means a method by which a teacher may earn a professional development credit, where:

- the activity is related to pedagogy, the teacher's endorsement area or an endorsement area the teacher wishes to add, professional responsibilities, mentoring, or working with families and the community, among other things;
- the activity is not required by federal or state laws, or local school district policies, though the subject matter of the activity may be related to federal, state, or local requirements;
- the activity is not related to first aid or athletics;
- the teacher earns credit for attending, participating in, teaching, presenting, or preparing for the activity; and

- the teacher may be compensated for earning, but was not required to earn, the credit by the school district.

The PESB must develop and implement a means to approve and track credits earned for approved professional development activities. The PESB must also develop a process for approving professional development activities and for approving providers of professional development activities.

Extension. The PESB must provide a one-time, one-year extension to an applicant for the professional development credit option, who does not meet the above requirements, if the applicant earns 90 credits within six years following the year that the teacher first completes provisional status.

Fees. The PESB must determine and adjust professional certification fees to defray the reasonable, necessary cost of administering the professional development credit option for professional teacher certification.

Professional Administrator Certificate.

By September 1, 2017, the PESB must adopt rules for professional administrator certification that are substantially similar to the professional development credit option for professional teacher certification, described above.

Professional Certification Instruction.

The PESB must encourage institutions of higher education and the ESDs to partner with school districts to provide instruction for individuals seeking professional certification, rather than for teachers seeking professional certification.

Professional Certification Collaborative.

The Professional Educator Collaborative (collaborative) is established to review the integration of, and smooth the transitions between, educator certificates, and to make recommendations on how to improve and strengthen the pathways that lead to highly effective educators at each level of the public school system. The collaborative is directed to look broadly at the issues surrounding educator recruitment, retention, professional learning, and evaluation for effectiveness, and must consider the incentives and supports that should be provided at each stage of an educator's career. The collaborative must also review certification requirements that are not consistent with, or are duplicative of, evaluation requirements. In addition, the collaborative must make recommendations on how to improve the reciprocity between Washington's educator certificates and the educator certificates of other states.

The members of the collaborative must include representatives of the following organizations:

- the two largest caucuses of the Senate and the House of Representatives, appointed by the majority and minority leaders of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively;
- the PESB;
- the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI);
- the PESB-approved educator preparation programs;

- the Washington State School Directors' Association;
- the Washington Education Association;
- the Washington Association of School Administrators;
- the Association of Washington School Principals; and
- other educator associations.

Staff support for the collaborative must be provided by the PESB. The collaborative must contract with a nonprofit, nonpartisan institute that conducts independent, high quality research to improve education policy and practice and that works with policymakers, researchers, educators, and others to advance evidence-based policies that support equitable learning for each child.

By November 1, 2019, the collaborative must submit a preliminary report to the Legislature that describes the activities of the collaborative to date, and includes any preliminary recommendations agreed to by the collaborative. By November 1, 2020, the collaborative must submit a final report to the Legislature that makes recommendations on how to improve and strengthen the pathways that lead to highly effective educators at each level of the public school system.

The section outlining the collaborative expires August 31, 2021.

Other Provisions.

The PESB rule allowing teachers with a National Board Certificate to qualify for a professional teacher certificate is placed into statute. Provisions describing the requirements for administering the ProTeach Portfolio and awarding a professional teacher certificate upon meeting standard on this assessment are consolidated. An expired reporting requirement is removed.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill includes provisions establishing the Professional Certification Collaborative.

Rather than eliminating the statutory option of using the ProTeach Portfolio, the substitute bill directs the PESB to provide teachers with three options to obtain a professional certificate: (1) meet performance standards on the ProTeach Portfolio, (2) earn a National Board Certificate, or (3) earn 75 approved professional development credits. It is specified in the substitute bill that the activities to earn professional development credits may not be required by federal or state laws, or local school district policies, though the subject matter of the activity may be related to these requirements.

Rather than prohibiting the professional certification for school administrators, the substitute bill requires the PESB to adopt rules for professional administrator certification that are substantially similar to the professional development credit option for professional teacher certification.

The repealer of the certification renewal rules for teachers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics related subjects is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 16, 2017.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) There are many obligations for teachers to enter and stay in the teaching field: exams to enter teacher preparation programs, assessments to obtain a residency certification, a rigorous evaluation system, and assessments to obtain a professional certificate. One of these is not like the other and that is the ProTeach Portfolio requirement. This requirement is just another hoop, when there are other opportunities to benefit teachers, such as the National Board Certificate. A survey of 1,000 professionally certified teachers showed that over 80 percent of teachers think that the ProTeach process is not helpful and is unnecessary.

It is good to remove the professional certification requirements for principals. Many principals are doing an outstanding job and should not have to meet additional education requirements. Many current administrators were not required to go through a ProTech Portfolio process when they were teachers and were instead required to complete clock hours. That was a tried-and-true method that would be good to go back to. This would help give current and future teachers professional development plans.

The current professional certification requirements for teachers need to be thrown out. The ProTeach Portfolio takes too much time. It is just about journaling and is not supported by school principals. The new requirements are more than just about clock hours, because they give credit for teachers who present to their professional learning community team. Those teachers who have moved into instructional coach positions have to change positions and go back into the classroom to complete ProTeach Portfolio requirements. The ProTeach Portfolio is very expensive and some teachers choose to go out of state or leave the teaching profession in order to avoid this cost.

A license demonstrates statewide coherency within the teacher preparation system. The evaluation is on the performance of the teacher in the classroom. Since ProTeach Portfolio was implemented, the state has enacted the preservice assessment and the teacher evaluation system. Teachers who are professionally certified think that the ProCert Portfolio is repetitive, increases workload without providing significant growth, and is costly. Collaborative time with colleagues is more helpful. The two-tier licensure system is favored, but the assessment is not.

The ProTeach Portfolio is duplicative, expensive, and not connected to what is happening in classroom on a daily basis. Many districts are already providing teachers with professional learning opportunities. There is confusion about which professional development activities are allowed under the bill. Activities may not be related to activities required under federal or state laws. This seems to exclude training on the entire assessment system.

School districts want to remove barriers that perpetuate teacher shortages. School directors are supportive of removing the professional certificate for administrators, but administrators should continue to receive professional development, such as through the evaluation process. There is support for increased efficiency for reciprocity in certification of out-of-state teachers. The current directive to the PESB on out-of-state teacher certification is still too limited, as there is only reciprocity for three other state's second-tier certificates. Twenty-five percent of teachers from out-of-state come from Oregon, so it is concerning that the reciprocity for this certificate will expire soon.

(Opposed) Eliminating the professional teacher certification and going back to clock hours is moving in the wrong direction. This bill requires half of the clock hours that were required in 1970. The current professional certification process can be improved and should not be scrapped. Some teachers find that it improves their process of reflection on student goals and learning, and communication with families. Maybe the state should help pay teacher's ProTeach Portfolio costs, as it has considered paying for other costs of teaching.

Some teachers with a Master in Teaching degree are frustrated when they learn about the professional certification requirements. They think that they have already shown that they are effective teachers. But, they have only met residency standards. After three or four years in the profession, teachers begin to look at their practice differently than when they first began teaching. The opportunity to reflect on their practice, whether they are building a cohesive learning environment and designing instructional sequences that meet the needs of all students, can cause a shift in practice to a student-centered learning environment. Removing the performance based assessment endangers the desire to hold teachers at high standards and continue to guarantee the public that teachers are held to standards that improve student achievement. There needs to be greater coherence between the evaluation process and the professional certification process.

A license is a defined set of knowledge and skills. This bill is about continuing education. This bill effectively eliminates a two-tiered system, because there are no consistent standards for the second level. The ProTeach Portfolio was the first of its kind. It is submitted online, which cut the cost and time in obtaining a professional certificate in half. Teachers are encouraged to begin working on their portfolio in their third year of teaching, and then they have three years, plus potentially two two-year renewals. So, a new Washington teacher has until they complete their ninth year of teaching to complete the ProTeach Portfolio. This is not an unreasonable requirement, as there are no other professional development requirements during this time. The challenges to the current requirement are duplication and cost. These are things that can be improved. Teachers need to know how to use evidence of practice well and for different purposes.

The National Board Certificate process is not critiqued like the professional teacher certificate process likely because there is financial compensation for teachers who obtain a National Board Certificate, while the professional certificate has no compensation. In House Bill 2261, the Legislature promised that it would acknowledge this certificate in pay.

(Other) There are several good ideas out there about how to revise the licensure process to consider other elements of the teacher career continuum. Maybe the Office of the

Superintendent of Public Instruction and the PESB should explore these ideas and make recommendations to the Legislature on this issue.

There should be a second-tier certificate for administrators, but the current system does not work for principals. The PESB is looking at how to improve principal certification, so eliminating the second-tier now seems premature.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Bergquist, prime sponsor; Gene Sementi, West Valley School District; Kyle Rydell, Liberty School District; Jim Kowalkowski, Davenport School District and Rural Education Center; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; Tony Howard, Richland School District; and Jessica Vavrus, Washington State School Directors' Association.

(Opposed) Bob Cooper, Washington Association of College Teacher Education; and Jennifer Wallace and Luke Thomas, Professional Educator Standards Board.

(Other) Sue Anderson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.