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**SENATE BILL 5693**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Cortes, Conway, and Nobles

AN ACT Relating to teacher residency and apprenticeship programs; amending RCW 28B.102.110, 28A.410.045, 28A.410.220, 28A.410.2211, 28A.410.226, 28A.410.250, 28A.410.251, 28A.410.252, 28A.410.278, 28A.410.290, and 28A.660.005; reenacting and amending RCW 28A.410.270; adding new sections to chapter 28A.410 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 49.04 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an effective date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.410 RCW to read as follows:

(1) A teacher residency is a teacher preparation model that integrates a full year of collaborative hands-on classroom teaching with an experienced mentor with concurrent, targeted academic coursework, designed to develop effective, community-focused teachers. This collaborative model is offered by a public elementary or secondary school and a board-approved teacher preparation program.

(2) At a minimum, a teacher residency program must meet the following requirements:

(a) The program must be operated as a formal partnership between a school district or state-tribal education compact school and a board-approved teacher preparation program;

(b) The program partners must collaboratively design the coursework to align with the unique context of each resident's classroom;

(c) Each resident must be assigned a preservice mentor;

(d) A preservice mentor must co-teach with the resident throughout the duration of the resident's preservice clinical experience;

(e) Each resident must receive at least 900 hours of preservice clinical practice over the course of one school year;

(f)(i) A resident who is an undergraduate student may not be assigned the lead or primary responsibility for student learning until the resident completes 900 hours of preservice clinical practice; and

(ii) A resident who is a graduate student may not be assigned the lead or primary responsibility for student learning until the resident completes 450 hours of preservice clinical practice;

(g) Each resident must be grouped into a cohort based on geography, specialty, or other relevant criteria determined by the board;

(h) Funding must be provided to each resident; and

(i) A stipend must be provided to each preservice mentor.

(3) The board shall establish an approval process for a teacher preparation program in partnership with a school district, state-tribal education compact school, or consortium to either: (a) Become a new teacher preparation program; or (b) transition some or all of an existing teacher preparation program to a teacher residency program.

(4) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Board" means the Washington professional educator standards board.

(b) "Cohort" means a group of residents enrolled in the same teacher preparation program who begin their residencies at the same time and have the same anticipated completion date.

(c) "Consortium" means a group of school districts, state-tribal education compact schools, or both, that partner with a teacher preparation program to support a cohort of residents.

(d) "Preservice mentor" means a teacher qualified to be a mentor for the beginning educator support team program under RCW 28A.415.265.

(e) "Resident" means a person enrolled in a board-approved teacher preparation program who is participating in a teacher residency program.

(f) "Teacher preparation program" means a teacher preparation program approved by the board.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.410 RCW to read as follows:

A teacher apprenticeship program is a program approved by both the Washington apprenticeship and training council under chapter 49.04 RCW and the Washington professional educator standards board under RCW 28A.410.210 that is designed for individuals with bachelor's degrees who seek an initial teacher certificate and no graduate degree. In addition to meeting other requirements, the program must provide the apprentice with 2,000 hours of on-the-job mentored teaching experience under a gradual release method.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

A teacher apprenticeship program must meet the requirements in section 2 of this act.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.102.110 and 2019 c 295 s 217 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The alternative route and teacher residency conditional scholarship program is created. The purpose of the program is to provide financial assistance to encourage persons to become teachers through alternative route teacher certification programs or the teacher residency program and to retain these teachers in shortage areas.

(2) To qualify for the program an applicant must:

(a) Be accepted into, and maintain enrollment in, an alternative route teacher certification program under chapter 28A.660 RCW or a teacher residency program under section 1 of this act; and

(b) Intend to pursue an initial teacher certificate with an endorsement in a shortage area.

(3) Participants are eligible to receive an alternative route and teacher residency conditional scholarship for up to two academic years.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature recognizes that, in the educator preparation and certification context, the term "residency" refers to the initial certificate of an educator. In order to reduce possible confusion between teacher residency programs approved and operated under section 1 of this act and residency certificates issued under RCW 28A.410.010, the legislature intends to change the name of the "residency certificate" to the "initial certificate" and to change the name of the "professional certificate" to the "continuing certificate."

(2) The Washington professional educator standards board shall prepare to implement these name changes effective July 1, 2026.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.045 and 2007 c 319 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification program is established. The professional educator standards board shall adopt rules to implement the program in collaboration with the sovereign tribal governments whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington, including the tribal leader congress on education and the first peoples' language and culture committee. The collaboration required under this section shall be defined by a protocol for cogovernance in first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions education developed by the professional educator standards board, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, and the sovereign tribal governments whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington.

(2) Any sovereign tribal government whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington may participate individually on a government-to-government basis in the program.

(3) Under the first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification program:

(a) Only a participating sovereign tribal government may certify individuals who meet the tribe's criteria for certification as a teacher in the Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification program. Tribal law enforcement agencies and the Washington state patrol shall enter into government‑to‑government negotiations regarding the exchange of background information on applicants for certification. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall not authorize or accept a certificate or endorsement in Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions without certification from a participating sovereign tribal government and without conducting a record check of an individual applying for certification as required under RCW 28A.410.010;

(b) For each teacher to be certified in the program, the participating sovereign tribal government shall submit information and documentation necessary for the issuance of a state certificate, as defined by rule, to the office of the superintendent of public instruction;

(c) A Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certificate serves as a subject area endorsement in first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions. The holder of a Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certificate who does not also hold an initial((~~, residency,~~)) or continuing((~~, or professional~~)) teaching certificate authorized by the professional educator standards board may be assigned to teach only the languages, cultures, and oral tribal traditions designated on the certificate and no other subject;

(d) In order to teach first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions, teachers must hold certificates from both the office of the superintendent of public instruction and from the sovereign tribal government; and

(e) The holder of a Washington state first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certificate meets Washington state's definition of a highly qualified teacher under the no child left behind act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110) for the purposes of teaching first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions, subject to approval by the United States department of education.

(4) First peoples' language/culture teacher certificates issued before July 22, 2007, under rules approved by the state board of education or the professional educator standards board under a pilot program remain valid as certificates under this section, subject to the provisions of this chapter.

(5) Schools and school districts on or near tribal reservations are encouraged to contract with sovereign tribal governments whose traditional lands and territories lie within the borders of the state of Washington and with first peoples' language, culture, and oral tribal traditions teacher certification programs for in-service teacher training and continuing education in the culture and history appropriate for their geographic area, as well as suggested pedagogy and instructional strategies.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.220 and 2019 c 121 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) The Washington professional educator standards board shall make available a means of assessing an applicant's knowledge in the basic skills. For the purposes of this section, "basic skills" means the subjects of at least reading, writing, and mathematics. An applicant must take this basic skills assessment, or an alternative or equivalent basic skills assessment as determined by the Washington professional educator standards board, and report the individual results to the Washington professional educator standards board and an approved teacher preparation program, for admission to the approved teacher preparation program.

(b) An approved teacher preparation program may use the results of the basic skills assessment, or an alternative or equivalent basic skills assessment as determined by the Washington professional educator standards board, as a formative assessment of academic strengths and weakness in determining the candidate's readiness for the program.

(c) The Washington professional educator standards board may establish criteria to ensure that persons from out-of-state who are applying for ((~~residency~~)) initial certification and persons applying to master's degree level teacher preparation programs can demonstrate to the board's satisfaction that they have the requisite basic skills.

(d) The Washington professional educator standards board may identify and accept other tests and test scores as long as the tests are comparable in rigor to the basic skills assessment and candidates meet or exceed the basic skills requirements established by the board.

(2) The Washington professional educator standards board shall set performance standards and develop, pilot, and implement a uniform and externally administered ((~~professional~~)) continuing‑level certification assessment based on demonstrated teaching skill. In the development of this assessment, consideration shall be given to changes in ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification program components such as the culminating seminar.

(3) Beginning not later than September 1, 2002, the Washington professional educator standards board shall provide for the initial piloting and implementation of a means of assessing an applicant's knowledge in the subjects for which the applicant has applied for an endorsement to his or her ((~~residency~~)) initial or ((~~professional~~)) continuing teaching certificate. The assessment of subject knowledge shall not include instructional methodology. Beginning September 1, 2005, passing this assessment shall be required to receive an endorsement for certification purposes.

(4) The Washington professional educator standards board may permit exceptions from the assessment requirements under subsections (1), (2), and (3) of this section on a case-by-case basis.

(5) The Washington professional educator standards board shall provide for reasonable accommodations for individuals who are required to take the assessments in subsection (1), (2), or (3) of this section if the individuals have learning or other disabilities.

(6) With the exception of applicants exempt from the requirements of subsections (2) and (3) of this section, an applicant must achieve a minimum assessment score or scores established by the Washington professional educator standards board on each of the assessments under subsections (2) and (3) of this section.

(7) The Washington professional educator standards board and superintendent of public instruction, as determined by the Washington professional educator standards board, may contract with one or more third parties for:

(a) The development, purchase, administration, scoring, and reporting of scores of the assessments established by the Washington professional educator standards board under subsections (1), (2), and (3) of this section;

(b) Related clerical and administrative activities; or

(c) Any combination of the purposes in this subsection.

(8) Applicants for admission to a Washington teacher preparation program and applicants for ((~~residency~~)) initial and ((~~professional~~)) continuing certificates who are required to successfully complete one or more of the assessments under subsections (1), (2), and (3) of this section, and who are charged a fee for the assessment by a third party contracted with under subsection (7) of this section, shall pay the fee charged by the contractor directly to the contractor. Such fees shall be reasonably related to the actual costs of the contractor in providing the assessment.

(9) The superintendent of public instruction is responsible for supervision and providing support services to administer this section.

(10) The Washington professional educator standards board shall collaboratively select or develop and implement the applicable assessments and minimum assessment scores required under this section with the superintendent of public instruction and shall provide opportunities for representatives of other interested educational organizations to participate in the selection or development and implementation of such assessments in a manner deemed appropriate by the Washington professional educator standards board.

(11) The Washington professional educator standards board shall adopt rules under chapter 34.05 RCW that are reasonably necessary for the effective and efficient implementation of this section.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.2211 and 2021 c 198 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The professional educator standards board shall revise assessments for prospective teachers and teachers adding subject area endorsements required for teacher certification under RCW 28A.410.220 to measure the revised standards in RCW 28A.410.221.

(2) The professional educator standards board shall require that successful candidates for the ((~~residency~~)) initial certificate demonstrate effective subject specific instructional methods that address the revised standards.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.226 and 2013 c 197 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) As provided under subsections (2) and (3) of this section, individuals certified by the professional educator standards board as a school nurse, school social worker, school psychologist, or school counselor must complete a training program on youth suicide screening and referral as a condition of certification. The training program must be at least three hours in length. The professional educator standards board must adopt standards for the minimum content of the training in consultation with the office of the superintendent of public instruction and the department of health. In developing the standards, the board must consider training programs listed on the best practices registry of the American foundation for suicide prevention and the suicide prevention resource center.

(2) This section applies to the following certificates if the certificate is first issued or is renewed on or after July 1, 2015:

(a) Continuing certificates for school nurses;

(b) Continuing certificates for school social workers;

(c) Continuing ((~~and professional~~)) certificates for school psychologists; and

(d) Continuing ((~~and professional~~)) certificates for school counselors.

(3) A school counselor who holds or submits a school counseling certificate from the national board for professional teaching standards or a school psychologist who holds or submits a school psychologist certificate from the national association of school psychologists in lieu of a ((~~professional~~)) continuing certificate must complete the training program under subsection (1) of this section by July 1, 2015, or within the five-year period before the certificate is first submitted to the professional educator standards board, whichever is later, and at least once every five years thereafter in order to be considered certified by the professional educator standards board.

(4) The professional educator standards board ((~~shall consider the training program under subsection (1) of this section as approved continuing education under RCW 28A.415.020 and~~)) shall count the training program toward meeting continuing education requirements for certification as a school nurse, school social worker, school psychologist, or school counselor.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.250 and 2017 3rd sp.s. c 26 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

The agency responsible for educator certification shall adopt rules for ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification that:

(1) Grant ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification to any teacher who attains certification from the national board for professional teaching standards; ((~~[and]~~)) and

(2) Identify an expedited ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification process for out-of-state teachers who have five years or more of successful teaching experience, including a method to determine the comparability of rigor between the Washington ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification process and the advanced level teacher certification process of other states. A ((~~professional~~)) continuing certificate must be issued to these experienced out-of-state teachers if the teacher holds: (a) A valid teaching certificate issued by the national board for professional teaching standards; or (b) an advanced level teacher certificate from another state that has been determined to be comparable to the Washington ((~~professional~~)) continuing certificate.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.251 and 2017 3rd sp.s. c 26 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

By September 1, 2017, the Washington professional educator standards board shall adopt rules allowing teachers and principals with at least two years of experience, who hold or have held ((~~a residency~~)) an initial certificate and have not achieved the ((~~professional~~)) continuing certificate, to renew their ((~~residency~~)) initial certificate in five-year intervals based on completion of ten credits or one hundred clock hours ((~~as defined in RCW 28A.415.020 and 28A.415.023~~)).

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.252 and 2016 c 233 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

The agency responsible for educator certification shall adopt rules for ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification that identify an expedited ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification process for out-of-state teachers who have five years or more of successful teaching experience, including a method to determine the comparability of rigor between the Washington ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification process and any United States federally issued or state-issued advanced level teacher certification process that allows an individual to teach internationally. A ((~~professional~~)) continuing certificate must be issued to these experienced out-of-state teachers if the teacher holds a United States federally issued or state-issued advanced level teacher certificate that allows the individual to teach internationally and that has been determined to be comparable to the Washington ((~~professional~~)) continuing certificate.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.270 and 2021 c 198 s 4 and 2021 c 197 s 11 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) The board shall adopt a set of articulated teacher knowledge, skill, and performance standards for effective teaching that are evidence-based, measurable, meaningful, and documented in high quality research as being associated with improved student learning. The standards shall be calibrated for each level along the entire career continuum. For candidates recommended for ((~~residency~~)) initial teacher certification by a board-approved preparation program, the standards adopted by the board must be the most recent teaching standards published by a consortium of state and national education organizations dedicated to the reform of the preparation, licensing, and ongoing professional development of teachers since 1987.

(b) The ((~~Washington professional educator standards~~)) board shall incorporate along the entire continuum the standards of practice developed under RCW 28A.410.260.

(c) By January 1, 2020, in order to ensure that teachers can recognize signs of emotional or behavioral distress in students and appropriately refer students for assistance and support, the board shall incorporate along the entire continuum the social-emotional learning standards and benchmarks recommended by the social-emotional learning benchmarks work group in its October 1, 2016, final report titled, "addressing social emotional learning in Washington's K-12 public schools." In incorporating the social-emotional learning standards and benchmarks, the board must include related competencies, such as trauma-informed practices, consideration of adverse childhood experiences, mental health literacy, antibullying strategies, and culturally sustaining practices.

(2) The board shall adopt a definition of master teacher, with a comparable level of increased competency between ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification level and master level as between ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification level and national board certification. Within the definition established by the board, teachers certified through the national board for professional teaching standards shall be considered master teachers.

(3) Award of a ((~~professional~~)) continuing certificate shall be based on a minimum of two years of successful teaching experience as defined by the board, and may not require candidates to enroll in a ((~~professional~~)) continuing certification program.

(4) Educator preparation programs approved to offer the ((~~residency~~)) initial teaching certificate shall be required to demonstrate how the program produces effective teachers as evidenced by multiple measures of the knowledge, skills, performance, and competencies described in subsection (1) of this section and other criteria established by the board.

(5) Each board-approved teacher preparation program must publish, and provide to candidates prior to admission, a list of program completion requirements.

(6) Before a board-approved teacher preparation program may recommend a candidate for ((~~residency~~)) initial teacher certification, the candidate must meet or exceed the knowledge, skill, performance, and competency standards described in subsection (1) of this section.

(7) For the purpose of this section, "board" means the Washington professional educator standards board.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.278 and 2019 c 295 s 304 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) After August 31, 2013, candidates for ((~~a residency~~)) an initial principal certificate must have demonstrated knowledge of teacher evaluation research and Washington's evaluation requirements and successfully completed opportunities to practice teacher evaluation skills.

(2) At a minimum, principal preparation programs must address the following knowledge and skills related to evaluations under RCW 28A.405.100:

(a) Examination of teacher and principal evaluation criteria, and four-level rating evaluation system, and the preferred instructional and leadership frameworks used to describe the evaluation criteria;

(b) Classroom observations;

(c) The use of student growth data and multiple measures of performance;

(d) Evaluation conferencing;

(e) Development of classroom teacher and principal support plans resulting from an evaluation; and

(f) Use of an online tool to manage the collection of observation notes, teacher and principal‑submitted materials, and other information related to the conduct of the evaluation.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.290 and 2010 c 235 s 502 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) By September 30, 2010, the professional educator standards board shall review and revise teacher and administrator preparation program approval standards and proposal review procedures at the ((~~residency~~)) initial certificate level to ensure they are rigorous and appropriate standards for an expanded range of potential providers, including community college and nonhigher education providers. All approved providers must adhere to the same standards and comply with the same requirements.

(2) Beginning September 30, 2010, the professional educator standards board must accept proposals for community college and nonhigher education providers of educator preparation programs. Proposals must be processed and considered by the board as expeditiously as possible.

(3) By September 1, 2011, all professional educator standards board-approved ((~~residency~~)) initial teacher preparation programs at institutions of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016 not currently a partner in an alternative route program approved by the professional educator standards board must submit to the board a proposal to offer one or more of the alternative route programs that meet the requirements of RCW 28A.660.020 ((~~and 28A.660.040~~)).

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.660.005 and 2007 c 396 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The legislature finds and declares:

(a) Teacher qualifications and effectiveness are the most important influences on student learning in schools;

(b) Preparation of individuals to become well-qualified, effective teachers must be high quality;

(c) Teachers who complete high quality alternative route programs with intensive field-based experience, adequate coursework, and strong mentorship do as well or better than teachers who complete traditional preparation programs;

(d) High quality alternative route programs can provide more flexibility and expedience for individuals to transition from their current career to teaching;

(e) High quality alternative route programs can help school districts fill subject matter shortage areas and areas with shortages due to geographic location;

(f) Regardless of route, all candidates for ((~~residency~~)) initial teacher certification must meet the high standards required by the state; and

(g) Teachers need an adequate background in subject matter content if they are to teach it well, and should hold full, appropriate credentials in those subject areas.

(2) The legislature recognizes widespread concerns about the potential for teacher shortages and finds that classified instructional staff in public schools, current certificated staff, and unemployed certificate holders represent a great untapped resource for recruiting more teachers in critical shortage areas.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 6 through 16 of this act take effect July 1, 2026.

**--- END ---**