
Education Committee

HB 1341

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

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

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) from requiring professional certification for school administrators.
- Requires the PESB to adopt new rules for professional certification for teachers that meet specified requirements, by September 1, 2017.
- Bases eligibility for the professional teacher certificate on professional developments credits, rather than on a uniform and externally administered professional-level certification assessment.

Hearing Date: 2/7/17

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB). Established by the Legislature in 2000, the 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;
- specifying the types and kinds of educator certificates to be issued and 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

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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 (i.e. Second Substitute Senate Bill 5955, enacted as Chapter 402, Laws of 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, 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.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Teachers. In 2011, PESB was required to revise its certificate renewal rules for teachers at the elementary and secondary levels in STEM related subjects to require that continuing education or professional growth plans for these teachers include a specific focus on the integration of STEM instruction.

Summary of Bill:

Professional Administrator Certificate. The PESB may not require professional certification for school administrators.

Professional Teacher Certificate. By September 1, 2017, the PESB must adopt new rules for professional certification for teachers that meet the following requirements. The PESB must require that an applicant for the professional teacher certificate earn 75 approved professional development credits within five years following the year that the teacher first completes provisional status. Teachers at the elementary and secondary levels in STEM-related subjects must earn professional development credits focusing on the integration of STEM instruction.

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 related to topics required by federal or state laws, or local school district policies, 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 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.

Hold Harmless. Teachers who hold a valid professional teacher certificate issued by the PESB on the effective date of the act must be granted a professional certificate under the new provisions.

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

Professional Certification Programs. The ESDs may continue to offer programs leading to professional teacher certification for educational staff associates only. The PESB must encourage institutions of higher education and ESDs to partner with school districts to provide instruction for educational staff associates seeking professional certification, rather than for teachers seeking professional certification program.

Provisions Removed and Statutes Repealed. Provisions related to a uniform and externally administered professional-level certification assessment based on demonstrated teaching skill are

removed, as is an expired reporting requirement. The certification renewal rules for teachers in STEM-related subjects are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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