
**State Government & Tribal
Affairs Committee**

HB 1226

Brief Description: Establishing the first peoples' language, culture, and history teacher certification program.

Sponsors: Representatives Sells, Barlow, Santos, Appleton, Lovick, Strow, Hasegawa, Quall, Dunshee, Hunt, McCoy, Priest, Ormsby, Wood, Wallace, Conway, Kenney, VanDeWege, Dickerson, Haigh and Simpson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the First Peoples' Language, Culture, and History Teacher Certification Program.

Hearing Date: 2/14/07

Staff: Colleen Kerr (786-7168).

Background:

In 2003, the Washington State Board of Education (SBE) adopted a rule creating the First Peoples' Language/Culture Certification Pilot Program. The intent of the three-year pilot program was to:

- contribute to the preservation, recovery, revitalization, and promotion of First Peoples' language;
- provide an opportunity for tribal children to learn and share their native language at public school;
- promote cultural sensitivity for all students; and
- provide tangible implementation of the 1989 Centennial Accord between Washington and the sovereign Tribal Governments in the State.

Under the terms of the pilot project, the First Peoples' Language/Culture Certification program was set to expire at the end of the 2005-06 school year. In 2005, however, jurisdiction over educator preparation and certification transferred from the SBE to the Professional Educator

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.

Standards Board (PESB) as a result of legislation. In May 2006, the PESB provided a one-year extension of the First Peoples' Language/Culture Certification Pilot Program. Then, in January 2007, the PESB voted to make the program permanent.

To date, government-to-government agreements for the pilot program have been signed with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Jamestown S'Klallam Indian Tribe, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, the Makah Tribe, the Nooksack Indian Tribe, the Skokomish Indian Tribe, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Tulalip Tribes of Washington, the Suquamish Tribe, and the Kalispel Tribe of Indians. Through these agreements 20 teachers have been certified to teach eight different tribal languages.

Summary of Bill:

The Washington State First Peoples' Language, Culture, and History Teacher Certification program is created in statute. The program is expanded from the pilot to include history.

The PESB will adopt rules to implement the program in collaboration with tribal governments that choose to participate. Tribal governments develop program criteria First Peoples' language, culture, and history teacher certification; the PESB does not review the program certification.

Participating tribal governments are authorized to certify individuals who meet the criteria. The tribal government will send the necessary information for a state certificate for the individual to the PESB so that the PESB may issue a state certificate. The tribal government will review the award of the certificate every five years and notify the PESB if the tribal government modifies or revokes the state certification. The state certification is valid unless modified or revoked by the tribal government.

If the federal Department of Education grants approval, individuals with this certification will meet the federal definition of "highly qualified teacher" requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act when teaching First Peoples' language, culture, and history.

Schools and school districts are encouraged to contract with tribal governments and the First Peoples' Language, Culture, and History Certification Programs for approved in-service training and continuing education in the culture and history appropriate for that geographic area.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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