
Higher Education Committee

HB 1675

Brief Description: Changing the work experience provisions of the alternative route partnership grant program.

Sponsors: Representatives Sells, Anderson, Wallace, Upthegrove and Kenney.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Reduces work requirements for entry into alternative routes one and two, as part of an Alternative Route Partnership Grant Program, from three years to one year.
- Removes work requirements for entry into alternative routes three and four of an Alternative Route Partnership Grant Program.

Hearing Date: 2/13/09

Staff: Andi Smith (786-7304)

Background:

The Alternative Routes Partnership Grant Program, established in 2001, is operated by the Professional Educator Standards Board with the Higher Education Coordinating Board as fiscal agent. It provides support for the formation of partnerships between school districts and higher education teacher preparation programs to offer one or more of four school-based alternative routes to teacher certification. The programs are aimed at experienced paraeducators and mid-career professionals with expertise in subject areas in which Washington has shortages, such as math, science, and special education.

There are nine Alternative Route programs that serve mid-career professionals, paraeducators, classified instructional staff, and conditional certificate holders in the following areas of the state:

- Mt. Vernon, Skagit Valley, and Everett;
- Seattle/Tacoma;

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- Olympia/South Sound;
- Yakima Valley; and
- A new Alternative Route program will open in the Tri Cities area in June of 2009.

The programs are typically more intensive and shorter in length than traditional teacher certification routes, based on mentored internships and on-site training. As of June 2008, 688 people have transitioned to a new career teaching in statewide and geographic shortage areas through the Alternative Routes to Teaching Program. Ninety-seven percent of Alternative Route candidates have entered Washington state's teaching force upon completion of their programs.

Programs geared toward experienced paraeducators (routes one and two) currently require that candidates have three years of "successful student interaction" before entry into the program. Programs aimed at "career changers" (routes three and four) currently require five years of work experience for entry into the program.

Summary of Bill:

Work experience requirements for teacher candidates pursuing residency teacher certification through alternative certification routes one and two are decreased from three years to one year.

Work experience requirements for candidates pursuing residency teacher certification through alternative certification routes three and four are removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 9, 2009.

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