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**SENATE BILL 5496**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Litzow, McAuliffe, Dammeier, Rolfes, and Chase; by request of Professional Educator Standards Board

AN ACT Relating to changing explicit alternative routes to teacher certification program requirements to expectations for program outcomes; amending RCW 28A.660.020 and 28A.660.035; and repealing RCW 28A.660.040.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.660.020 and 2010 c 235 s 503 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The professional educator standards board shall transition the alternative route partnership grant program from a separate competitive grant program to a preparation program model to be expanded among approved preparation program providers. Alternative routes are partnerships between professional educator standards board-approved preparation programs, Washington school districts, and other partners as appropriate. Program design of alternative route programs shall continue to evolve over time to reflect innovations and improvements in educator preparation. The professional educator standards board must construct rules that address the competitive grant process and eligibility for scholarships in addition to program design.

(2) ((~~Each prospective teacher preparation program provider, in cooperation with a Washington school district or consortia of school districts applying to operate [an] alternative route certification program shall include in its proposal to the Washington professional educator standards board:~~

~~(a) The route or routes the partnership program intends to offer and a detailed description of how the routes will be structured and operated by the partnership;~~

~~(b) The estimated number of candidates that will be enrolled per route;~~

~~(c) An identification, indication of commitment, and description of the role of approved teacher preparation programs and partnering district or consortia of districts;~~

~~(d) An assurance that the district or approved preparation program provider will provide adequate training for mentor teachers specific to the mentoring of alternative route candidates;~~

~~(e) An assurance that significant time will be provided for mentor teachers to spend with the alternative route teacher candidates throughout the internship. Partnerships must provide each candidate with intensive classroom mentoring until such time as the candidate demonstrates the competency necessary to manage the classroom with less intensive supervision and guidance from a mentor;~~

~~(f) A description of the rigorous screening process for applicants to alternative route programs, including entry requirements specific to each route, as provided in RCW 28A.660.040;~~

~~(g) A summary of procedures that provide flexible completion opportunities for candidates to achieve a residency certificate; and~~

~~(h) The design and use of a teacher development plan for each candidate. The plan shall specify the alternative route coursework and training required of each candidate and shall be developed by comparing the candidate's prior experience and coursework with the state's new performance-based standards for residency certification and adjusting any requirements accordingly. The plan may include the following components:~~

~~(i) A minimum of one-half of a school year, and an additional significant amount of time if necessary, of intensive mentorship during field experience, starting with full-time mentoring and progressing to increasingly less intensive monitoring and assistance as the intern demonstrates the skills necessary to take over the classroom with less intensive support. Before the supervision is diminished, the mentor of the teacher candidate at the school and the supervisor of the teacher candidate from the teacher preparation program must both agree that the teacher candidate is ready to manage the classroom with less intensive supervision;~~

~~(ii) Identification of performance indicators based on the knowledge and skills standards required for residency certification by the Washington professional educator standards board;~~

~~(iii) Identification of benchmarks that will indicate when the standard is met for all performance indicators;~~

~~(iv) A description of strategies for assessing candidate performance on the benchmarks;~~

~~(v) Identification of one or more tools to be used to assess a candidate's performance once the candidate has been in the classroom for about one-half of a school year;~~

~~(vi) A description of the criteria that would result in residency certification after about one-half of a school year but before the end of the program; and~~

~~(vii) A description of how the district intends for the alternative route program to support its workforce development plan and how the presence of alternative route interns will advance its school improvement plans.~~

~~(3)~~))As provided in RCW 28A.410.210, it is the duty of the professional educator standards board to establish policies for the approval of nontraditional preparation programs and to provide oversight and accountability related to the quality of these programs. In establishing and amending rules for alternative route programs, the professional educator standards board shall:

(a) Uphold criteria for alternative route program design that is innovative and reflects evidence-based practice;

(b) Ensure that approved partnerships reflect district engagement in their resident alternative route program as an integral part of their future workforce development, as well as school and student learning improvement strategies;

(c) Amend or adopt rules issuing preservice residents certification necessary to serve as substitute teachers in classrooms within the residency school for up to ten days per school year;

(d) Continue to prioritize program designs tailored to the needs of experienced paraeducators and candidates of high academic attainment in the subject area they intend to teach. In doing so the program designs must take into account school district demand for certain teacher credentials;

(e) Expand access and opportunity for individuals to become teachers statewide; and

(f) Give preference in admissions to applicants for alternative route programs who are eligible veterans or national guard members and who meet the entry requirements for the alternative route program.

(3) Beginning December 1, 2015, and each odd-numbered year thereafter, the professional educator standards board shall report to the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate the following outcomes as indicators that alternative route programs are meeting legislative intent through the regulation and oversight of the professional educator standards board. In considering administrative rules for, and reporting outcomes of, alternative route programs, the professional educator standards board shall examine the historical record of the data, reporting on:

(a) The number and percentage of alternative route completers hired;

(b) The percentage of alternative route completers from underrepresented populations;

(c) Three-year and five-year retention rates of alternative route completers;

(d) The average hiring dates of alternative route completers; and

(e) The percentage of alternative route completers hired in districts where their alternative route program was completed.

(4) To the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose, alternative route programs may apply for program funds to pay stipends to trained mentor teachers of interns during the mentored internship. The per intern amount of mentor stipend provided by state funds shall not exceed five hundred dollars.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.660.035 and 2009 c 468 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall identify school districts that have the most significant achievement gaps among subgroups of students and for large numbers of those students, and districts that should receive priority for assistance in advancing cultural competency skills in their workforce. The professional educator standards board shall provide assistance to the identified school districts to develop partnership grant programs between the districts and teacher preparation programs to provide ((~~one or more of the four~~)) alternative route programs under RCW ((~~28A.660.040~~))28A.660.020 and to recruit paraeducators and other individuals in the local community to become certified as teachers. ((~~A~~))An alternative route partnership ((~~grant~~)) program proposed by an identified school district shall receive priority eligibility for partnership grants under RCW 28A.660.020. To the maximum extent possible, the board shall coordinate the recruiting Washington teachers program under RCW 28A.415.370 with the alternative route programs under this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  RCW 28A.660.040 (Alternative route programs) and 2010 c 235 s 504 are each repealed.

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