

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## E2SSB 5695

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Creating alternative routes to teacher certification.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Eide, Finkbeiner, McAuliffe, Franklin, Hewitt, Rasmussen, Johnson, Shin, Patterson, Oke, Winsley and Kohl-Welles; by request of Governor Locke; Superintendent of Public Instruction).

**Senate Committee on Education**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**  
**House Committee on Education**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Background:** In 2000, the Legislature created the Washington Professional Educator Standards Board (WPESB) to advise and provide recommendations on issues affecting educators. The WPESB was also given a specific charge to provide recommendations for at least two high-quality alternative routes to teacher certification by December 1, 2000. The WPESB submitted recommendations for three alternative routes, including recommendations for funding support and implementation.

**Summary:** A statewide Partnership Grant program and the Alternative Route Conditional Scholarship program are created to support three alternative routes for teacher certification. Each route focuses on increasing the number of teachers in shortage and high need areas due to subject matter or geographic location.

Eligibility for Alternative Route One. To access state funding, the teacher candidate must meet the following requirements:

- seek an endorsement in special education, bilingual education or English as a second language;
- have three years experience as a para-educator and be currently employed as a para-educator;
- have an associate degree;
- meet the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements for teachers;
- pass the statewide basic skills exams, when available.

Eligibility for Alternative Route Two. To access state funding, the teacher candidate must meet the following requirements:

- seek certification in an identified subject or geographic shortage area;
- have three years experience in a classified staff position and be currently employed in a classified staff position;
- have a bachelor of arts or science degree;

- once the state content test is available, successful completion of the content test;
- meet the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements for teachers;
- pass the statewide basic skills exams, when available.

Eligibility for Alternative Route Three. To access state funding, the teacher candidate must meet the following requirements:

- have five years experience in the work force and is not employed in the school district;
- have a bachelor of arts or science degree;
- once the state content test is available, successful completion of the content test;
- demonstrate successful experiences with students or children (which may be shown by reference letters);
- meet the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements for teachers;
- pass the statewide basic skills exams, when available.

Priority must be given to route three candidates seeking certification in subject or geographic shortage areas. School districts may enroll route three candidates who are seeking endorsements in non-shortage subject areas if seeking a secondary grade level endorsement.

Partnership Grant Program: To the extent funds are provided, school districts may apply for state funds to partner with the regional Educational Service District and higher education teachers' preparation programs to provide one or more of the three alternative route programs. The WPESB, with support from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, selects the districts that receive grants according to specified factors. Grant funds may be used for stipends for the teacher candidates and the mentors following specific guidelines. Each of the alternative route programs must provide a mentor in the classroom with the teacher candidate until the candidate demonstrates competency necessary to manage the classroom with part-time supervision and guidance from the mentor. The mentor and supervising teacher must agree that the teacher candidate in route one and two has successfully completed the program. The mentor makes that decision for route three candidates. The programs may enroll candidates beginning in January 2002.

If specific funding is provided in the budget, then the Washington State Institute for Public Policy must evaluate the Partnership Grant programs and submit an interim evaluation to the WPESB, the Legislature, the Governor and the State Board of Education by December 1, 2002, and a final evaluation by December 1, 2004.

Alternative Route Conditional Scholarship Program: To the extent funds are provided, the WPESB awards conditional scholarships to eligible para-educators and other classified staff accepted in alternative routes one or two. The scholarship award covers up to \$4000 of the tuition cost for the alternative route in which the recipient is enrolled. The conditional scholarship provides one year of loan forgiveness in exchange for two years of teaching in a Washington State K-12 public school. If the recipient fails to teach in a Washington public school, then the individual must repay the scholarship principal with interest.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board is authorized to adopt rules, collect and manage repayments and accept grant donations for the conditional scholarship program.

The Partnership Grant program and the Alternative Route Conditional Scholarship program expire June 30, 2005.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	47	0	
House	90	6	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House	75	14	(House amended)
Senate	48	0	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 22, 2001