

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SHB 2212

C 461 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Relating to educator certification.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Hunter, Cox, Haigh, Talcott and Lantz).

House Committee on Education

House Committee on Appropriations

Senate Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education

Background:

Educator Certification

Under current law, an individual's certification to teach or be an administrator in public or approved private schools may be suspended or revoked for a series of offenses. The certification must be suspended or revoked for the conviction of certain felonies. Certification is permanently revoked if the educator or administrator pleads guilty or is convicted of any felony crime against children. These crimes include: physical injury, or death of a child; the sexual exploitation of a child; sexual offenses where a minor is the victim; promoting prostitution of a minor; the sale or purchase of a minor child; and the violation of similar laws of another jurisdiction. Each of the felonies listed is defined in the criminal code. A person whose certificate or permit has been revoked under this law must have his or her employment with the district terminated immediately. The person has certain rights under the law. He or she must be given an opportunity to be heard and has the right to appeal the decision. A person who has been terminated under these provisions remains terminated unless the person prevails on the appeal.

An employee whose certificate or permit is revoked under circumstances other than those listed above is eligible to receive another certificate or permit after a period of twelve months from the date of the revocation.

Salary Schedule

The state salary schedule recognizes the credits that teachers earn for professional development. The schedule also recognizes and rewards the attainment of advanced degrees. Professional development courses are offered through colleges or universities, Educational Service Districts (ESDs), local school districts, and professional organizations, sometimes at a cost to the participant. The Legislature also provides funding to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for professional development programs. Currently, documentation for professional development is audited by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) on a selective basis.

Summary:

Educator Certification

A school district employee must have his or her certificate or permit revoked or suspended upon a finding that the employee has engaged in any unauthorized use of school equipment to intentionally access any material depicting sexually explicit conduct or has intentionally possessed on school grounds any material depicting sexually explicit conduct. Reference to the current statutory definition of sexually explicit conduct is included. An exception for material used in conjunction with established curriculum is included. A first time offense can result in either suspension or revocation and a second offense results in mandatory revocation of the certificate. A person whose certificate is in question must be given the opportunity to be heard and has the right to appeal. These provisions are only applicable to findings that occur after the effective date of the act.

Salary Schedule

All courses earned toward a college or university degree must be obtained from an accredited educational institution if the credits are used to increase a teacher's earnings on the state salary schedule. The accrediting association must be recognized by the State Board of Education. The SPI must verify the accreditation status of degree granting institutions for school districts and provide training and resources to help the districts verify degrees. Teachers and other certificated staff who submit degrees from unaccredited institutions in order to advance on the salary schedule will be fined \$300 and required to reimburse their districts for any compensation they have received due to those degrees.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	94	3	
Senate	41	0	(Senate amended)
House	97	0	(House concurred)

Effective: July 24, 2005