

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5941

As Reported by House Committee On: Education

Title: An act relating to certification of adjunct faculty as common school substitute teachers.

Brief Description: Concerning certification of adjunct faculty as common school substitute teachers.

Sponsors: Senators Rivers, Rolfes, Litzow, Dammeier and Angel.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/16/15, 3/26/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Professional Educator Standards Board to amend or adopt rules that provide for the issuance of certification (other than emergency substitute certification) that permits currently employed higher education adjunct faculty members to serve as substitute teachers.
- Sets forth minimum criteria that must be met in order for an adjunct faculty member to obtain the substitute certification, and provides that completion of an approved teacher preparation program may not be a precondition to such certification.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 20 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Ortiz-Self, Vice Chair; Reykdal, Vice Chair; Magendanz, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Stambaugh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Fagan, Gregory, Griffey, Hargrove, Hayes, S. Hunt, Kilduff, Klippert, McCaslin, Orwall, Pollet and Springer.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

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.

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) is tasked in statute with establishing rules determining eligibility and certification of personnel employed in common schools, including certification for emergency or temporary, substitute or provisional duty. The Superintendent of Public Instruction acts as the administrator of the rules and has the power to issue and revoke certificates and permits according to the terms of the PESB rules.

Rules are in place for a variety of types of certificates for teachers, administrators, and educational staff associates. These include rules pertaining to limited certificates. Limited certificates encompass certificates for substitutes, emergency substitutes, and intern substitute teachers, as follows:

- To obtain a substitute certificate, an individual must be fully qualified for a regular teaching certificate. A substitute certificate permits the recipient to serve as a substitute teacher in any grade level or subject for up to 30 consecutive school days. The certificate is valid for life.
- An emergency substitute certificate enables someone who is not fully qualified for a regular teaching certificate to serve as a substitute in a school district that has exhausted or will exhaust its list of qualified substitutes. School districts initiate the application process for this certificate, and it is valid for up to three years.
- An intern substitute teacher certificate allows a student teacher to substitute in the classroom in which he or she is assigned for student teaching. It is valid for up to one year.

All candidates for certification must meet the following general requirements:

- No person who is less than 18 years of age may receive a certificate.
- Applicants must give evidence of good moral character and personal fitness, by means of affidavits related to any criminal history or behavioral problems, educational history, and work history. They must also complete a record check, including a fingerprint check.

Summary of Bill:

By December 1, 2015, the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) must amend or adopt rules that provide for the issuance of certification (other than emergency substitute certification) that permits currently employed higher education adjunct faculty members to serve as substitute teachers. Minimum criteria are set forth, requiring that, in order to obtain such certification, adjunct faculty members:

- possess a minimum of a master's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
- have three or more years of demonstrated successful experience instructing students; and
- meet the age, good moral character, and personal fitness requirements adopted by rule for teachers.

Persons meeting these criteria are not required to have completed an approved teacher preparation program or to hold or have held a regular teaching certificate.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) There is a substitute shortage. The bill is supported. It is not earth shattering, and won't have much impact, but it is one small step to help school districts. The bill that will help with the shortage is House Bill 1737, and that bill is very much supported. Both bills have support, and anything that can be done to help solve this problem is appreciated.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The intent of the bill is appreciated. The economy is improving, and persons who have served as substitute teachers are obtaining full time jobs. The pay for substitutes is not a huge draw. The union that represents both K-12 teachers and adjunct faculty members has not been hearing from its adjunct faculty members that this is something that they want to do. Usually, a person who teaches in the higher education system has his or her heart in higher education. They voice their desire for equal pay for equal work, but haven't voiced a desire to substitute teach in the K-12 system. Also, given that adjuncts generally work in the evenings, it may not be viable for them to serve as substitute during the day in K-12. It is possible for community college faculty to serve as emergency substitutes already. This change in the law probably won't help, but it probably won't hurt.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Rivers, prime sponsor; and Dan Steele, Washington Association of School Administrators.

(Other) Wendy Radar-Konofalski, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.