
Education Committee

HB 1756

Brief Description: Concerning career and technical education.

Sponsors: Representatives Manweller and Tarleton.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and school districts from requiring that online career and technical education (CTE) courses that are eligible for an occupational education credit be aligned with a state-recognized career and technical student organization if certain requirements are met.
- Prohibits the SPI and districts from limiting online CTE courses from approved providers to only those the district offers in a traditional classroom or skill center setting, but limits this prohibition to districts with fewer than 1,000 students.
- Modifies provisions governing the approval of school district plans for the delivery of CTE.
- Allows individuals with 8,000 hours of industry experience to enroll in certain alternative route programs if they are seeking certifications and endorsements to teach CTE courses.
- Establishes a conditional scholarship program for persons who are seeking the necessary certifications and endorsements to teach CTE courses.
- Allows up to 10 industry years to count for credit on the salary allocation schedule for teachers.
- Makes teachers who hold valid CTE certificates for the content area in which they are employed ineligible to participate in collective bargaining if the person is employed by the school district at an amount that is less than 0.4 FTE.

Hearing Date: 2/6/17

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386) and Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

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.

Background:

Career and Technical Education.

As defined in statute, "career and technical education" or CTE is a planned program of courses and learning experiences that begins with exploration of career options and supports basic academic and life skills. State law specifies that CTE enables the achievement of high academic standards, leadership, options for high-skill, high-wage employment preparation, and advanced and continuing education. Currently, a CTE instruction may be delivered through programs at middle schools, high schools, regional skill centers, and through approved online courses.

All CTE courses approved by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must be taught by an instructor who has a current certification CTE endorsement and whose endorsement matches the instructional area. There are two pathways to becoming a CTE-endorsed teacher: the college/university route; and the business and industry route. Both options require documented paid occupational experience in a specific CTE specialty area.

Standards for CTE programs are established by the OSPI, and the OSPI is responsible for reviewing and approving local plans for the delivery of a CTE by school districts. The OSPI is also authorized to provide technical assistance to local districts and to develop state guidelines for the delivery of career guidance in secondary schools.

To qualify for approval, a school district's CTE plan must satisfy specific statutory criteria, including demonstrating:

- how the CTE program will ensure academic rigor and address the skills gap of Washington's economy;
- that all preparatory CTE courses comply with specific minimum criteria established in statute;
- progress toward meeting or exceeding targets for an increased number of CTE programs in high-demand fields; and
- that approved CTE programs maximize opportunities for students to earn dual credit for high school and college.

The OSPI is required to establish performance measures and targets and to monitor the performance of CTE programs in three areas:

- student participation in and completion of high-demand programs;
- students earning dual credit for high school and college; and
- performance measures and targets established by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

If a school district does not meet the applicable performance targets, the OSPI may require the district to submit an improvement plan. If the district fails to implement an improvement plan or continues to not meet the performance targets for three consecutive years, the OSPI may deny the approval or reapproval of one or more of the district's CTE programs.

Subject to requirements of the OSPI and policies and procedures of the applicable school district, CTE instruction may be delivered through online courses offered by districts or an approved private or nonprofit entity. School districts must award credit and grades for online high school

courses successfully completed by a student that meet the school district's graduation requirements and that are provided by an approved online provider.

Graduation Requirements/CTE Provisions.

In accordance with its duty to establish and enforce graduation requirements, the State Board of Education (SBE) establishes course distribution requirements consistent with graduation credit requirements. Graduation requirements for the classes of 2017 and 2018 obligate students to earn one occupational education credit prior to receiving a diploma.

The occupational education credit may be earned through a CTE course or a course that meets the definition of an exploratory course as described in the CTE Program Standards of the SBE. The program standards require leadership skills to be integrated throughout the content of each course and require exploratory courses to demonstrate leadership skills and employability skills. The standards further specify that leadership skills and employability skills are developed and practiced at the highest professional level through integration of aligned state-recognized career and technical student organizations.

Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification.

In 2001 the Legislature authorized the alternative route to residency teacher certification programs. In these programs, one or more school districts and a Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) approved preparation program, partner to develop and offer an alternative route program. There are four alternative routes intended to attract different possible candidates, with the Route 1 and Route 2 programs designed for existing school district employees.

Route 3 is for individuals with bachelor's degrees who are not employed in the school district at the time of application. Priority for this route is given to individuals seeking residency teacher certification in subject matter or geographic shortage areas. Route 3 candidates attend an intensive summer teaching academy, followed by a full year employed by a district in a mentored internship, followed, if necessary, by a second summer teaching academy.

Route 4 is for individuals with bachelor's degrees who are employed in the district at the time of application, or who hold conditional teaching certificates. Route 4 candidates attend an intensive summer teaching academy, followed by a full year employed by a district in a mentored internship. If employed on a conditional certificate, the candidate may serve as the teacher of record, supported by a well-trained mentor.

Teacher Conditional Scholarships and Grant Programs.

A conditional scholarship is a loan that is forgiven in whole or in part in exchange for qualified service as a certificated teacher employed in a Washington public school. The conditional scholarship programs are designed to help school districts recruit teachers, particularly in subject matter and geographic shortage areas. Under most grant and scholarship programs, the state will forgive one year of loan obligation for every two years a loan recipient teaches in a Washington public school. Some programs forgive one year of loan obligation for every year a recipient teaches in a shortage area. Most programs are administered by the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC).

There are programs available for individuals in traditional and alternative route teacher preparation programs, and for teachers pursuing an endorsement in a subject or geographic

shortage area. Currently, there are no programs designed specifically for individuals seeking certification and endorsements to teach CTE courses.

Salary Allocation Schedule - Credit for Non-school Service.

For each school year, the Legislature establishes in the appropriations act a statewide salary allocation schedule that is used to distribute funds for basic education certificated instructional staff salaries. The salary schedule is for allocation purposes only, so school districts, subject to certain limitations, retain discretion over how the allocated funding is used. In some instances, school district employees may include experience in non-school positions when determining a person's placement on the salary schedule. For example, nurses, counselors, and psychologists may count up to two years of service in non-school positions as two years of school service for salary schedule purposes. The non-school position service credits, however, do not count for purposes of retirement benefits or for any other state retirement system benefits.

Collective Bargaining for Teachers.

Washington's Educational Employment Relations Act (Employment Relations Act) prescribes certain rights and obligations of the educational employees of school districts, and establishes procedures governing the relationship between the employees and their employing school district. In accordance with specified requirements, the Employment Relations Act allows qualifying certificated school district employees, including teachers, to collectively bargain with respect to wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment.

Summary of Bill:

CTE Program Delivery Provisions.

Rules governing online learning adopted by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and associated policies and procedures adopted by school district boards of directors may not:

- require online CTE courses that are eligible for the occupational education credit required for graduation from a public high school to be aligned with a state-recognized career and technical student organization (CTSO) if the school or district can provide the student with alternative options for demonstrating leadership and employability skills for the online course, including community-based options, that are comparable to those traditionally available through a CTSO; or
- limit the online CTE courses available to students from approved online providers to only those courses that the district offers to students in a traditional classroom or skill center setting. This provision applies only to districts that enroll fewer than 1,000 students.

Provisions governing the criteria that school districts must satisfy to have their CTE plan qualify for approval or re-approval are modified. In order to receive approval, school district plans must align CTE programs with statewide and local industry projections and career cluster needs evidenced through economic development data. The plans must also use appropriate longitudinal data when demonstrating progress toward meeting or exceeding applicable performance measures and targets of the OSPI.

Alternative Route Eligibility and Conditional Scholarships.

Alternative Route 3 and Route 4 programs are made available to individuals without baccalaureate degrees who have at least 8,000 hours of industry experience and who are seeking certifications and endorsements to teach CTE courses.

The CTE Conditional Scholarship Program is established to provide scholarships for individuals seeking certifications and endorsements to teach CTE courses, subject to funding provided by the Legislature. The program must be administered by the WSAC, and administrative duties include disbursing scholarships, collecting and managing repayments for recipients who do not meet their loan obligations, and accepting donations from public and private sources.

The PESB is charged with selecting individuals to receive the conditional scholarships.

The program is limited to persons accepted and enrolled in PESB-approved teacher preparation programs, who are making satisfactory progress toward completing the program. The maximum annual scholarship amount is \$8,000.

Under the scholarship's provisions, the state must forgive one year of loan obligation for every two years a recipient teaches in a public school. However, the state must forgive one year of loan obligation for each year a recipient teaches in a public school if the recipient teaches at a school that meets specified free or reduced price meal eligibility requirements, and holds a valid CTE teaching certificate for the content area in which he or she is assigned.

Salary Allocation Schedule-Credit for Non-school Service.

With respect to the state's salary allocation schedule, classroom teachers who hold a valid CTE teaching certificate for the content area in which he or she is assigned are given credit for years of industry experience in any state. The calculation must be that one year of industry experience, up to a maximum of 10 years, counts as one year of service for purposes of the salary schedule. Industry years of experience, however, do not count for purposes of retirement benefits or for any other state retirement system benefits.

Limits to Collective Bargaining for Part-time CTE Teachers.

Teachers who hold a valid CTE teaching certificate for the content area in which they are assigned and who are employed by the school district at an amount that is less than four-tenths of a full-time equivalent position are ineligible to participate in collective bargaining under the Employment Relations Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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