

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6726

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### As Passed House:

March 7, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to the professional educator standards board establishing a professional-level certification assessment.

**Brief Description:** Granting the professional educator standards board ongoing authority to establish professional-level certification assessments and performance standards.

**Sponsors:** By Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Tom, McAuliffe and Rasmussen).

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Education: 2/26/08 [DP].

#### Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/7/08, 93-1.

### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Codifies a requirement for the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to develop and implement a uniform assessment for the professional teaching certificate.
- Authorizes the PESB to contract for the assessment and provides that individuals taking the assessment pay fees directly to the contractor.

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## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Liias, Roach, Santos and Sullivan.

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

### Background:

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*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 a 20-member board responsible for establishing requirements for state certification of educators and approving educator preparation and certification programs. The PESB is authorized to contract for assessments to determine the basic skills and subject knowledge of teacher certification applicants, with the assessment fee to be paid by the applicant directly to the contractor.

Within five years of receiving an initial or residency teaching certificate, teachers must enroll in a program to earn a professional certificate. Professional certification programs are performance-based and include a pre-assessment seminar, a professional growth team and plan, and a culminating seminar. The 2007 Legislature directed the PESB, by June 2009, to set performance standards and to develop, pilot, and implement a uniform and externally-administered assessment for the professional certificate, based on demonstrated teaching skills. The PESB was also directed to consider changing professional certification program requirements such as the culminating seminar.

However, the 2007 language was not codified in statute and did not amend the section of law that authorizes the PESB to contract for the uniform assessment and permit the collection of assessment fees by the contractor.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The requirement for the PESB to set performance standards and to develop, pilot, and implement a uniform and externally-administered assessment for the professional certificate is codified in statute, along with a direction that the PESB consider changing professional certification program requirements such as the culminating seminar. The PESB must accomplish these tasks by January 2010. The PESB is authorized to contract for the assessment. Individuals taking the assessment pay any fees directly to the contractor.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Due to concerns about the professional certification process, last year the Legislature asked the PESB to develop and pilot a uniform assessment. However, the Attorney General found that the PESB needed specific authority to contract with a vendor and have candidates pay the vendor an assessment fee. This is a technical fix to legislation passed last year. It is important to be able to move forward because without this statutory authority, the progress being made was halted. This is an important aspect of improving teacher preparation and teacher quality.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Tom, prime sponsor; Nasue Nishida, Professional Educator Standards Board; and Judy Hartmann, Governor's Policy Office.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.