

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5640

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 13, 1991

Brief Description: Providing an alternate teacher certification program.

SPONSORS: Senators Craswell, Rasmussen, Bailey, McDonald, Cantu and Thorsness.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Erwin, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Craswell, Metcalf, and Oke.

Staff: Susan Mosborg (786-7439)

Hearing Dates: February 20, 1991; February 26, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Recent rapid growth in the school-age population in Washington has increased the demand for teachers and caused a widespread shortage of substitutes. Continued rapid growth is likely to cause a statewide shortage of teachers in most subject areas. It has been suggested that providing alternate teacher certification will help prevent a teacher shortage and attract persons of diverse backgrounds and expertise into the teaching profession.

SUMMARY:

The State Board of Education shall establish an alternate teacher certificate that will allow eligible persons to qualify for initial teacher certification by completing one quarter of teacher education classes and two years of full-time teaching under the guidance and supervision of a school district. The certificate will be available beginning in the 1992-93 school year.

Candidates for the alternate teacher certificate must: (1) have a bachelor's degree in the arts, sciences or humanities; (2) have at least 10 years' work experience relevant to the subject area in which the candidate is seeking endorsement; (3) meet the age and character requirements established by the State Board of Education for all certificated school staff; and (4) have a contract for employment with a school district in the state.

The State Board of Education establishes rules for the preservice course work requirements. No more than 15 quarter hours of coursework or its equivalent in inservice clock hours may be required. Prior to teaching, the candidate must also

develop a written plan with the school district for supervision, guidance and support. The plan must include assignment of a mentor teacher.

The alternate certificate is valid for not more than two years of full-time teaching, or its equivalent. Candidates who wish to continue teaching beyond that time must apply for regular teacher certification. Regular initial certification shall be granted by the Superintendent of Public Instruction without the requirement of additional coursework or experience.

The State Board of Education shall report the standards adopted for the alternate certificate to the Legislature by December 15, 1991, and report on the program each year.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

Nationwide, teacher preparation programs are graduating only about one tenth the number of teachers that will be needed. The supply of graduates in the areas of math, science, and foreign language is especially low. Non-traditional certification paths have worked very well for some individuals.

Teacher recruitment and training is worth some calculated risk taking. More than 15 states are experimenting with alternative certification.

School boards have long supported alternative certification. This proposal is cautioned and cautious, and is close to what the State Board of Education is doing with its internship certificate pilot program.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

The bill is unnecessary. The State Board of Education has met the intent of alternative certification proposals by adopting rules for an internship certificate pilot program.

TESTIFIED: Matt Ryan (pro); Lynn Harsh, Mike Snodgrass, teachers (pro); Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association (pro); Ted Andrews, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction