

FINAL BILL REPORT

EHB 1654

C 14 L 17
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Changing explicit alternative routes to teacher certification program requirements to expectations for program outcomes.

Sponsors: Representatives McCaslin, Bergquist, Ortiz-Self, Muri and Pollet; by request of Professional Educator Standards Board.

House Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

Background:

In 2001 the Legislature first 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.

The PESB provides grant funding to support alternative route programs that engage in grow your own teacher strategies. These grants are available to preparation programs, school districts, and teacher candidates (in the form of scholarships). Applicants are selected based on their commitment and ability to partner with one another in order to create effective alternative route programs that meet district workforce development needs. The PESB provides technical assistance and guidance in creating strong partnerships, developing clear expectations, identifying how to structure the alternative route programs for greater success, and understanding the regional and state needs of districts.

There are various alternative route programs intended to attract different possible candidates, and these are described in statute, as follows:

- *Route 1: For Classified Staff with Transferable Associate Degrees.* Alternative route programs operating Route 1 enroll currently employed classified instructional employees (paraeducators) with transferable associate degrees seeking residency teacher certification with endorsements in special education, bilingual education, or English as a second language. Candidates enrolled in Route 1 complete both their baccalaureate degree and requirements for residency certification in two years or less, including a mentored internship to be completed in the final year.

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.

- *Route 2: For Classified Staff with Baccalaureate Degrees.* Alternative route programs operating Route 2 enroll currently employed classified staff with baccalaureate degrees seeking residency teacher certification in subject matter shortage areas or shortages due to geographic location. Candidates enrolled in Route 2 must complete a mentored internship complemented by flexibly scheduled training and coursework offered at a local site, such as a school or educational service district, or online or via video-conference, in collaboration with the higher education partner.
- *Route 3: For Individuals with Baccalaureate Degrees Employed Outside the School System.* Alternative route programs operating Route 3 enroll individuals with baccalaureate degrees, who are not employed in the district at the time of application. Priority is given to individuals who are seeking residency teacher certification in subject matter shortage areas or shortages due to geographic location. Candidates enrolled in Route 3 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: For Individuals Teaching with Conditional Certificates.* Alternative route programs operating Route 4 enroll individuals with baccalaureate degrees, who are employed in the district at the time of application, or who hold conditional teaching certificates. Candidates enrolled in Route 4 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.

Summary:

The PESB has the duty to establish policies for the approval of nontraditional preparation programs and to provide oversight and accountability related to the quality of these programs. The PESB is directed to construct rules with respect to alternative route programs that address the competitive grant process and program design. It is specified that the program design must continue to evolve over time to reflect the innovations and improvements in educator preparation.

In establishing and amending rules for the alternative route programs, the PESB must:

- uphold criteria for alternative route program design that is innovative and reflects evidence-based practice;
- ensure that approved partnerships reflect district engagement in their resident alternative route program as an integral part of their future workforce development, as well as school and student learning improvement strategies;
- provide for the issuance of preservice certification necessary to serve as substitute teachers in classrooms within the residency school for up to 10 days per school year;
- continue to prioritize program designs tailored to the needs of experienced paraeducators and candidates of high academic attainment in the subject area they intend to teach, taking into account school district demand for certain credentials;
- expand access and opportunity for individuals to become teachers statewide; and
- give preference in admissions to applicants who are eligible veterans or National Guard members and who meet the entry requirements.

Beginning December 1, 2017, and each odd-numbered year thereafter, the PESB must report to the Legislature regarding outcomes of the alternative route programs. In considering rules, and reporting outcomes, the PESB must examine the historical record of the data, reporting on:

- the number and percentage of completers hired;
- the percentage of completers from underrepresented populations;
- three and five year retention rates of completers;
- the average hiring dates of completers; and
- the percentage of completers hired in districts where their program was completed.

The statute that describes, in detail, each of the alternative route programs is repealed. Provisions describing the proposal for a preparation program to apply to offer an alternative route program are removed.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	98	0
Senate	49	0

Effective: July 23, 2017