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## Education Committee

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### HB 1651

**Brief Description:** Concerning teacher residency and apprenticeship programs.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Ortiz-Self, Reed and Eslick.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Describes a teacher residency and establishes requirements for teacher residency programs.
- Directs the Professional Educator Standards Board to establish a process to approve teacher residency programs.
- Describes a teacher apprenticeship program and establishes requirements for teacher apprenticeship programs.
- Expands student eligibility for the Alternative Route Conditional Scholarship program to students in teacher residency programs.
- Renames educator certificates.

**Hearing Date:** 2/3/25

**Staff:** Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

**Background:**

Educator Preparation Programs.

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) adopts rules and creates policies for the preparation and certification of educators. The PESB approves entities to offer preparation programs for prospective educators, such as teachers, principals, and school counselors.

All teacher preparation programs (TPPs) leading to a Washington teacher certificate must meet

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minimum state standards established by the PESB. Each teacher preparation program is required to develop, and submit to the PESB, a plan describing how the program will partner with local school districts regarding field placement of student teachers.

*Traditional.* A traditional PESB-approved teacher preparation program (TPP) is generally offered by an institution of higher education. One component of teacher preparation programs is a student teaching experience in a classroom setting. The PESB requires this experience to be at least 450 hours, including supervised planning, instruction, and reflection. The experience must also relate to specific program outcomes and be designed to integrate educational theory, knowledge, and skills in practice under the direction of a certificated teacher with three years of teaching experience.

*Alternative route.* Alternative route to teacher certification (alternative route) programs are partnerships between PESB-approved TPPs, Washington school districts, and other partners as appropriate that focus on teacher shortage areas. In addition to meeting TPP standards, an alternative route program must meet partnership agreement requirements and implement a development plan for each candidate. The PESB requires alternative route programs to include a one-year mentored internship and 540 hours of student teaching.

*Apprenticeship.* The state Washington Apprenticeship and Training Council, within the state Department of Labor and Industries, establishes apprenticeship program standards as rules, including requirements for apprentice-related and supplemental instruction, coordination of instruction with job experiences, and instructor qualifications. These standards include 2,000 hours of on-the-job training. Federal apprenticeship laws require a teacher apprenticeship program to be sponsored by an employer, labor union, industry association, educational institution, or workforce board, so a PESB-approved TPP can be registered as a teacher apprenticeship program.

#### Teacher Certifications.

Washington has been issuing residency and professional certificates to teachers since September 2000. The residency teacher certificate is Washington's initial teacher license. Applicants for this certificate must: possess a bachelor's degree or higher; complete an assessment in the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics; pass a content knowledge assessment; pass a fingerprint-based criminal history record check; and, for in-state applicants, complete a PESB-approved TPP.

The professional teacher certificate is Washington's second-tier teacher license; this certificate is optional. Applicants for this certificate must meet one of the following requirements: two years of successful teaching experience as defined by the PESB; National Board Certification; or five years of successful teaching plus either an advanced level teacher certificate from another state deemed comparable to the Washington professional certificate or an advanced level international teacher certificate deemed comparable to the Washington professional certificate.

#### Beginning Educator Support Team Program.

The Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) program provides professional development and mentor support for beginning educators. A BEST mentor is one who has successfully completed training in assisting, coaching, and advising beginning educators, has been selected using mentor standards developed by the OSPI, and is participating in ongoing mentor-skills professional development.

#### Alternative Route Conditional Scholarship.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) administers the Alternative Route Conditional Scholarship (CS) program, which provides financial assistance to encourage persons to become teachers through alternative route programs and to retain these teachers in shortage areas. A CS is a loan that is forgiven, in whole or in part, in exchange for qualified service. The maximum CS award is \$8,000 per person per year, for up to two years.

The CS is forgiven when the recipient fulfills the following service obligation: serve as a certificated employee for two school years for each year of CS received; or serve as a certificated employee in a shortage area for one school year for each year of CS received.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### Teacher Residency Program.

A teacher residency is described as a teacher preparation model that integrates a full year of collaborative hands-on classroom teaching with an experienced mentor with concurrent, targeted academic coursework designed to develop effective, community-focused teachers. It is specified that this collaborative model must be offered by a public elementary or secondary school and a Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)-approved teacher preparation program (TPP).

At a minimum, a teacher residency program must meet the following requirements:

- the program must be operated as a formal partnership between a school district or state-tribal education compact school and a PESB-approved TPP;
- the program partners must collaboratively design the coursework to align with the unique context of each resident's classroom;
- each resident must be assigned a preservice mentor who must co-teach with the resident throughout the duration of the resident's 900-hour preservice clinical experience over the course of one school year. The preservice mentor must be qualified to be a mentor for the Beginning Educator Support Team Program;
- undergraduate residents must complete 900 hours, and graduate residents 450 hours, of preservice clinical practice before assuming primary responsibility for student learning. Each resident must be grouped into a cohort based on geography, specialty, or other relevant criteria determined by the board; and
- funding must be provided to each resident and a stipend must be provided to each preservice mentor.

The PESB must establish an approval process for a PESB-approved TPP in partnership with a school district, state-tribal education compact school, or a group of school districts or state-tribal

education compact schools to either: (1) become a new TPP; or (2) transition some or all of an existing TPP to a teacher residency program.

Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

A teacher apprenticeship program is described as a program approved by both the Washington Apprenticeship and Training Council and the PESB that is designed for individuals with bachelor's degrees who seek an initial teacher certificate and no graduate degree. In addition to meeting other requirements, the program must provide the apprentice with 2,000 hours of on-the-job mentored teaching experience under a gradual release method.

Alternative Route Conditional Scholarship.

Eligibility for the Alternative Route Conditional Scholarship Program is expanded to include students in teacher residency programs.

Teacher Certificate Name Changes.

The PESB is directed to prepare for the following educator certificate name changes, effective July 1, 2026: the "residency certificate" will be renamed the "initial certificate," and the "professional certificate" will be renamed the "continuing 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.