S-3702.1

SENATE BILL 6278

State of Washington 69th Legislature 2026 Regular Session

By Senator Wellman

Read first time 01/22/26. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

AN ACT Relating to the ongoing review of approved teacher and principal preparation programs; amending RCW 28A.410.275 and 28B.10.033; creating a new section; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature intends to ensure that Washington teacher preparation programs engage in meaningful review processes that strengthen the programs' abilities to prepare educators for the modern classroom. It is critical that Washington's teacher preparation system integrates the knowledge and skills that educators need to effectively serve each and every student and is responsive to the changing needs of the communities being served by the teacher preparation system. This act seeks to streamline existing accountability measures of teacher preparation programs to support meaningful review of and self-reflection by programs, include input from those within the education system that are being served by teacher preparation programs, and facilitate the continuous improvement of Washington's teacher preparation system.

Sec. 2. RCW 28A.410.275 and 2019 c 386 s 8 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The Washington professional educator standards board must periodically review approved preparation programs to assess whether and to what extent the programs are meeting knowledge, skill, and performance standards, and publish on its website the results of the review in a format that facilitates program comparison.

(2) Ongoing review of fully approved teacher and principal preparation programs must include the following components as established by the Washington professional educator standards board:

(a) Program standards;

(b) Educator role standards;

(c) Evidence submitted by programs; and

(d) Input from community constituents and prekindergarten and K-12 partners including, but not limited to, input from educators in the classroom and administrators within school districts that may have direct experience with the program being reviewed.

(3) The Washington professional educator standards board shall regularly update the components established in subsection (2) of this section to reflect the changing needs of the modern classroom as identified by educators in the classroom and as identified through a review of changes to state and federal requirements. This regular update is intended to promote better continuity, communication, consistency, and coherence across the educator preparation system and the prekindergarten and K-12 community it serves, and enable educator preparation programs to better respond and adapt in a timely manner to the changing needs of the prekindergarten and K-12 system.

(4) Following a review using the components established in subsection (2) of this section, the Washington professional educator standards board will determine a response to any areas of practice where the program's performance is out of alignment with standards and requirements, provide the program notice of that response, and require the program to identify actions that will be taken to come into alignment with the standards and requirements.

Sec. 3. RCW 28B.10.033 and 2019 c 295 s 202 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) Each Washington professional educator standards board-approved teacher preparation program, including an alternative route teacher certification program, must develop a plan describing how the program will partner with school districts in the general geographic region of the program regarding field placement of student teachers.

The plans must be developed in collaboration with school districts desiring to partner with the programs, and may include use of unexpended federal or state funds to support residencies and mentoring for students who are likely to continue teaching in the district in which they have a supervised field placement.

(b) ((~~Beginning July 1, 2020, the~~)) The following goals must be considered when developing the plans required under this section:

(i) Field placement of student teachers should be targeted to high-need subject areas, including special education and English language learner, and high-need geographic areas, including Title I and rural schools; and

(ii) Student teacher mentors should be highly effective as evidenced by the mentors having received level 3 or above on both criteria 3 (recognizing individual student learning needs and developing strategies to address those needs) and criteria 6 (using multiple student data elements to modify instruction and improve student learning) on their most recent comprehensive performance evaluation under RCW 28A.405.100. Student teacher mentors should also have received or be concurrently receiving professional development in mentoring skills.

(2) The plans required under subsection (1) of this section must be submitted to the Washington professional educator standards board and updated ((~~by July 1st every even-numbered year~~)) on a schedule established by the Washington professional educator standards board at a frequency of no less than one submission every three years.

(3) The Washington professional educator standards board shall post the plans and updates required under this section on its website.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Section 3 of this act takes effect January 1, 2027.

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