
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Connie Leyva, Chair

2019 - 2020 Regular

Bill No:	AB 525	Hearing Date:	June 5, 2019
Author:	Luz Rivas		
Version:	March 18, 2019		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Ian Johnson		

Subject: Teacher credentialing.

SUMMARY

This bill allows individuals seeking a special education or pupil personnel services teaching credential to hold a baccalaureate degree in education and makes other technical changes related to teacher credentialing.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the education specialist credential to authorize teachers to teach students with exceptional needs, and establishes the pupil personnel services credential to authorize individuals to serve as school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and school child welfare and attendance services personnel.
- 2) Permits candidates for multiple subject teaching credentials to have earned a baccalaureate degree in education.
- 3) Prohibits candidates for single subject credentials, education specialist credentials, and pupil personnel services credentials from having a baccalaureate degree in education.
- 4) Establishes the non-personally identifiable education number for each educator to whom the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) issues a credential, certificate, permit, or other document.
- 5) Establishes a single subject credential in World Languages with an authorization in Chinese.
- 6) Requires the CTC to submit biennial reports to the Legislature concerning teacher assignments and misassignments based, in part, on the annual reports of the county superintendents of schools.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Permits candidates for the education specialist credential, which authorizes teaching special education, and the pupil personnel services credential, which includes school counseling, school social work, school psychology, and school child welfare and attendance services, to have majored in education.
- 2) Removes references to “highly qualified teacher” under the No Child Left Behind Act, which was eliminated when the law was reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act.
- 3) Removes a reference to pre-internship credentials, which are no longer issued.
- 4) Requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to periodically provide reports and recommendations to the Legislature regarding the state’s teacher workforce for purposes of developing and reviewing state policy, identifying workforce trends, and identifying future needs.
- 5) Requires these reports to be made publicly available on the CTC’s website. States that the CTC may make use of information obtained from the California Department of Education (CDE), including information obtained for purposes of monitoring teacher assignments.
- 6) States that the nonpersonally identifiable educator identification number for each educator to whom the CTC issues a credential, certificate, permit, or other document authorizing that individual to provide a service in the public schools shall be used for purposes of sharing data with local educational agencies (LEAs) and the CDE to satisfy the reporting requirements of reporting on the teacher workforce and misassignment monitoring system.
- 7) Permits the nonpersonally identifiable educator identification number to be used to disclose data for research purposes, pursuant to Civil Code requirements regarding, among other things, protection of human subjects.
- 8) Clarifies, for purposes of identifying that the authorization for single subject world languages teachers to teach Chinese is either an authorization to teach Mandarin or Cantonese.
- 9) Eliminates the requirement to ensure that oral proficiency in English is a criterion for scoring the performance of candidates.
- 10) Corrects obsolete code references.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “The shortage of teachers in California could grow even worse should the Legislature fail to update statutes governing the agency that trains and licenses them. The CTC on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) is tasked with ensuring integrity, relevance, and quality in the preparation, certification, and discipline of California teachers.

AB 525 makes a number of statutory changes that the Commission has identified as necessary, dealing with a range of subjects including baccalaureate requirements, data-sharing, teaching assessments, internships, and terminology.”

- 2) ***Background on education major prohibition.*** The prohibition on teachers majoring in education as undergraduates dates back to the Fisher Act of 1961. According to Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) history, “profound international and national happenings merged alternately with purely California considerations to result in a climatic session of the 1961 Legislature.” Notably, the 1961 legislature dealt with “an aggressive drive by the Soviet Union toward some kind of world supremacy,” combined with a strong dislike and distrust of professional “educationalists.” The CTC history notes that “this storm of public criticism reached its peak in 1958, incited by the Soviet launch of Sputnik in fall of 1957.” Two organizations formed to lobby on this issue in the 1950’s. The Council for Basic Education (which remained active until 2004) and the Committee for Improving Teacher Education, led by university presidents, Nobel laureates, an encyclopedia editor, and “pointedly lacking traditional professional educators.” These organizations argued that “...while professional education departments might be tolerated, they should serve a minor role in teacher preparation.” They argued that the schools “had added many ‘frills’ and non-essentials to the curriculum; they had employed teachers who had been thoroughly ‘brainwashed’ by the college departments of education.” They sought to “reduce drastically the ‘professional’ preparation of teachers.”
- 3) ***Would universities develop education majors for teacher candidates?*** Due to restrictions at the federal level related to financial aid, it is unclear whether this bill will result in any new programs being designed by the universities. Specifically, federal law allows students receiving Pell Grants to extend their award for an additional year of post-baccalaureate study leading to a teaching credential. However, to be eligible for this Pell Grant extension, a student must be pursuing their credential from an institution that does not offer a baccalaureate degree in education. Therefore, absent a change in the law at the federal level, it may be unlikely that the universities would design new programs authorized by this bill that would cause other students to lose their Pell Grant eligibility.
- 4) ***Arguments in support.*** Public Advocates writes, regarding the bill’s requirement that the CTC periodically provide reports and recommendations to the Legislature regarding the state’s teacher workforce: “With the modernization of the teacher assignment monitoring system (proposed both in the Governor’s budget as well as in AB 1219 (Jones-Sawyer), it is critical that the CTC continue to elevate teacher workforce issues to the Legislature. Equitable access to qualified teachers continues to be an issue in California, and lawmakers need to have the relevant data regularly presented so they are able to legislate and budget to ensure every student is taught by a prepared and qualified teacher.”

SUPPORT

Commission on Teacher Credentialing
Public Advocates

OPPOSITION

None received

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