

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 4152
By: Rose
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Texas currently faces a shortage of teachers in areas such as special education, mathematics, science, and bilingual education. As a result, many students are taught by out-of-field teachers, often leading to lower student achievement in these areas. Currently, the rigid timetable for submitting paperwork and passing the Texas certification exam is preventing some qualified teachers in these areas from being able to enter a classroom immediately. One way to alleviate this shortage is to provide teachers certified in needed disciplines in other states who have recently moved to Texas with certification reciprocity to teach in Texas with a two-year temporary certification. This would simplify the certification process for out-of-state teachers certified in a shortage area to quickly enter a Texas classroom and allow certified teachers to begin teaching in a shortage area immediately.

H.B. 4152 requires the State Board of Educator Certification to issue a teaching certificate to an educator who holds a certificate or other credential issued by another state or country to teach in certain subject areas the commissioner of education determines has a shortage of teachers. The bill requires the teacher to apply for certification to the State Board for Educator Certification and pass the appropriate Texas certification exam within two years of the teacher's start date.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 4152 amends the Education Code to require, rather than authorize, the State Board for Educator Certification to issue a certificate to an educator who meets certain degree, certification, and examination requirements. The bill clarifies that the requirement to issue a certificate applies to an educator who applies for the certificate. The bill expands the list of conditions that qualify an educator to be issued a certificate to include an educator who holds a certificate or other credential issued by another state or country to teach mathematics, science, special education, bilingual education, or another subject area that the commissioner determines has a shortage of teachers. The bill requires the educator to perform satisfactorily on the state examination for certification not later than the second anniversary of the date the certificate from the other state was issued. The bill requires the board to post on the board's Internet website the procedures for obtaining the certificate described by the bill's provisions. The bill requires the commissioner of education to provide guidance to school districts that employ an educator certified as provided by the bill on procedures to classify the educator as a highly qualified teacher in a manner consistent with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.