

1-1 By: West S.B. No. 1511
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 10, 2011; March 22, 2011, read
1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Education; April 20, 2011,
1-4 reported adversely, with favorable Committee Substitute by the
1-5 following vote: Yeas 7, Nays 0; April 20, 2011, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 1511 By: West

1-7 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-8 AN ACT

1-9 relating to minimum standards for approval of educator preparation
1-10 programs.

1-11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-12 SECTION 1. Section 21.044, Education Code, is amended to
1-13 read as follows:

1-14 Sec. 21.044. EDUCATOR PREPARATION. (a) The board shall
1-15 propose rules establishing the training requirements a person must
1-16 accomplish to obtain a certificate, enter an internship, or enter
1-17 an induction-year program. The board shall propose rules
1-18 specifying [specify] the minimum academic qualifications required
1-19 for a certificate.

1-20 (b) In addition to satisfying applicable requirements and
1-21 meeting applicable qualifications established under Subsection
1-22 (a), to obtain a classroom teaching certificate, including a
1-23 certificate qualifying a person to teach career and technical or
1-24 special education classes, unless a certificate is awarded under
1-25 Subsection (c), a person must:

1-26 (1) maintain an overall grade point average of at
1-27 least 2.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent while enrolled in
1-28 an educator preparation program; or

1-29 (2) earn a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a
1-30 four-point scale or the equivalent for the last 60 semester credit
1-31 hours attempted at a public or private institution of higher
1-32 education.

1-33 (c) Based on extraordinary circumstances, as determined by
1-34 the board in accordance with board rule, the board may award a
1-35 certificate to a person who would be eligible for a certificate if
1-36 not for the person's failure to satisfy a grade point average
1-37 requirement as specified under Subsection (b)(1) or (2). In any
1-38 year, the board may not award certificates under this subsection to
1-39 more than five percent of an educator preparation program's
1-40 candidates for certification for that year.

1-41 (d) An educator preparation program may impose requirements
1-42 or qualifications in addition to requirements and qualifications
1-43 established under this section.

1-44 SECTION 2. Section 21.045, Education Code, is amended by
1-45 adding Subsections (d) and (e) to read as follows:

1-46 (d) The performance standards under Subsection (c) must
1-47 include a requirement that an educator preparation program,
1-48 including an undergraduate, alternative certification, or
1-49 postbaccalaureate program, admit only an applicant for admission
1-50 who:

1-51 (1) has, except as provided by Subsection (e):

1-52 (A) maintained an overall grade point average of
1-53 at least 2.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent on any course
1-54 work previously attempted at a public or private institution of
1-55 higher education; or

1-56 (B) earned a grade point average of at least 2.5
1-57 on a four-point scale or the equivalent for the last 60 semester
1-58 credit hours attempted at a public or private institution of higher
1-59 education;

1-60 (2) demonstrates, in a manner determined by the
1-61 board, basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics;

1-62 (3) has successfully completed at least 18 semester
1-63 credit hours in the subject-specific content area in which the

2-1 applicant is pursuing certification; and
 2-2 (4) if the applicant is seeking initial certification,
 2-3 has achieved a satisfactory level of performance on a content
 2-4 certification examination, which may be a content certification
 2-5 examination administered by a vendor approved by the commissioner
 2-6 for purposes of administering such an examination for the year for
 2-7 which the applicant is applying for admission to the program.

2-8 (e) The performance standards under Subsection (c) must
 2-9 permit an educator preparation program to admit an applicant who
 2-10 fails to satisfy a grade point average requirement prescribed by
 2-11 Subsection (d)(1)(A) or (B), provided that:

2-12 (1) not more than five percent of the total number of
 2-13 applicants admitted to the program in a year fail to satisfy the
 2-14 requirement under Subsection (d)(1)(A) or (B); and

2-15 (2) for each applicant admitted as described by this
 2-16 subsection, the director of the program:

2-17 (A) determines, based on documentation provided
 2-18 by the applicant, that the applicant's work, business, or career
 2-19 experience demonstrates achievement; and

2-20 (B) maintains and makes available at the request
 2-21 of the board the documentation provided under Paragraph (A).

2-22 SECTION 3. Subsection (a), Section 21.048, Education Code,
 2-23 is amended to read as follows:

2-24 (a) The board shall propose rules prescribing comprehensive
 2-25 examinations for each class of certificate issued by the board. The
 2-26 board shall determine the satisfactory level of performance
 2-27 required for each certification examination. The board shall
 2-28 require a satisfactory level of examination performance in English
 2-29 language arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies
 2-30 for the issuance of a generalist or multi-subject certificate.

2-31 SECTION 4. Subchapter A, Chapter 21, Education Code, is
 2-32 amended by adding Section 21.008 to read as follows:

2-33 Sec. 21.008. BIENNIAL REPORT ON EDUCATORS. (a) Not later
 2-34 than December 1 of each even-numbered year, the agency shall
 2-35 prepare, publish, and submit to the legislature a report regarding
 2-36 public school staffing and the working conditions for public school
 2-37 educators. The report also shall be posted on the agency's Internet
 2-38 website.

2-39 (b) The report must contain, at a minimum, the following
 2-40 staffing information for each public school campus:

2-41 (1) the percentage of teachers assigned to teach
 2-42 subjects outside the teacher's area of certification or expertise;

2-43 (2) the percentage of teachers employed under
 2-44 emergency certificates;

2-45 (3) teacher turnover rates; and

2-46 (4) the number and percentage of teachers who have
 2-47 less than one year of teaching experience.

2-48 (c) The report must contain information regarding working
 2-49 conditions in each school district based on a statewide survey
 2-50 conducted by the agency of educators. To encourage the uninhibited
 2-51 participation of educators, the survey must be designed to prevent
 2-52 the disclosure of the identity of a survey participant. The agency
 2-53 shall include in the report recommendations for improving the
 2-54 working conditions at campuses identified by the agency, based on
 2-55 the results of the survey, as having poor working conditions.

2-56 (d) The commissioner is directed to seek private funding for
 2-57 the creation, implementation, and analysis of the survey.
 2-58 Implementation of this section is contingent upon securing funding.

2-59 SECTION 5. Sections 21.044 and 21.045, Education Code, as
 2-60 amended by this Act, apply only to a person admitted to an educator
 2-61 preparation program on or after January 1, 2012.

2-62 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
 2-63 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
 2-64 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
 2-65 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
 2-66 Act takes effect September 1, 2011.

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