

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 544
By: Blanco
Education
6/28/2023
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Nationally, there is a shortage of professional educators within the K-12 environment, and Texas is no exception. The pandemic has only exacerbated this teacher shortage, and educators are leaving the profession at record levels. As a result, Texas needs creative solutions to the state's worsening teacher workforce shortage.

The Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) is an accredited institution through Air University by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. There are over 3,700 CCAF instructors based in Texas, teaching primarily in Wichita Falls, San Antonio, and San Angelo. Additionally, there are over 48 campuses in Texas with instructors across the state.

S.B. 544 seeks to provide military members teaching at the Community College of the Air Force a direct pathway to teaching within the Texas K-12 system. The State of Florida first passed similar legislation in 2006, which created a process to streamline certification for qualified CCAF instructors.

S.B. 544 would allow qualified CCAF instructors to bypass an educator preparation program, which is a prerequisite for the instructor to obtain teacher certification from the state. Instead, the instructor would only have to take the necessary certification exams to ensure they are prepared to enter a K-12 classroom. In addition, the CCAF instructor must hold at least a bachelor's degree, an appropriate certificate or credential, and have taught at least two full-time semesters.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

S.B. 544 amends current law relating to the issuance of a temporary teaching certificate to and requirements regarding educator certification for certain persons with experience as instructors for the Community College of the Air Force.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the State Board for Educator Certification in SECTION 1 (Section 21.0525, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 21, Education Code, by adding Section 21.0525, as follows:

Sec. 21.0525. CERTIFICATION OF CERTAIN MILITARY INSTRUCTORS; TEMPORARY TEACHING CERTIFICATE. (a) Requires the State Board for Educator Certification to propose rules providing for a person who holds a bachelor's degree and has at least two semesters' experience as a full-time instructor for the Community College of the Air Force to:

(1) be issued a temporary teaching certificate on the person's enrollment in an educator preparation program; and

(2) receive credit for the person's education, training, and clinical or professional experience as an instructor for the Community College of the Air Force toward the requirements for completion of an educator preparation program, including requirements regarding coursework, field-based experience, or clinical experience.

(b) Provides that a temporary teaching certificate issued under this section is valid for a term of one year from the date of issuance.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2023.