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# SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Connie Leyva, Chair

2019 - 2020 Regular

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**Bill No:** AB 988 **Hearing Date:** June 5, 2019  
**Author:** Berman  
**Version:** April 4, 2019  
**Urgency:** No **Fiscal:** Yes  
**Consultant:** Ian Johnson

**Subject:** Teacher credentialing: out-of-state prepared teachers: education specialist credential.

## SUMMARY

This bill allows an out-of-state prepared candidate for the education specialist credential to demonstrate their area of concentration based on two years of experience in California, while the candidate holds a Preliminary credential.

## BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to issue a five-year preliminary multiple subject teaching credential authorizing instruction in a self-contained classroom, a five-year preliminary single subject teaching credential authorizing instruction in departmentalized classes, or a five-year preliminary education specialist credential authorizing instruction of special education pupils to an out-of-state prepared teacher who meets all of the following requirements:
  - a) Possesses a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
  - b) Has completed a teacher preparation program at a regionally accredited institution of higher education, or a state-approved teacher preparation program offered by a local educational agency.
  - c) Meets the subject matter knowledge requirements for the credential. If the subject area listed on the out-of-state credential does not correspond to a California subject area, the CTC may require the applicant to meet California subject matter requirements before issuing a clear credential.
  - d) Has earned a valid corresponding elementary, secondary, or special education teaching credential based upon the out-of-state teacher preparation program. For the education specialist credential, the CTC shall determine the area of concentration based on the special education program completed out-of-state.
  - e) Has successfully completed a criminal background check for credentialing purposes. (Education Code 44274.2)

- 2) Requires the holder of a preliminary credential who is prepared out-of-state to meet the state basic skills proficiency requirement within one year of the date the credential is issued or the credential becomes invalid. (EC 44274.2)
- 3) Requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to issue a clear multiple subject, single subject, or education specialist teaching credential to an applicant who satisfies the requirements above, provides verification of two or more years of teaching experience, including, but not limited to, two satisfactory performance evaluations, and documents, in a manner prescribed by the CTC, that he or she has met the state requirements for teaching English learners including, but not limited to, the requirements in Section 44253.3 or 44259.5. (EC 44274.2)
- 4) Requires, for applicants who do not meet the experience requirement, the CTC to issue a clear multiple subject, single subject, or education specialist teaching credential upon verification of the following requirements:
  - a) The CTC has issued to the applicant a preliminary five-year teaching credential.
  - b) The applicant has completed a beginning teacher induction program.
  - c) The applicant has met the requirements for teaching English learners.
  - d) Before issuing an education specialist credential, the commission shall verify completion of a program for the Professional Level II credential accredited by the CTC. (EC 44274.2)

## ANALYSIS

This bill allows an out-of-state prepared candidate for the education specialist credential to demonstrate their area of concentration based on two years of experience in California, while the candidate holds a Preliminary credential.

## STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “California is facing a severe teacher shortage, and the most vulnerable populations of students are affected. Nine out of ten school districts in California report a shortage in special education teachers, and the shortage disproportionately impacts low-income and minority students. AB 988 would remove an existing barrier to out-of-state special education teachers that choose to teach in California in response to this alarming shortage. To be fully qualified to teach in California, a teacher must hold a credential, based on a two-tiered credentialing process. Each tier involves a set of requirements that the teacher must meet. This bill would streamline the credentialing process for out-of-state special education teachers by allowing these teachers to use two years of teaching in California to demonstrate the teaching experience requirement, a requirement needed to complete the second-tier of the process. Currently, teachers who have been prepared out-of-state are faced with additional requirements due to a misalignment of California’s special

education areas of concentration with other states. This additional requirement results in additional costs and a prolonged process for the teacher and often discourages out-of-state teachers to teach in California. Removing this existing barrier will help California respond to the shortage that specifically impacts low-income, minority special education students.”

Some states do not specify the types of disabilities that a special education teacher may teach with their credential. When these out-of-state teachers apply for a credential in California, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing issues a preliminary credential. To clear their credential, the teacher must demonstrate their specialization in either Mild/Moderate or Moderate/Severe student needs by documenting two years of specialized out-of-state teaching or complete additional coursework. In some cases, this has resulted in out-of-state prepared teachers with extensive special education classroom experience being required to return to school to clear their credential in California. This bill would allow these out-of-state special education teachers to demonstrate their specialization by documenting two years of successful teaching in California, while holding their Preliminary credential.

- 2) ***The Learning Policy Institute (LPI) report.*** The LPI’s 2016 report, “Addressing California’s Emerging Teacher Shortage: An Analysis of Sources and Solutions” included the following summary: “After many years of teacher layoffs in California, school districts around the state are hiring again. With the influx of new K-12 funding, districts are looking to lower student-teacher ratios and reinstate classes and programs that were reduced or eliminated during the Great Recession. However, mounting evidence indicates that teacher supply has not kept pace with the increased demand.” The report included the following findings:
  - a) Enrollment in educator preparation programs has dropped by more than 70 percent over the last decade.
  - b) In 2014-15, provisional and short-term permits nearly tripled from the number issued two years earlier, growing from about 850 to more than 2,400.
  - c) The number of teachers hired on substandard permits and credentials nearly doubled in the last two years, to more than 7,700 comprising a third of all the new credentials issued in 2014-15.
  - d) Estimated teacher hires for the 2015-16 school year increased by 25 percent from the previous year while enrollment in the University of California and the California State University teacher education programs increased by only about 3.8 percent.

The LPI report offered several policy recommendations for consideration, including the creation of more innovative pipelines into teaching.

- 3) ***Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) assessment.*** As part of the Proposition 98 Education Analysis for the 2016-17 Governor’s Budget released in February

2016, the 3) Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) included a section on teacher workforce trends in which it examined evidence for teacher shortages in specific areas, identified and assessed past policy responses to these shortages, and raised issues for the Legislature to consider going forward in terms of new policy responses. In the report, the LAO indicated that the statewide teacher market will help alleviate existing shortages over time and that the shortages may decrease without direct state action. However, the LAO noted there are perennial staffing difficulties in specific areas, such as special education, math, and science, for which they encouraged the Legislature to address with narrowly tailored policies rather than with broad statewide policies.

- 4) ***Credentialing process for out-of-state prepared teachers.*** California has a two-tier credential structure. A preliminary credential is the first document issued after an individual meets basic credential requirements. The preliminary credential is issued for a maximum of five years. A clear credential is issued when all credential requirements have been completed. If the requirements for the clear credential are not completed before the expiration of the preliminary, the holder is deemed ineligible to teach in California's public schools.

Further, current law requires that every teacher who provides instructional services to an English-learner be authorized to provide specialized instruction for those learners. This instruction would either (1) help the learners understand instruction that is taught only in English, (2) help the learners develop their ability to listen, speak, read, and write in English, (3) be provided in the learners' primary language as English is acquired, or (4) be taught in a language other than English for those learners in a dual immersion program.

For out-of-state prepared teachers, current law requires the applicant to attain a master's degree or demonstrate 150 hours of professional development to earn a Clear teaching credential, in addition to demonstrating subject matter knowledge and complete the Crosscultural, Language, and Academic Development certificate.

## **SUPPORT**

Association of California School Administrators  
 California Federation of Teachers  
 California School Boards Association  
 California Teachers Association  
 North Coastal Consortium for Special Education  
 Public Advocates  
 Special Education Local Plan Areas Administrators of California

## **OPPOSITION**

None received

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