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Action

Legislative Committee

Analyses of Bills

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents an analysis of an educator preparation and licensing bill introduced by Legislators. The analysis will summarize current law, describe the bill provisions, estimate its costs and recommend amendments, if applicable.

Recommended Action: Staff recommends a position in the bill analysis submitted for the Commission's consideration.

Presenter: Marilyn Errett, Administrator; Office of Governmental Relations

Strategic Plan Goal: 2

Support policy development related to educator preparation, conduct and professional growth

- ◆ Inform key legislators and policy makers on issues and ideas relevant to the Commission's scope of action

Bill Analysis

AB 1304 (Block)
Recognition of Study: Linked Learning

Recommended Position: *Support*

Sponsor: *Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce*

Bill Version: *As Introduced February 18, 2011*

Analysis of Bill Provisions

Assembly Bill 1304 (Block) is a reintroduction of a 2010 bill, AB 1223. The Commission supported AB 1223 after Assembly Member Block accepted a minor amendment requested by the Commission. AB 1304 would:

- Encourage the Commission to convene a workgroup to develop program standards for the issuance of a “recognition of study” for linked learning (multiple pathways) competence for holders of a single subject teaching credential who will be teaching pupils enrolled in linked learning programs;
- Define “recognition of study” as a statement added to a single subject teaching credential that the credential holder has completed a Commission-approved course of study in linked learning teaching methods that can be applied to the academic instruction authorized by his or her credential. A “recognition of study” in a linked learning teacher preparation program may be offered as part of an initial teacher preparation program or as a separate program for previously credentialed teachers;
- Define linked learning programs as specified;
- Express the intent of the Legislature that successful candidates for a “recognition of study” in linked learning demonstrate appropriate knowledge, as specified and further decided upon by the Commission.

In addition, AB 1304 would encourage California State University and other teacher preparation institutions to establish goals for increasing the number of teachers prepared through linked learning programs. Further, the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program (BTSA) would be encouraged by the Legislature to provide appropriate support, mentoring, and assistance to beginning teachers who are teaching in linked learning programs, including candidates who are in externships. Last, the measure states that the Commission may work with the Superintendent of Public Instruction to gather and post, on an appropriate internet web site, best practices from school districts and schools on curriculum development and professional development relating to implementing and sustaining multiple pathway (linked learning) programs.

Current Law

Education Code section 44252 (a) directs the Commission to establish standards and procedures for the initial issuance and renewal of credentials. Education Code section 44257.2 allows the Commission to issue a multiple or single subject teaching credential with a specified concentration in a particular subject based upon the depth of an applicant's preparation in an important subject of the school curriculum. The Commission is directed to establish and maintain standards for concentrations in particular subjects, as necessary, and to determine the authorizations of teaching credentials with concentrations. The commission is directed to ensure that with the exception of single subject credentials in the sciences, the authorization of a credential with a specified concentration is not more restrictive than the authorization of the same credential without the specified concentration.

AB 2648 (Chap. 681, Stats. 2008)¹ required the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop a report, in conjunction with stakeholders, that explores the feasibility of expanding multiple pathway programs in California. The full report can be found at: http://www.schoolsmovingup.net/mpstudy/downloads/Multiple_Pathways_Report_2010.pdf. The report includes a number of key recommendations for policymakers and education advocates to consider, including:

- Revising the California *Education Code* to state that the purpose of high school is to educate and prepare all students to be postsecondary and career ready upon high school graduation;
- Augmenting the accountability system to foster college and career readiness, increasing of graduation rates, and decreasing the number of dropouts;
- Improving the conditions to establish and expand Linked Learning programs.

Background

The linked learning, or multiple pathways, approach to instruction has gained momentum in California over the past several years. This instructional approach aims to connect academic learning to practical applications and real world experiences as well as to provide students with an avenue to college or directly into the workplace. In addition to legislation to examine the feasibility of the statewide application of the multiple pathway (linked learning) approach, several organizations have come forward to support the effort.

According to the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (CFTL), The James Irvine Foundation has provided financial support for the expansion of multiple pathways (linked learning) programs that include multiyear programs of study connecting classroom learning with real-world applications through the integration of a rigorous academic curriculum, a demanding CTE course sequence, and work-based learning. In the CFTL report, *The Status of the Teaching Profession 2009*², the study included an examination of the question: *As high schools change, are teachers prepared for the changes?* According to the CFTL report, “To implement a given strategy effectively,

¹ EC 52372.5

² <http://www.cftl.org/documents/2009/TCFReport2009.pdf>

high school teachers need specific pedagogical skills associated with the demands of that strategy. For instance, in high schools that rely heavily on interdisciplinary projects and other authentic assessments of student learning, such as presentations, portfolios, and exhibitions, teachers must know how to develop such assessments and provide instruction that cuts across content areas and develops students' critical thinking, analytical, and communication skills." The report continues, "Despite strategic hiring practices, many high schools—particularly those where reforms are most urgently needed—struggle to attract and retain teachers who have the knowledge and skills to implement the schools' design principles."

More than 140 organizations and individuals have joined together to form *The Linked Learning Alliance*³, a statewide alliance of education, industry, and community organizations dedicated to improving California's high schools and preparing students for postsecondary education and careers. The group includes the California Department of Education, California State University, University of California, California Community College System Office, California Postsecondary Education Commission, and California Student Aid Commission. Also in the group are business and trade organizations, community and advocacy organizations, education organizations and associations and public agencies such as school districts.

Some teacher preparation programs have begun to include cross-discipline teaching techniques in their curriculum. These universities apply a linked learning lens to their Commission-approved single subject credential programs that provides additional focus on the unique skills and knowledge needed to teach in linked learning pathways. These include developing and delivering interdisciplinary curriculum, generating work-based learning opportunities, and learning how to communicate with business and industry partners. According to an August 2010 policy brief published by the Alliance for Excellent Education, a national policy and advocacy organization based in Washington, DC, "In 2008, San Diego State University, supported by a grant from the James Irvine Foundation, was joined by the California state universities at Fresno, Sacramento, and San Bernardino to establish a network in collaboration with ConnectEd—a group that focuses on advancing practice, policy, and research for Linked Learning—to tackle the issue of better preparing teachers for the Linked Learning classroom. Since the network's inception, California State University Long Beach and the University of California, Los Angeles, have also joined, bringing the total to six higher education institutions."⁴ A follow-up posted by ConnectEd reports, "The network of universities offering Linked Learning teacher preparation programs is growing. In January 2011, two new universities, CSU East Bay and Claremont Graduate University, will join the six sites currently offering this emphasis."⁵

³ <http://www.connectedcalifornia.org/coalition/index.php>

⁴ <http://www.all4ed.org/files/LinkedLearningBuildingCapacity.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.connectedcalifornia.org/pathways/happenings.php#entrancerate>

As is currently the case with all programs that provide a concentration within a credential program, the concentration is not noted on the credential. Some programs provide a certificate from the institution recognizing the specialized course of study within the credential program.

In 2010, the original bill, AB 1223, was successful in the Legislature and sent to then Governor Schwarzenegger for consideration. Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed the bill with the following message:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1223 without my signature.

This bill would authorize the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to convene a workgroup to develop program standards for the purpose of establishing some “recognition of study” for linked learning competence for credentialed teachers. Nothing under current law prohibits the CTC from convening any workgroup without statutory authority. Therefore, this bill is unnecessary.

For this reason, I am unable to sign this bill.

Commission Activity

In general, it is the Commission’s practice to list credential authorizations only when the authorization is necessary in order for the teacher or other credential holder to provide specified instruction or a specified service. Without the authorization, the individual is not authorized to provide the instruction or service. According to the Commission’s Administrator’s Assignment Manual, an authorization is defined as the following:

***Authorization:** Each credential, certificate, permit, or waiver authorizes an individual to serve in a subject or subject area(s) in a setting at a grade level listed on the document. The authorization statement, printed on the document since 1989, provides the specifics for the authorization.*

Fiscal Impact

Because AB 1223 “encourages” the Commission to convene a workgroup and because the bill does not specify a timeline, the Commission could complete the work as staff, time and available funding allow. The project could be included as other projects are completed and included in the operating budget of the Commission. Staff has determined that program review would be “minor/absorbable.”

Relevant Commission Legislative Policies

Policy 1: The Commission supports legislation that proposes to maintain or establish high standards for the preparation of public school teachers and other educators in California and opposes legislation that would lower standards for teachers and other educators.

Policy 6: The Commission supports alternatives to existing credential requirements that maintain high standards for the preparation of educators and opposes alternatives that do not provide sufficient assurances of quality.

Organizational Positions

Support

Sponsored by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce

Opposition

None noted at this time.

Reason for Suggested Position

According to the Assembly Education Committee analysis of the 2010 bill, AB 1223, “Multiple pathway programs are found in several districts across the state and they are found in various forms; for example some districts have implemented California Partnership Academies (CPA), small learning communities, or other career-themed schools. Teachers that deliver instruction in these programs, often work in teams with other educators and local business leaders to organize lessons around an integrated curriculum focused on project-based learning. These instructional activities and strategies may require specialized skills and competencies not typically included in traditional teacher preparation or professional development programs.”

Members of the Legislature, including leadership, have maintained a strong interest in the linked learning, or multiple pathways, approach. As the application of this instructional approach gains momentum, the call for appropriate teacher preparation becomes more evident. However, many teacher education programs have noted that the Legislature has added requirements over the years without providing relief from other mandated content areas. Another mandate could place a hardship on programs that provide preparation that is responsive to local needs, but may not align with the linked learning, or multiple pathways, approach.

The concept of a clearly delineated notation on a credential identifying a concentration, or “recognition of study,” based on Commission standards and approved by the Commission could be a viable option for programs choosing to emphasize the linked learning, or multiple pathways, approach. The “recognition of study” would not be an authorization in the sense that it would not be a requirement for providing the specialized instruction or service, but would indicate to employers that the teacher has completed a state-approved program that makes the teacher suitable and prepared for the specialized school setting.

In January 2010, the Commission adopted a position of *Support if Amended* on AB 1223. The Commission requested a minor change in language to clarify that the final decision regarding the adoption of program standards for a linked learning concentration would be the Commission’s based upon recommendations of its linked learning workgroup. The bill was amended on June 10, 2010, thus changing the Commission’s position to *Support*.

It is true that the Commission could chose to assemble a group to consider how best to incorporate linked learning teaching methods into teacher preparation programs. However, it is sometimes helpful to have a clear signal from the Legislature and the Governor regarding the direction of Commission activities as it ties in to other state policies.

For these reasons, staff recommends a position of **Support**.

Analyst: *Marilyn Errett*

Date of Analysis: *March 24, 2011*

LEGISLATIVE GUIDELINES OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING

Adopted February 3, 1995

1. The Commission supports legislation that proposes to maintain or establish high standards for the preparation of public school teachers and other educators in California and opposes legislation that would lower standards for teachers and other educators.
2. The Commission supports legislation that proposes to maintain or establish high standards of fitness and conduct for public school educators in California and opposes legislation that would lower standards of fitness or conduct for public school educators.
3. The Commission supports legislation that reaffirms that teachers and other educators have appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions, as evidenced by holding appropriate credentials, and opposes legislation that would allow unprepared persons to serve in the public schools.
4. The Commission supports the maintenance of a thoughtful, cohesive approach to the preparation of credential candidates and opposes legislation that would tend to fragment or undermine the cohesiveness of the preparation of credential candidates.
5. The Commission supports legislation that strengthens or reaffirms initiatives and reforms that it previously has adopted and opposes legislation that would undermine initiatives or reforms that it previously has adopted.
6. The Commission supports alternatives to existing credential requirements that maintain high standards for the preparation of educators and opposes alternatives that do not provide sufficient assurances of quality.
7. The Commission opposes legislation that would give it significant additional duties and responsibilities if the legislation does not include an appropriate source of funding to support those additional duties and responsibilities.
8. The Commission supports legislation that affirms its role as an autonomous teacher standards board and opposes legislation that would erode the independence or authority of the Commission.

Possible Bill Positions for Commission Consideration

The Commission may adopt a position on each bill considered for action. The following chart describes the bill positions. The Commission may choose to change a position on a bill at any subsequent meeting.

Sponsor: Legislative concepts are adopted by the Commission and staff is directed to find an author for the bill and to aid the author's staff by providing background information and seeking support for the bill.

Support: The Commission votes to support a bill and directs staff to write letters of support to Legislative Committee members and to testify in support of the bill at Legislative Committee hearings. The Commission's support position will be recorded in the Legislative Committee's bill analysis. If the bill is successful in the Legislature, staff writes letters of support to the Governor.

Support if Amended: The Commission expresses support for the overall concept of a bill, but objects to one or more sections. The Commission votes to direct staff to contact the author with suggested amendments. If the bill is amended to reflect the Commission's recommendations, the Commission's position automatically becomes "Support."

Seek Amendments: The Commission expresses concern over one or more sections of the bill and votes to direct staff to contact the author with suggested amendments. If the bill is amended to reflect the Commission's recommendations, staff will inform the Commission at a subsequent meeting and ask if the Commission would like to adopt a new position.

Watch: The Commission expresses interest in the content of the bill but votes to direct staff to "watch" the bill for future amendments or for further movement through the Legislative process. Early in the Legislative session, the Commission may wish to adopt a "watch" position on bills that are not yet fully formed.

Oppose Unless Amended: The Commission objects strenuously to one or more sections of the bill and votes to direct staff to contact the author with suggested amendments. If the bill is not amended to reflect the Commission's recommendations, the Commission may vote to adopt an "Oppose" position at a subsequent meeting. If the bill is amended to reflect the Commission's recommendations, staff will inform the Commission at a subsequent meeting and ask if the Commission would like to adopt a new position.

Oppose: The Commission expresses opposition to the overall concept of a bill and votes to direct staff to write letters of opposition to Legislative Committee members and to testify in opposition to the bill at Legislative Committee hearings. The Commission's "oppose" position will be recorded in the Legislative Committee bill analysis. If the bill is successful in the Legislature, staff writes letters of opposition to the Governor.

No Position: The Commission may choose to delay taking a position on a bill and may vote to direct staff to bring the bill forward at a subsequent meeting. The Commission may also choose to direct staff not to bring the bill forward for further consideration.