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Information/Action

Legislative Committee of the Whole

Analyses of Bills of Interest to the Commission

AGENDA INSERT

Executive Summary: Staff will present analyses of educator preparation or licensing bills introduced by Legislators. The analyses will summarize current law, describe the bills' provisions, estimate its costs and recommend amendments if applicable.

Information will be provided in an Agenda Insert.

Recommended Action: The Commission may take a position on the measures. Positions of the Commission to consider are: Sponsor, Support, Support if Amended, Seek Amendments, Watch, Oppose Unless Amended, Oppose, or No Position.

Presenters: Bonnie Parks, Director, Office of Governmental Relations

Strategic Plan Goal: 4

Continue effective and appropriate involvement of the Commission with policymaker's on key education issues.

- ♦ Influence legislation regarding the preparation and certification of professional educators

ANALYSES OF BILLS OF INTEREST TO THE COMMISSION

Bill Number: Assembly Bill 49

Author: Assembly Member Benoit

Sponsor: Assembly Member Benoit

Subject of Bill: California Basic Skills Test (CBEST) exemption
for prelingually deaf credential candidates

Date Introduced: Current content introduced on January 4, 2006

Date Last Amended: January 13, 2006

Status in Leg. Process: Assembly Floor (Consent Calendar)

Possible Actions: Should the Commission wish to take a position on
this bill, the positions for the Commission to
consider are: Sponsor, Support, Support if
Amended, Seek Amendments, Watch, Oppose
Unless Amended, Oppose or No Position

Date of Analysis: January 23, 2006

Analyst: Marilyn Errett

Summary of Current Law

Sections 44265.6 through 44265.9 of the California Education Code provide a specific exemption from the California Basic Skills Test (CBEST) credential requirement for individuals who are prelingually deaf. The permits and credentials currently specified in law under these provisions are the education specialist emergency permit for instructing deaf and hearing impaired pupils, the education specialist credential for instructing deaf and hearing impaired pupils, and the pupil personnel services credentials for school counselor, school psychologist, and school social worker. The permits and credentials subject to the CBEST exemption are restricted to instruction or service in state special schools for deaf and hearing impaired pupils or in special classes for deaf and hearing impaired pupils.

Prelingually deaf is defined in California Education Code section 44265.7 as “having suffered a hearing loss prior to three years of age that prevents the processing of linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.”

Summary of Current Activity by the Commission

The CBEST exemption for prelingually deaf individuals first became law in 1994 based on the premise that the primary communication mode for these individuals, American Sign Language, has a grammar and structure that is distinct from spoken American English, thus making test passage difficult. The Commission issues approximately two credentials per year on the basis of this CBEST exemption. Candidates must meet all other credential requirements. For the teaching and service credentials specified in the current California Education Code sections, the Commission issues a two-year preliminary credential and will later issue a three-year extension of the preliminary credential upon verification by the employing school district, county office of education, or state special school that the credential applicant has passed a proficiency assessment based on a series of observations. Holders of the preliminary credential based on the CBEST exemption may be recommended for a professional clear credential upon completion of the professional clear credential requirements for the specific type of teaching or service credential. The professional clear credentials are also restricted to instruction or service in state special schools for deaf and hearing impaired pupils or in special day classes for deaf and hearing impaired pupils. Emergency permits were added to the CBEST exemption list beginning in January 2005. The Commission has not issued any emergency permits under these provisions.

Analysis of Bill Provisions

The California Education Code sections outlining the CBEST exemption for prelingually deaf credential candidates have been amended piece by piece over the years as one constituent group or individual expresses a need to a member of the Legislature. AB 49 would provide consistency to the CBEST exemption provision by deleting the specific list of credentials and substituting a more general reference to “teaching and service credentials.” By making the credential references less specific, the measure eliminates the need for future legislation to add more credentials. Current statute related to the education specialist emergency permit for instructing deaf and hearing impaired pupils would remain as it is – restricted to just the one type of permit.

Analysis of Fiscal Impact of Bill

Minor/Absorbable costs to the Commission for revising the information leaflet.

Analysis of Relevant Legislative Policies by the Commission

The following Legislative policies apply to this measure:

4. The Commission supports the maintenance of a thoughtful, cohesive approach to the preparation of credential candidates, and opposes legislation which would tend to fragment or undermine the cohesiveness of the preparation of credential candidates.
5. The Commission supports legislation which strengthens or reaffirms initiatives and reforms which it previously has adopted, and opposes legislation which would undermine initiatives or reforms which 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.

Organizational Positions on the Bill

Support

Riverside County Schools Advocacy Association

Oppose

None known at this time

Suggested Amendments

None

ANALYSES OF BILLS OF INTEREST TO THE COMMISSION

Bill Number: Assembly Bill 476

Author: Assembly Member Baca

Sponsor: Assembly Member Baca

Subject of Bill: Assumption Program of Loans for Education
(APLE) for mathematics and science credentials

Date Introduced: Current content introduced on January 4, 2006

Date Last Amended: January 13, 2006

Status in Leg. Process: Assembly Floor (Consent Calendar)

Possible Actions: Should the Commission wish to take a position on
this bill, the positions for the Commission to
consider are: Sponsor, Support, Support if

**Amended, Seek Amendments, Watch, Oppose
Unless Amended, Oppose or No Position**

Date of Analysis: January 23, 2006

Analyst: Marilyn Errett

Summary of Current Law

Sections 69612 through 69615.6 of the California Education Code establish the Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE). The California Student Aid Commission administers the program. The APLE is a competitive teacher incentive program designed to encourage outstanding students to become teachers in:

- subject areas where a critical teacher shortage has been identified, or in
- designated schools meeting criteria established by the Superintendent of Public Instruction including rural schools; schools serving a high percentage of low-income families; schools with higher than twenty percent of its teachers serving on emergency permits, credential waivers, or intern credentials; or a school designated as a high priority school.

The California Student Aid Commission may assume up to \$19,000 in outstanding educational loan balances in return for four years of teaching service in a designated school or subject area.

Under current law, the program is limited to individuals who “need to complete training or coursework in order to be fully credentialed.”

Summary of Current Activity by the Commission

The Commission is not directly involved in the administration of the APLE program. However, Commission staff members regularly refer teacher candidates to the California Student Aid Commission for information on the APLE program.

Analysis of Bill Provisions

AB 476 would change the eligibility criteria for participation in the APLE program to include fully credentialed teachers who wish to earn a single subject teaching credential in mathematics or science in addition to their existing credential authorization. The author cites the current severe shortage of math and science teachers and points to the upcoming groundswell of teacher retirements over the next several years.

Since 1989 the California Student Aid Commission has made an exception to the requirement that the APLE program is available only for teaching candidates seeking an initial credential. This exception applies to candidates seeking a special education credential or a reading and language arts credential in addition

to their existing teaching credential. AB 476 seeks to clarify in statute the eligibility criteria for participation in the APLE program.

Analysis of Fiscal Impact of Bill

No fiscal impact to the Commission.

Analysis of Relevant Legislative Policies by the Commission

The following Legislative policies apply to this measure:

3. The Commission supports legislation which reaffirms that teachers and other educators have appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions, as evidenced by holding appropriate credentials, and opposes legislation which would allow unprepared persons to serve in the public schools.

Organizational Positions on the Bill

Support

California State University

Oppose

None known at this time

Suggested Amendments

None