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Information

Legislative Committee

2021 Legislative Outlook

Executive Summary: This agenda item provides an update on Commission-sponsored and Commission-monitored legislation from 2020 that staff anticipates will be reintroduced in the 2021 legislative session.

Recommended Action: For information only

Presenter: Sasha Horwitz, Government Relations & Public Affairs Manager,
Administrative Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal

III. Communication and Engagement

- e) Advise the Governor, Legislature, and other policy makers regarding issues affecting the quality, preparation, certification, and discipline of the education workforce.

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2021 Legislative Outlook

Introduction

This agenda item provides an update on Commission-sponsored and Commission-monitored legislation from 2020 that staff anticipates will be reintroduced in the 2021 legislative session.

Background

The 2020 legislative year was significantly disrupted by COVID-19. The Senate and Assembly Education Committees each held a single legislative hearing, which reduced the total number of bills that could be heard. Only those bills that were deemed related to California's COVID-19 response were granted a hearing. Many of the bills that the Commission was monitoring at the beginning of the legislative year, died early in the process without being heard in any committee. No Commission-sponsored or Commission-monitored bills were approved by the legislature.

The Commission sponsored two bills, both of which received unanimous support in the Assembly Education Committee and Assembly floor, only to stall in the other chamber when they were not granted hearing in the Senate Education Committee.

The first of these bills, "AB 2485 (Kalra) - Teacher credentialing: Subject Matter Competence," sought to give teaching credential candidates additional flexibility for demonstrating that they meet the statutory subject matter requirements for the credential they are seeking. The second, "AB 2541 (Medina) - Teacher Preparation Programs: Regionally Accredited Institutions" sought to clarify that the Commission has statutory authority to establish regulations recognizing that a degree conferred by an institution of higher education (IHE) in preaccreditation status is valid once the IHE and program of study successfully complete the accreditation process. Staff intends to work with the authors' offices to reintroduce these bills, and if necessary, find another author to carry the bills in 2021.

The Commission took a support position on one bill, "AB 1982 (Cunningham) - Teacher credentialing: basic skills proficiency test: exemption," which sought to create a new option for teacher candidates to demonstrate the Basic Skills Requirement by permitting the Commission to accept letter grades of B or higher in credit-bearing higher education coursework in basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills in the English language in place of the CBEST exam. The bill was successful in the Assembly but was not granted a hearing in the Senate Education Committee. The author's office has expressed interest in reintroducing the bill but has not finalized its 2021 legislative package.

The Commission also closely monitored "SB 614 (Rubio) -Teacher credentialing: Reading Instruction," which sought to revise the Reading Instruction Comprehension Assessment (RICA) statute by replacing the examination with a performance assessment. While the bill died in the

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Assembly Appropriations Committee, stakeholders have indicated that they plan to reintroduce the proposal in 2021 with modifications.

Next Steps

The Commission will continue to work with legislative staff, the Administration, and stakeholders to discuss the reintroduction of the Commission's sponsored proposals in 2021. In addition, Commission staff will monitor all bill proposals impacting the Commission's work and will report back to the Commission on these in early spring 2021.