
6B

Information/Action

Legislative Committee

Analysis of Bill

AGENDA INSERT

Executive Summary: Staff will present an analysis of AB 437 (Kalra), which impacts the Commission's work. The analysis will summarize current law, describe the bill's provisions and possible amendments, and estimate its costs.

Recommended Action: Staff seeks feedback from the Commission on the proposed amendments.

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.

Bill Analysis

[AB 437 \(Kalra\) - Teacher credentialing: subject matter competence.](#)

Position: Support

Sponsor: Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Introduced: February 4, 2021

Status: Passed Assembly Education Committee (7-0); Referred to Assembly Appropriations Committee

Summary: AB 437 broadens access to a teaching credential by expanding the available pathways for demonstrating subject matter knowledge, a requirement for becoming a public school teacher.

AB 437 would create new pathways for teacher candidates to meet the requirement by creating the option to recognize relevant college-level coursework for this purpose. Commission-approved programs of professional preparation would be responsible for verifying that coursework aligns to the domains of the Commission adopted subject matter requirements. In addition, candidates would be able to demonstrate competency by “mixing-and-matching” aligned coursework and the passage of California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET) subtests, to meet all the domains of the Subject Matter Competency Requirement (SMR).

Background: California Education Code states that teacher credential candidates must demonstrate competency in the subject matter they will be authorized by their credential to teach. This SMR can be met by completing the applicable CSET or a Commission-approved subject matter program as an undergraduate.

Education Code does not allow the completion of a degree major, in and of itself, to satisfy the subject matter requirement. CSETs are the most frequently used option to meet the SMR. There are currently 40 different CSET exams and each comprises two to four subtests ranging between \$99 and \$134. Some candidates retake subtests multiple times before passing the full sequence of subtests, adding additional expenses and barriers to the completion of their credentials.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, access to seats at testing centers has been significantly limited as testing centers have been closed or operating at a reduced capacity. Many aspiring teachers have been unable to schedule appointments to take their CSET exams as required for their credentials, which has created a significant bottleneck in the teacher pipeline. While the state has issued temporary flexibilities (i.e., EO-N-66-20 and SB 820 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, 2020)) allowing candidates to defer this requirement until later in preparation,

candidates cannot finish their preliminary credentials without completing the subject matter requirement.

Analysis: Staff has convened stakeholders to identify ways to effectively implement the bill as currently written. Based on these conversations, staff proposes the following amendments to the bill:

- Adding language specifying that the course verification process must include consultation with subject matter content experts.
- Adding the requirement that the Commission must adopt regulations before implementation of course review to ensure a consistent process across institutions.
- Adding a minimum grade requirement (C or better) for courses used to meet the subject matter requirements.
- Clarifying that Advanced Placement scores of 3 or higher may be used.
- Clarifying that courses must “meet or exceed” the domains of the subject matter requirements.
- Specifying a recency requirement for courses of up to 10 years, consistent with existing CSET recency requirements.
- Adding language to allow a baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with a major in a specified subject to satisfy the subject matter requirement.
 - Single Subject: Major must align to subject of single subject credential.
 - Multiple Subject: Major must be in liberal studies or an interdisciplinary major that addresses all the content areas of the Multiple Subject credential.
 - Special Education: Major must meet the Multiple Subject requirements or be in a subject aligned to currently allowed CSET exams used for an Education Specialist credential.
- Restores existing code language that limits the definition of a waiver to the subject matter examination requirement as only a Commission approved subject matter program.
- Other minor clarifying changes as needed.

Prior Legislation: [AB 2485 \(Kalra, 2020\) - Teacher credentialing: subject matter competence.](#)

Fiscal Impact: Testing fees are one of three primary revenue sources for the Commission. On average for the last five years, the Commission received \$3,026,953 from CSET testing fees, or about 58.4 percent of total annual testing fee revenue. It is unknown how many candidates would use the options proposed in this bill. With 40 different CSET subjects, 2-4 subtests per subject, and testing fees that vary based on the subtest, staff estimates that half of all candidates would use the coursework option in place of one or two CSET subtests. If half of all candidates took one fewer subtest staff would expect a revenue drop of between 16.6 percent and 25 percent; representing a decline of approximately \$500,000 to \$750,000 annually.

These are short term reductions in examination revenue, however, and they have the important benefit of reducing barriers to entering the teaching profession. In the long term,

staff expects future revenue to emerge as more qualified teachers move past barriers that have prevented them from completing their preparation and are able to apply for credentials and pay credential fees, including renewal fees.

Most importantly, as these newly qualified teachers enter the workforce, they will help reduce the teacher shortage and improve outcomes for students.

Organization Positions

Support

California Charter Schools Association

California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA)

California Language Teachers' Association

California School Boards Association

California Teachers Association

Public Advocates, INC.

Small School Districts Association

Opposition

None

Appendix

This is the February 4, version of AB 437.

SECTION 1.

Section 44259 of the Education Code is amended to read:

44259.

(a) Except as provided in clauses (i) and (iii) of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (b), a program of professional preparation for multiple or single subject teaching credentials shall not include more than two years of full-time study of professional preparation.

(b) The minimum requirements for the preliminary multiple or single subject teaching credential are all of the following:

(1) A baccalaureate degree or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of ~~postsecondary~~ *higher* education. Except as provided in subdivision (c) of Section 44227, for single subject teaching credentials, the baccalaureate degree shall not be in professional education. The commission shall encourage *regionally* accredited institutions of *higher education* to offer undergraduate minors in education and special education to students who intend to become single subject credentialed teachers.

(2) ~~Passage Demonstration of the state basic skills proficiency test that is developed and administered by the commission~~ pursuant to Section 44252.5.

(3) (A) Satisfactory completion of a program of professional preparation that has been accredited by the Committee on Accreditation on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the commission. In accordance with the commission's assessment and performance standards, ~~each~~ a program shall include a teaching performance assessment as set forth in Section 44320.2 that is aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. The commission shall ensure that ~~each~~ a candidate recommended for a credential or certificate has demonstrated satisfactory ability to assist pupils to meet or exceed academic content and performance standards for pupils adopted by the state board. Programs that meet this requirement for professional preparation shall include any of the following:

(i) Integrated programs of subject matter preparation and professional preparation pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 44259.1.

(ii) Postbaccalaureate programs of professional preparation, pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 44259.1.

(iii) Internship programs of professional preparation, pursuant to Section 44321, Article 7.5 (commencing with Section 44325), Article 11 (commencing with Section 44380), and Article 3 (commencing with Section 44450) of Chapter 3.

(iv) Degree programs offered pursuant to Article 5 (commencing with Section 78060) of Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3.

(B) A program of professional preparation pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall provide experience that addresses all of the following:

(i) Health education, including study of nutrition, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the physiological and sociological effects of the abuse of alcohol, narcotics, and drugs and the use of tobacco. Training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation shall also meet the standards established by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross.

(ii) Field experience in methods of delivering appropriate educational services to pupils with exceptional needs in regular education programs.

(iii) Advanced computer-based technology, including the uses of technology in educational settings.

(4) Study of alternative methods of developing English language skills, including the study of reading as described in subparagraphs (A) and (B), among all pupils, including those for whom English is a second language, in accordance with the commission's standards of program quality and effectiveness. The study of reading shall meet the following requirements:

(A) Commencing January 1, 1997, satisfactory completion of comprehensive reading instruction that is research based and includes all of the following:

(i) The study of organized, systematic, explicit skills including phonemic awareness, direct, systematic, explicit phonics, and decoding skills.

(ii) A strong literature, language, and comprehension component with a balance of oral and written language.

(iii) Ongoing diagnostic techniques that inform teaching and assessment.

(iv) Early intervention techniques.

(v) Guided practice in a clinical setting.

(B) For purposes of this section, "direct, systematic, explicit phonics" means phonemic awareness, spelling patterns, the direct instruction of sound/symbol codes and practice in connected text, and the relationship of direct, systematic, explicit phonics to the components set forth in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of subparagraph (A).

A program for the multiple subject teaching credential also shall include the study of integrated methods of teaching language arts.

(5) (A) Verification of subject matter competence, demonstrated through one of the following methods:

~~(5) (i) Completion of a subject matter program that has been approved by the commission on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 44310) or passage of a subject matter examination pursuant to Article 5 (commencing with Section 44280). The commission shall ensure that subject matter standards and examinations are aligned with the academic content and performance standards for pupils adopted by the state board. 44310).~~

(ii) Passage of a subject matter examination pursuant to Article 5 (commencing with Section 44280).

(iii) Successful completion of coursework at one or more regionally accredited institutions of higher education that addresses each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the commission in the content area of the credential pursuant to Section 44282, as verified by a commission-approved program of professional preparation.

(iv) Demonstration to the satisfaction of the commission that the candidate, through a combination of the passage of one more subtests of the subject matter examination described in clause (ii) and the completion of relevant coursework described in clause (iii), has addressed each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the commission in the content area of the credential pursuant to Section 44282.

(B) The commission shall ensure that subject matter standards and examinations are aligned with the academic content and performance standards for pupils adopted by the state board.

(6) Demonstration of a knowledge of the principles and provisions of the Constitution of the United States pursuant to Section 44335.

~~(7) Commencing January 1, 2000, demonstration, Demonstration,~~ in accordance with the commission's standards of program quality and effectiveness, of basic competency in the use of computers in the classroom as determined by one of the following:

(A) Successful completion of a commission-approved program or course.

(B) Successful passage of an assessment that is developed, approved, and administered by the commission.

(c) The minimum requirements for the clear multiple or single subject teaching credential shall include all of the following requirements:

(1) Possession of a valid preliminary teaching credential, as prescribed in subdivision (b), possession of a valid equivalent credential or certificate, or completion of equivalent requirements as determined by the commission.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (3), completion of a program of beginning teacher induction, including ~~one~~ *either* of the following:

~~(A) A program of beginning teacher support and assessment approved by the commission and the Superintendent pursuant to Section 44279.1.~~

~~(B) (A) An alternative- A program of beginning teacher induction that is provided by one or more local educational agencies and has been approved by the commission and the Superintendent- on the basis of initial review and periodic evaluations of the program in relation to appropriate standards of credential program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the commission, the Superintendent, and the state board- *commission* pursuant to this subdivision. The ~~standards for alternative programs- program standards~~ shall encourage innovation and experimentation in the continuous preparation and induction of beginning teachers. ~~An alternative program of beginning teacher induction that has met state standards pursuant to this subdivision may apply for state funding pursuant to Sections 44279.1 and 44279.2.~~~~

~~(C) (B) An alternative-~~ A program of beginning teacher induction that is sponsored by a regionally accredited ~~college or university,~~ *institution of higher education*, in cooperation with one or more local school districts, that addresses the individual professional needs of beginning teachers and meets the commission's standards of induction. The commission shall ensure that preparation and induction programs that qualify candidates for professional credentials extend and refine each beginning teacher's professional skills in relation to the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and the academic content and performance standards for pupils adopted by the state board.

(3) (A) If a candidate satisfies the requirements of subdivision (b) through completion of an accredited internship program of professional preparation, and if that internship program fulfills induction standards and is approved as set forth in this subdivision, the commission shall determine that the candidate has fulfilled the requirements of paragraph (2).

(B) If an approved induction program is verified as unavailable to a beginning teacher, the commission shall accept completion of an approved clear credential program after completion of a baccalaureate degree at a regionally accredited *institution of higher education* as fulfilling the requirements of paragraph (2). The commission shall adopt regulations to implement this subparagraph.

(d) The commission shall develop and implement standards of program quality and effectiveness that provide for the areas of application listed in clauses (i) to (iii), inclusive, of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (b), starting in professional preparation and continuing through induction.

(e) A credential that was issued before January 1, 1993, shall remain in force as long as it is valid under the laws and regulations that were in effect on the date it was issued. The commission shall not, by regulation, invalidate an otherwise valid credential, unless it issues to the holder of

the credential, in substitution, a new credential authorized by another provision in this chapter that is no more restrictive than the credential for which it was substituted with respect to the kind of service authorized and the grades, classes, or types of schools in which it authorizes service.

(f) A credential program that is approved by the commission shall not deny an individual access to that program solely on the grounds that the individual obtained a teaching credential through completion of an internship program when that internship program has been accredited by the commission.

(g) Notwithstanding this section, persons who were performing teaching services as of January 1, 1999, pursuant to the language of this section that was in effect before that date, may continue to perform those services without complying with any requirements that may be added by the amendments adding this subdivision.

(h) Subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) do not apply to any person who, as of January 1, 1997, holds a multiple or single subject teaching credential, or to any person enrolled in a program of professional preparation for a multiple or single subject teaching credential as of January 1, 1997, who subsequently completes that program. It is the intent of the Legislature that the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) apply only to persons who enter a program of professional preparation on or after January 1, 1997.

SEC. 2.

Section 44280 of the Education Code is amended to read:

44280.

(a) The adequacy of subject matter preparation and the basis for assignment of certified personnel shall be determined by the successful passage of a subject matter examination as certified by the ~~commission, except~~ *commission or as specifically waived by the commission* as set forth in Article 6 (commencing with Section 44310). ~~For the purpose of determining the adequacy of subject matter knowledge of languages for which there are no adequate examinations, the commission may establish guidelines for accepting alternative assessments performed by organizations that are expert in the language and culture assessed. The commission shall submit an expenditure plan for the development~~ *The successful passage of all examination subtests for the content area of the credential being sought, as certified by the commission, shall constitute successful passage of a subject matter examination in the Filipino language to the Department of Finance no later than January 8, 2006. Upon approval of the expenditure plan by the Department of Finance and subject to an appropriation in the Budget Act of 2006 for this purpose, the commission shall contract with another entity for that entity to develop, for certification by the commission, a subject matter examination in the Filipino language, to be administered no later than September 1, 2008.* *examination.*

(b) For the purpose of determining the adequacy of subject matter knowledge of languages for which there are no adequate examinations, the commission may establish guidelines for accepting alternative assessments performed by organizations that are expert in the language and culture assessed.

SEC. 3.

Section 44310 of the Education Code is amended to read:

44310.

(a) The commission shall waive the subject matter examination requirement for graduates of ~~accredited public and private institutions~~ a regionally accredited institution of higher education who successfully ~~complete subject matter programs specified by the commission~~. do any of the following:

(1) Complete a subject matter program approved by the commission on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness pursuant to this article.

(2) (A) Complete coursework at one or more regionally accredited institutions of higher education that addresses each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the commission in the content area of the credential pursuant to Section 44282.

(B) A program of professional preparation may review transcripts supplied by a candidate and confirm that each domain has been addressed.

(3) Address each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the commission in the content area of the credential being sought through a combination of the passage of one more subtests of the subject matter examination and the completion of relevant coursework.

(b) Eligibility for an examination waiver can only be achieved when ~~the subject matter program is one which is listed by the commission under Section 44282, and the program~~ a candidate's subject matter knowledge and competence pursuant to Section 44282 has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the commission pursuant to subdivision (a) through a subject matter program or coursework that has been successfully completed in an ~~approved~~ at a regionally accredited institution of higher ~~learning~~ education.

(c) The commission may require that the approved examination be taken by candidates, who are otherwise eligible for an examination waiver, for informational purposes only.