



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.

DATE: June 23, 2015

SUBJECT: SB 635 - State Board of Education and the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board - Alternative Teacher Certification Program

PURPOSE:

To request the State Board of Education to appoint a workgroup to consider and, if appropriate, develop of an alternative teacher certification programs for areas experiencing critical teacher shortages.

BACKGROUND:

A. Legislative Background

Senate Bill 635 was introduced as a local bill pertaining to the Washington County public school system. As introduced, this bill authorized the Washington County Board of Education to declare a critical teacher shortage and establish its own local alternative teacher certification program. This local alternative teacher certification program would be established to fill critical teacher vacancies in middle school, general secondary content areas, professional and technical education, specialty areas, specialized professional areas, world languages, and school counselors. MSDE, in a letter of information to the legislative committees, noted that federal requirements allowing Washington County to establish its own alternative certification program related to State, not local, certification and the alternative paths are currently authorized under state regulations. (Attached 1)

Senate Bill 635 was significantly amended by the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee to require the State Board of Education (SBOE), the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB), and at least two local education agencies (LEA) to consider and, if appropriate, develop an alternative teacher certification program for areas of the State experiencing a critical teacher shortage. (Attached 2) The two LEAs shall be selected by the State Superintendent of Schools and from one rural area and one urban area.

In considering whether there is a necessity to develop an alternative teacher certification program, SBOE, PSTEB, and the two LEAs shall, at minimum, consider:

- Criteria that ensure that teachers certified under the program have high quality skills while allowing flexibility in the required qualifications; and
- Extending the period of validity of a conditional certificate for teachers who teach in recognized education shortage areas, including professional and technical education areas and less commonly taught world languages.

SB 635 requires the SBOE to report to the General Assembly by December 1, 2015 on the results of the consideration and, if appropriate, the development of any additional alternative teacher certification programs for areas experiencing critical teacher shortages.

B. *Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board*

As part of MSDE's 2015 legislative update to PSTEB, Amanda Conn, Director of Education Policy and Government Relations, briefed PSTEB about the requirements of SB 635. PSTEB decided to wait for the SBOE to act on the requirements of SB 635 before taking any action such as appointing a small group of PSTEB members to discuss alternative teacher certification programs.

C. *Critical Teacher Shortage Areas*

MSDE, in conjunction with local school systems and institutions of higher education, has conducted an annual study since 1986 to determine critical teacher shortage areas. Although some data are collected annually, since 2008 the report has been published biennially. The latest Maryland Teacher Staffing Report, 2014-2016, provides data on teacher candidates completing programs in institutions of higher education that have Maryland Approved Programs (MAP) and in Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Programs (MAAPP). The report also collects the hiring needs of the local school systems to determine critical shortage areas by analyzing the data and applying the criteria agreed upon.

The 2014-2016 report adopted by the SBOE declared the following areas as critical shortage areas:

- Career and technology areas (7-12):
 - Technology education, and
 - Family and Consumer Sciences;

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- Computer science (7-12);
- Business Education (7-12)
- Mathematics (7-12)
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) (PreK-12);
- Science areas (7-12):
 - Chemistry;
 - Earth/space science;
 - Physical science; and
 - Physics;
- Special education areas:
 - Generic: Infant/primary (birth-grade 3);
 - Generic: Elementary/middle school (grades 1-8);
 - Generic: Secondary/adult (grades 6 – adult);
 - Hearing impaired;
 - Visually impaired;
- World language areas (PreK-12):
 - Chinese, and
 - Spanish
- The Arts
 - Art (PreK-12);
 - Dance (PreK-12); and
 - Theatre (7-12)

A full copy of the report is available at

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/divisions/certification/progapproval/docs/MarylandTeacherReport20142016.pdf>.

ACTION:

Recommend that the SBOE appoint a workgroup of SBOE members to meet with selected PSTEB members and representatives of two LEAs to fulfill the requirements of SB 635.



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March 12, 2015

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway, Chairperson
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 635-Washington County- Board of Education- Alternative Teacher Certification Program

Dear Chairperson Conway:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) provides this information on **Senate Bill 635**, Washington County- Board of Education- Alternative Teacher Certification Program, which authorizes Washington County Board of Education to establish an alternative teacher certification program, to declare a critical teacher shortage, and certify certain candidates to fill certain teacher shortage vacancies in certain areas during this time period.

Currently there are several ways for an individual to obtain certification, through both traditional and nontraditional certification routes. The nontraditional routes are referred to as Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Programs and conditional certification. These nontraditional options are available to all local education agencies and were designed to assist in filling critical shortage areas.

COMAR13A.12.01 regulates the certification of professional education personnel by the State of Maryland. All local education agencies must adhere to these certification regulations as certification is an integral part of the measurement of "Highly Qualified Teachers", which is reported to the federal government on an annual basis. Additionally, certification is directly connected to the federal funding for which local education agencies qualify. Certifications awarded outside of COMAR would not be recognized by Maryland or by other states.

According to COMAR, certification may be obtained in one of the following ways:

- Completing a college or university State-approved educator preparation program;

- Holding a valid, out-of-state professional certificate and submitting verification of 27 months of full-time satisfactory professional experience;
- Meeting transcript analysis requirements;
- Completing a Resident Teacher Certification (RTC) program; or
- Applying for a Conditional Teaching Certificate. To be issued a Conditional Teacher Certificate, an applicant hired by a local school system must hold a bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education in any subject area. Conditional Teacher Certificates are valid for 2 years and can be renewed once, if the applicant has met specified requirements.

Washington County may apply for a conditional certificate on behalf of an individual when they are unable to find a qualified person.

Resident Teacher Certification programs, referred to as Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Programs (MAAPPs), are designed to assist local education agencies to fill hard-to-staff positions within its schools. MSDE has implemented this regulation and policy since 2005. MAAPPs differ from traditional programs in that alternative preparation leads to teacher certification, but not necessarily to a degree. MAAPP programs allow an individual to apply for a Resident Teaching Certificate after 90 clock hours of study and usually costs far less than traditional routes. An individual who holds an RTC is eligible for a Standard Professional Certificate (SPC) upon receipt by the MSDE of the following items: (1) completion of a MAAPP; (2) a qualifying score on the applicable MSDE-approved pedagogy test; and (3) satisfactory teaching performance during the residency period.

The educational components of MAAPPs may be delivered by a college or university (two or four-year), a nonprofit partner, or may be developed by the local school system itself in collaboration with the Program Approval Branch of MSDE. As of April, 2014, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties as well as Baltimore City, had active MAAPPs.

Washington County has had an Alternative Certification program in the past and can reinstate or establish a new MAAPP without the need of legislation. Washington County discontinued its previous MAAPP program in 2009 stating that there was a lack of need.

Washington County, along with all of the other local education agencies, already identifies critical shortage areas on an annual basis. This information, required by the federal government every December, is reported to the Maryland State Board of Education. This board approves the teacher shortage areas reported to the federal government.

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Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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This year on August 18, 2014, Washington County Board of Education reported five unfilled teacher vacancies. The school system reported that their only area of recruitment difficulty was in the subject of World Languages, which is a statewide shortage area.

MSDE will be happy to answer any questions that the committee may have about routes to certification. For further information, please contact Amanda Stakem Conn, Esq., Annapolis: 410-260-6028 or Baltimore office: 410-767-0468 or e-mail amanda.conn@maryland.gov or Dr. Michial Gill, Annapolis office: 410-260-6028 or Baltimore office: 410-767-3170 or e-mail at michial.gill@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Penelope Thornton Talley, Esquire
Chief Performance Officer

SENATE BILL 635

F3

5lr2664
CF HB 790

By: Washington County Senators
Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2015
Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments
Senate action: Adopted
Read second time: April 3, 2015

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 ~~Washington County~~ State Board of Education and the Professional Standards
3 and Teacher Education Board – Alternative Teacher Certification Program

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing the ~~Washington County~~ State Board of Education, the
5 Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, and a certain number of local
6 education agencies to establish consider and, if appropriate, develop an alternative
7 teacher certification program for certain areas of the State; authorizing the Board to
8 declare a critical teacher shortage and certify certain candidates to fill certain
9 teacher shortage vacancies in certain areas during a certain time period; specifying
10 who may fill a certain vacant position during the school year; providing that a
11 candidate hired to fill a critical shortage teacher vacancy is not eligible for a certain
12 certificate except under certain circumstances; requiring that certain local education
13 agencies be chosen by the State Superintendent of Schools and be from certain areas;
14 requiring the State Board of Education, the Professional Standards and Teacher
15 Education Board, and certain local education agencies to consider certain criteria in
16 the consideration of the development of a certain program; requiring the State Board
17 of Education to submit certain information to the General Assembly on or before a
18 certain date; and generally relating to an alternative teacher certification program
19 in Washington County and the State Board of Education and the Professional
20 Standards and Teacher Education Board.

21 ~~BY adding to~~
22 ~~Article Education~~
23 ~~Section 6-122~~
24 ~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.
Underlining indicates amendments to bill.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 ~~(2014 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)~~

2 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
3 That ~~the Laws of Maryland read as follows:~~

4 ~~Article Education~~

5 ~~6-122.~~

6 ~~(A) THE WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MAY ESTABLISH AN~~
7 ~~ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.~~

8 ~~(B) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF THIS ARTICLE, ON OR~~
9 ~~AFTER MAY 1 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1, THE WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF~~
10 ~~EDUCATION MAY:~~

11 ~~(1) DECLARE A CRITICAL TEACHER SHORTAGE; AND~~

12 ~~(2) CERTIFY A CANDIDATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CRITERIA OF~~
13 ~~THE ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM ESTABLISHED BY THE~~
14 ~~BOARD UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, TO FILL A CRITICAL TEACHER~~
15 ~~SHORTAGE VACANCY IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:~~

16 ~~(I) MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION (GRADES 4-9);~~

17 ~~(II) GENERAL SECONDARY CONTENT AREAS (GRADES 7-12);~~

18 ~~(III) PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (GRADES 7-~~
19 ~~12);~~

20 ~~(IV) SPECIALTY AREAS (PREKINDERGARTEN- GRADE 12);~~

21 ~~(V) SPECIALIZED PROFESSIONAL AREAS (GRADES 7-12);~~

22 ~~(VI) WORLD LANGUAGES (PREKINDERGARTEN- GRADE 12);~~

23 ~~AND~~

24 ~~(VII) SCHOOL COUNSELORS.~~

25 ~~(C) IF A POSITION THAT HAS BEEN FILLED UNDER THE ALTERNATIVE~~
26 ~~TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM BECOMES VACANT DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR,~~
27 ~~THE POSITION MAY BE FILLED BY:~~

28 ~~(1) A TEACHER WHO HAS AN EDUCATOR CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE~~
29 ~~STATE SUPERINTENDENT UNDER THIS SUBTITLE; OR~~

~~(2) A TEACHER WHO HAS BEEN CERTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON COUNTY.~~

~~(D) (1) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, A TEACHER HIRED TO FILL A CRITICAL TEACHER SHORTAGE VACANCY IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR AN EDUCATOR CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.~~

~~(2) IF A TEACHER HIRED TO FILL A CRITICAL TEACHER SHORTAGE VACANCY COMPLETES A CERTIFICATION TRACK APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT DURING THE TERM OF EMPLOYMENT, THE TEACHER MAY BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR AN EDUCATOR CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.~~

(a) (1) The State Board of Education, the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, and at least two local education agencies shall consider and, if appropriate, develop an alternative teacher certification program for areas of the State experiencing a critical teacher shortage.

(2) The local education agencies specified under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be selected:

(i) By the State Superintendent of Schools; and

(ii) From one rural area and one urban area.

(b) In considering whether there is a necessity to develop an alternative teacher certification program under subsection (a) of this section, the State Board of Education, the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, and the local education agencies shall, at minimum, consider:

(1) Criteria that ensure that teachers certified under the program have high quality skills while allowing flexibility in the required qualifications; and

(2) Extending the period of validity of a conditional certificate for teachers who teach in recognized education shortage areas, including professional and technical education areas and less commonly taught world languages.

(c) On or before December 1, 2015, the State Board of Education shall report the results of the consideration and, if appropriate, the development of a program under subsections (a) and (b) of this section to the General Assembly in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2015.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.