

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 71a

49th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2010

Tracking Number: .180278.1

Short Title: Mentorship Requirements for Level 1 Teachers

Sponsor(s): Representative Sheryl Williams Stapleton and Others

Analyst: Eilani Gerstner

Date: February 8, 2010

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

AS AMENDED

The House Education Committee amendment adds language to specify that mentorship services shall be provided by Level 2 or Level 3 mentors.

Original Bill Summary:

Among its provisions, HB 71 amends the *School Personnel Act* to clarify that:

- Level 1 teachers must undergo a formal mentorship program for at least one full school year before applying for a Level 2 license;
- the Public Education Department (PED) shall require mentorship for all first-year teachers;
- if funds are available, PED may provide funding for mentorship services that extend beyond the first year of teaching if the local superintendent or charter school administrator certifies to the Secretary of Public Education that further formal mentorship of a beginning teacher is necessary to accomplish the purposes of the mentorship program; and
- the state shall not pay for more than three years' mentorship for any beginning teacher.

Fiscal Impact:

This bill does not contain an appropriation.

Since 2000, the Legislature has appropriated approximately \$11.4 million for beginning teacher mentorship, including approximately \$1.4 million for FY 10. (However, the House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for House Bills 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 does not contain an appropriation for the mentorship program for FY 11.)

PED reports that, including both Level 1 and Internship teachers:

- 1,306 teachers received mentorship services in school year 2009-2010; and
- 1,950 teachers received mentorship services in school year 2008-2009.

Substantive Issues:

A September 2009 staff report to the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) on beginning teacher mentorship raised several issues. HB 71 addresses two of them:

1. The *School Personnel Act* requires Level 1 teachers to “undergo a formal mentorship program and an annual intensive performance evaluation by a school administrator for at least three full school years before applying for a level two license,” which could be interpreted to mean that Level 1 teachers must participate in a mentorship program for three years. However, PED has also reported to the LESL that the department has distributed funding for first-year teachers only.
2. The *School Personnel Act* specifies that the mentorship program is for “all level one teachers.” However, the term “beginning teachers” is used when prescribing the funding requirements for mentorship dollars. In addition, PED has reported to the LESL that the department distributes mentorship funding for Internship licensed teachers, as well as for Level 1 teachers, on the basis that they are beginning teachers. While the Level 1 license is recognized in the *School Personnel Act* as part of the three-tiered licensure system, the Internship license is not addressed in state law but in PED rule. PED rule allows individuals pursuing an alternative route to a Level 1 license to apply for an Internship license and teach as the teacher of record while completing an alternative licensure program.

HB 71 clarifies both of these issues by requiring mentorship for all “first-year” teachers and allowing PED to distribute mentorship funding for up to three years for a beginning teacher if requested by the district or charter school.

Background:

- In 2001, the *School Personnel Act* was amended to create the beginning teacher mentorship program.
- The purpose of the beginning teacher mentorship program is to “provide beginning teachers with an effective transition into the teaching field, to build on their initial preparation and to ensure their success in teaching; to improve the achievement of students; and to retain capable teachers in the classroom and to remove teachers who show little promise of success.”
- When the three-tiered licensure system¹ was enacted in 2003, participation in the mentorship program became a requirement for advancement from Level 1 to Level 2 licensure.
- In 2007, LESL-endorsed legislation was enacted to require PED to work with teacher preparation programs, colleges of arts and sciences, and high schools to develop a model to provide mentorship services to each of their graduates who obtain a teaching position in a public high school, and to report recommendations to the LESL. The LESL received the final recommendations for the model in September 2008.

¹ Perhaps the central feature of the 2003 education reform legislation was the creation of a three-tiered educator licensure, evaluation, and salary system, designed as “a progressive career system in which licensees are required to demonstrate increased competencies and undertake increased duties as they progress through the licensure levels.”

Related Bill(s):

SJM 22 *Study Internship Teaching License*