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SB-488 Teacher credentialing: reading instruction. (2021-2022)

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Senate Bill No. 488

CHAPTER 678

An act to amend Sections 44252.6, 44259, 44283, and 44468 of, to add Sections 44259.6, 44259.7, 44283.3, and 44320.3 to, and to repeal Section 44268.5 of, the Education Code, relating to teacher credentialing.

[Approved by Governor October 08, 2021. Filed with Secretary of State October 08, 2021.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 488, Rubio. Teacher credentialing: reading instruction.

Existing law requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to, among other duties, establish standards for the issuance and renewal of credentials, certificates, and permits. Existing law requires the commission to develop, adopt, and administer a reading instruction competence assessment consisting of one or more instruments to measure an individual's knowledge, skill, and ability relative to effective reading instruction, as provided. Existing law requires the requirements for the issuance of the preliminary multiple subject teaching credential to include successful passage of one of specified components of the reading instruction competence assessment.

This bill would additionally authorize the passage of a combination of those specified components, as approved by the commission to meet that requirement, and would extend these requirements to the issuance of a preliminary education specialist credential. The bill would impose these requirements relating to the reading instruction competence assessment, as revised by this bill, until the commission ensures that an approved teaching assessment assesses candidates for a preliminary multiple subject credential and a preliminary education specialist credential for competence in instruction in literacy.

The bill would authorize a holder of a preliminary multiple subject credential or a preliminary education specialist credential, who was unable to take the reading instruction competence assessment due to the closure of assessment centers during the COVID-19 pandemic and who must complete this requirement in order to earn a professional clear credential, if the reading instruction competence assessment is no longer being administered, to complete this requirement through successful completion of an assessment required by another state that is identified by the commission as meeting certain requirements.

Existing law requires, as a minimum requirement for a preliminary multiple or single subject teaching credential, the satisfactory completion of a program of professional preparation that includes a teaching performance assessment that meets specified requirements and has been approved by the commission.

Existing law requires an internship program to provide interns who meet entrance criteria and are accepted to a multiple subject teaching credential program, a single subject teaching credential program, or a level 1 education specialist credential program that provides instruction to individuals with mild to moderate disabilities the opportunity to choose an early program completion option, culminating in a 5-year preliminary teaching credential. Existing law requires that this early program completion option be made available to interns who meet specified requirements, including, among others, that the intern pass the teaching performance assessment.

This bill would require the commission, by July 1, 2025, to ensure that an approved teaching performance assessment assess all candidates, including intern candidates, for a preliminary multiple subject credential and a preliminary education specialist credential for competence in instruction in literacy, including, but not limited to, evidence-based methods of teaching foundational reading skills, as specified. The bill would make other revisions relating to those internship programs, as provided.

Existing law specifies the minimum requirements for the preliminary multiple or single subject teaching credential, including, among other things, a baccalaureate degree or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education, demonstration of basic skills proficiency, satisfactory completion of a program of professional preparation, verification of subject matter competence, and the study of alternative methods of developing English language skills, including the study of reading, among all pupils, including those for whom English is a second language, in accordance with the commission's standards of program quality and effectiveness.

This bill would extend all of those requirements to the education specialist teaching credential, as specified. The bill would change the requirement of the study of alternative methods of developing English language skills to a requirement of the study of effective means of teaching literacy to all pupils, as specified. The bill would allow coursework completed at a community or junior college that is regionally accredited by specified accrediting agencies to count towards the verification of subject matter competence requirement. The bill would require the commission to ensure that its standards of program quality and effectiveness and the teaching performance expectations for the preparation of candidates for the preliminary multiple subject credential, the preliminary English language arts credential, and the preliminary education specialist credential include the study of effective means of teaching literacy, as specified.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) All teachers, including teachers with multiple subject and education specialist teaching credentials, should be prepared to teach foundational reading.
- (b) The State Department of Education has adopted an English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) Framework that includes foundational reading.
- (c) The Commission on Teacher Credentialing has recently updated the teaching performance expectations for literacy and reading to align with the ELA/ELD Framework, specifically citing foundational reading, and to include guidelines for the identification of, and strategies to meet the needs of, pupils with dyslexia.
- (d) The Commission on Teacher Credentialing has developed a robust, data-driven accreditation system that monitors teacher preparation providers and requires teacher credential candidates to perform a minimum of 600 hours of clinical practice and student teaching.
- (e) The vast majority, at least 80 percent, of school districts are impacted by the teacher shortage, especially in math, science, bilingual education, and special education.
- (f) Assessments of candidates for the purpose of state licensure must meet accepted standards of validity and reliability to ensure that candidates are assessed in an unbiased and consistent manner.
- (g) The issuance of substandard permits and intern credentials has skyrocketed in recent years because of the teacher shortage, and holders of these substandard permits and intern credentials are disproportionately serving pupils of color, low-income pupils, and English learners.
- (h) Recent research makes clear that fully credentialed teachers of color improve the school climate and pupil achievement, particularly for pupils of color.
- (i) Current and recent administrations have invested or proposed to invest over \$1 billion to address the teacher shortage and support the entrance of qualified, diverse teacher candidates into the teaching profession.

SEC. 2. Section 44252.6 of the Education Code is amended to read:

44252.6. (a) The commission, no later than July 1, 2007, shall ensure that the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET): Multiple Subjects be modified to add an assessment of basic writing skills at least as comprehensively and to the level of rigor that basic writing skills are assessed by the state basic skills proficiency test.

(b) Any individual who passes the CSET: Multiple Subjects, after it has been adjusted pursuant to subdivision (a), with the necessary score determined by the commission, shall be considered proficient in the skills of reading, writing, and mathematics, and shall not be required to pass the state basic skills proficiency requirements of Sections 44227, 44252, and 44830.

(c) The commission shall ensure that the consolidation and modification of assessments pursuant to this section does not result in an increase in the total fees paid by teacher credential candidates.

SEC. 3. 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 subject, single subject, or education specialist teaching credential are all of the following:

(1) A baccalaureate degree or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of 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) Demonstration of basic skills proficiency 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, 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 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 effective means of teaching literacy, including, but not limited to, the study of reading as described in subparagraphs (A) and (B), and evidence-based means of teaching foundational reading skills in print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency to all pupils, including tiered supports for pupils with reading difficulties, English learners, and pupils with exceptional needs. The study of effective means of teaching literacy shall be in accordance with the commission's standards of program quality and effectiveness and current teaching performance expectations, shall be aligned to the current English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) Framework adopted by the state board, and shall incorporate the program guidelines for dyslexia developed pursuant to Section 56335. 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).

(C) A program for the multiple subject teaching credential and the education specialist 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:

(i) Completion of a subject matter program approved by the commission on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 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. Coursework completed at a community or junior college that is regionally accredited by an accrediting agency listed in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (g) of Section 44203 or by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may count for purposes of this clause.

(iv) Successful completion of a baccalaureate or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with the following, as applicable:

(I) For single subject credentials, a major in one of the subject areas in which the commission credentials candidates.

(II) For multiple subject credentials, a liberal studies major or other degree that includes coursework in the content areas pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 44282.

(III) For education specialist credentials, either a major in one of the subject areas in which the commission credentials candidates or a liberal studies or other major that includes coursework in the content areas pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 44282.

(v) Demonstration that the candidate, through a combination of the methods described in clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) in whole or in part, has met or exceeded each of the domains of the subject matter requirements adopted by the commission in the content area of the credential pursuant to Section 44282 for multiple and single subject credentials, or pursuant to Section 44265 for education specialist credentials.

(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) 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 either of the following:

(A) A program of beginning teacher induction that is provided by one or more local educational agencies and has been approved by the commission 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 pursuant to this subdivision. The program standards shall encourage innovation and experimentation in the continuous preparation and induction of beginning teachers.

(B) A program of beginning teacher induction that is sponsored by a regionally accredited 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) Paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) does 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 paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) apply only to persons who enter a program of professional preparation on or after January 1, 1997.

SEC. 4. Section 44259.6 is added to the Education Code, to read:

44259.6. By September 1, 2022, the commission shall ensure that its standards of program quality and effectiveness for the preparation of candidates for the preliminary multiple subject credential, the preliminary single subject English language arts credential, and the preliminary education specialist credential, and the teaching performance expectations for the preliminary multiple subject credential, the preliminary single subject English language arts credential, and the preliminary education specialist credential, include and specify all of the requirements in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 44259.

SEC. 5. Section 44259.7 is added to the Education Code, to read:

44259.7. By September 1, 2024, the commission shall ensure that, in addition to the requirements of Section 44259.6, its standards of program quality and effectiveness for the preparation of candidates for the preliminary multiple subject credential, the preliminary single subject English language arts credential, and the preliminary education specialist credential, and the teaching performance expectations for the preliminary multiple subject credential, the preliminary single subject English language arts credential, and the preliminary education specialist credential, include all of the requirements of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 44259, including those added by the act that added this section.

SEC. 6. Section 44268.5 of the Education Code is repealed.

SEC. 7. Section 44283 of the Education Code is amended to read:

44283. (a) The Legislature hereby recognizes that teacher competence in reading instruction is essential to the progress and achievement of pupils learning to read in elementary and secondary schools. It is the intent of the Legislature that the commission develop a reading instruction competence assessment to measure the knowledge, skill, and ability of first-time credential applicants who are not credentialed in any state who will be responsible for reading instruction.

(b) The commission shall develop, adopt, and administer a reading instruction competence assessment consisting of one or more instruments to measure an individual's knowledge, skill, and ability relative to effective reading instruction. The reading instruction competence assessment shall measure the knowledge, skill, and ability of first-time credential applicants who are not credentialed in any state that the commission determines to be essential to reading instruction and shall be consistent with the state's reading curriculum framework adopted after July 1, 1996, and the Reading Program Advisory published by the department in 1996. The commission shall perform the following duties with respect to the reading instruction competence assessment:

- (1) Develop, adopt, and administer the assessment.
- (2) Initially and periodically analyze the validity and reliability of the content of the assessment.
- (3) Establish and implement appropriate passing scores on the assessment.
- (4) Analyze possible sources of bias on the assessment.
- (5) Collect and analyze background information provided by first-time credential applicants who are not credentialed in any state who participate in the assessment.
- (6) Report and interpret individual and aggregated assessment results.
- (7) Convene a task force to advise the commission on the design, content, and administration of the assessment. Not less than one-third of the members of the task force shall be classroom teachers with recent experience in teaching reading in the early elementary grades.
- (8) Before requiring successful passage of the assessment for the preliminary multiple subject teaching credential, certify that all of the teacher education programs approved by the commission pursuant to Section 44227 offer instruction in the knowledge, skills, and abilities required by the assessment.

(c) Until the commission ensures that an approved teaching performance assessment for a preliminary multiple subject credential, as required by Section 44320.2, and a preliminary education specialist credential assesses candidates for competence in instruction in literacy as specified in Section 44320.3, the requirements for issuance of the preliminary multiple subject teaching credential, as set forth in subdivision (b) of Section 44259, or the preliminary education specialist credential shall include successful passage of one of the following components of the reading instruction competence assessment:

- (1) A comprehensive examination of the knowledge and skill pertaining to effective reading instruction of the credential applicant.
- (2) An authentic assessment of teaching skills and classroom abilities of the credential applicant pertaining to the provision of effective reading instruction.
- (3) A combination of paragraphs (1) and (2), as approved by the commission.

(d) The reading instruction competence assessment is subject to the provisions of Sections 44235.1 and 44298.

SEC. 8. Section 44283.3 is added to the Education Code, to read:

44283.3. A holder of a preliminary multiple subject credential or a preliminary education specialist credential who was unable to take the reading instruction competence assessment pursuant to Section 44283, as it read on January 1, 2020, due to the closure of assessment centers during the COVID-19 pandemic, and who must complete this requirement in order to earn a professional

clear credential, may, if the reading instruction competence assessment is no longer being administered, complete this requirement through successful completion of an assessment required by another state that is identified by the commission as meeting the requirements of Section 44283, as it read on January 1, 2021.

SEC. 9. Section 44320.3 is added to the Education Code, to read:

44320.3. (a) By July 1, 2025, the commission shall ensure that an approved teaching performance assessment for a preliminary multiple subject credential, as required by Section 44320.2, and for a preliminary education specialist credential assesses all candidates for competence in instruction in literacy, including, but not limited to, evidence-based methods of teaching foundational reading skills, as described in paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 44259. The commission shall ensure that any competencies assessed pursuant to this section are assessed in a manner aligned to the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 44259, the commission's standards of program quality and effectiveness and current teaching performance expectations, and the current English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) Framework adopted by the state board. The commission shall ensure that the assessment meets the commission's adopted teaching performance assessment design standards for validity, reliability, and sponsor support responsibilities.

(b) Before requiring successful passage of the teaching performance assessment for the preliminary multiple subject teaching credential and the preliminary education specialist credential pursuant to subdivision (a), the commission shall certify that all of the teacher education programs approved by the commission pursuant to Section 44227 provide instruction in the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 44259.

(c) Commencing on July 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, until the requirements of this section are met, the commission shall report to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature on its progress in meeting the requirements of this section and Sections 44259.6 and 44259.7, including how stakeholders were engaged in the process of meeting the requirements of this section and Sections 44259.6 and 44259.7.

SEC. 10. Section 44468 of the Education Code is amended to read:

44468. (a) An internship program, established pursuant to Article 7.5 (commencing with Section 44325) of Chapter 2 or this article, that is accredited by the commission shall provide interns who meet entrance criteria and are accepted to a multiple subject teaching credential program, a single subject teaching credential program, or an education specialist credential program that provides instruction to individuals with mild to moderate disabilities the opportunity to choose an early program completion option, culminating in a five-year preliminary teaching credential. The early program completion option shall be made available to interns who meet the following requirements:

(1) Pass a written assessment that assesses knowledge of teaching foundations, is adopted for this purpose by the commission, and includes all of the following:

(A) Human development as it relates to teaching and learning aligned with the state content and performance standards for pupils adopted by the state board.

(B) Techniques to address learning differences including working with pupils with special needs.

(C) Techniques to address working with English learners to provide access to the curriculum.

(D) Reading instruction as set forth in paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 44259.

(E) The assessment of pupil progress based upon the state content and performance standards for pupils adopted by the state board and planning intervention based on the assessment.

(F) Classroom management techniques.

(G) Methods of teaching the subject fields.

(2) (A) Pass the teaching performance assessment as set forth in Section 44320.2.

(B) An intern participating in the early completion option may take the teaching performance assessment only one time as part of the early completion option. An intern who takes the teaching performance assessment but is not successful may complete the internship program. Scores on this assessment shall be used by the internship program in providing the individualized professional development plan for interns that emphasizes preparation in areas where additional growth is warranted and waiving preparation in areas where the candidate has demonstrated competence. The intern shall retake and pass the teaching performance assessment at the end of the internship in order to be considered for recommendation by the internship program to the commission.

(3) Until the commission ensures that an approved teaching performance assessment for a preliminary multiple subject credential, as required by Section 44320.2, and for a preliminary education specialist credential assesses candidates for competence in instruction in literacy as specified in Section 44320.3, successfully pass a reading instruction competence assessment required by Section 44283, if required for the intern's credential.

(4) Meet the requirements for teacher fitness as set forth in Sections 44339, 44340, and 44341.

(b) An intern who elects to use the early completion option must first pass the assessment required pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) in order to qualify to take the teaching performance assessment required pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a).

(c) An intern who passes the assessments described in subdivision (a) and is recommended by the internship program to the commission is eligible for a five-year preliminary multiple subject teaching credential, single subject teaching credential, or education specialist credential that authorizes instruction to individuals with mild to moderate disabilities.

(d) The commission shall issue a clear multiple or single subject teaching credential to an applicant whose employing school district documents, in a manner prescribed by the commission, that the applicant has fulfilled both of the following requirements:

(1) Holds a preliminary five-year teaching credential issued by the commission.

(2) Completes a commission-approved teacher induction program.