

Teachers Standards and Practices Commission					
	2015-17 Actual	2017-19 Legislatively Adopted	2017-19 Legislatively Approved*	2019-21 Current Service Level	2019-21 Governor's Recommended
General Fund	200,000	1,700,000	1,700,000	-	-
Other Funds	6,576,291	8,961,470	9,106,410	9,063,665	8,941,685
Total Funds	6,776,291	10,661,470	10,806,410	9,063,665	8,941,685
Positions	26	27	27	23	23
FTE	24.42	25.71	25.71	22.50	22.50
* Includes Emergency Board and administrative actions through December 2018.					

Program Description

The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC), composed of 17 members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, has three primary areas of responsibility:

- Establish rules and issue licenses and registrations to teachers, administrators, school nurses, school counselors, and school psychologists.
- Maintain and enforce professional standards of competent and ethical performance and proper assignment of licensed educators through investigations and actions brought about through formal complaints to the Commission.
- Adopt standards for college and university teacher education programs and approve programs that meet such standards.

There are almost 65,000 educators (some have more than one license --e.g., teacher and administrator) licensed by TSPC with teachers representing roughly 90%. For comparison, there are approximately 30,000 working teachers in Oregon’s public schools. The TSPC is one of eleven stand-alone teacher licensee entities among the states.

During the 2017 Session, the Legislature passed HB 2763 which provided \$1.7 million General Fund and \$1.7 million Other Funds to the budget to financially assist those educators who are working toward the National Board Certification. This is intended to be a one-time General Fund appropriation (other than the cost of one position) to the National Board Certification Fund which is designed to assist 150 educators to defray their costs of earning their Certification in the next few years.

CSL Summary and Issues

- The CSL budget for TSPC factors in the elimination of four limited duration positions (3.21 FTE) that were added in the 2017-19 budget to continue to address backlogs in responding to incoming phone calls and email and backlogs in licensing and investigations. The Agency Requested budget requests two of these positions to continue (limited duration), but the Governor’s budget does not continue the positions. There was also a limited duration position that was responsible for electronically scanning the Commission’ case files which are statutorily required to be maintained for 25 years.

- The 2017-19 one-time \$1.7 million General Fund investment for the National Board Certification Fund (see above) is not included in the 2019-21 CSL, but the corresponding Other Funds amount continues for payouts from the Fund to teachers receiving assistance.

Policy Issues

- Discussions of reducing class size and other “education reform” efforts will increase the demand for teachers including those licensed for CTE related classes. If these budget and policy considerations are implemented, the challenge will be to find sufficient number of teachers. Some subject areas are more challenging than others. The number of new teachers coming out of teacher preparation programs is just starting to increase again, but the number of out-of-state applicants is 600 less than it was two years ago. In addition, six teacher preparation programs have closed since 2011.

Other Significant Issues and Background

- The Commission is recovering from a period of falling revenues due to the decrease in the number of teachers applying and renewing their licenses. The Commission eliminated positions, left positions vacant, reduced other spending, and used its ending balance resources to address the falling revenues. Consequences of these actions were backlogs in: (1) investigations; (2) processing of licenses; and (3) responding to emails and phone calls. Limited duration staff authorized for 2015-17 and 2017-19 have made significant progress in addressing these backlogs. Based on information in the CSL development and Agency Request Budget, fee revenue is assumed to fall slightly from the amount estimated for 2017-19. This means that even without any budget increases above CSL, the Commission will need to rely on its ending balance to provide some of the resources for the budget. The other option are reductions which increases the chance of growing backlogs again.
- The agency is primarily supported by Other Funds from licensing and other fees paid by the regulated educators with the term of a license ranging from three to five years. In 2015, the Legislature passed HB 2411 which increased the maximum the Commission can charge in fees – the last licensure increase occurred in January 2005. Basic licenses are for a three or five-year duration depending on the type of license. The fee for a new or renewed instate basic teaching license was increased from \$100 to \$140. As part of the fee “redesign”, many of the teachers who had held three-year licenses will move to five-year licenses. This should affect the amount of renewal fee revenue starting in January 2019. The budget is not based on a reduction in revenue due to this given the uncertainty of its impact. It could mean that fee revenue may start to drop in 2019-21. Another potential fee revenue issue resulting from HB 2763 (2017) is that those teachers who hold National Board Certification, will no longer have to pay for their license renewals.
- The Commission is completing a new licensing information technology project including an on-line application process. This project has been delayed, partially due to the higher priorities being placed on non-TSPC projects for the DAS contractors. There is also a case management information technology project for disciplinary actions. Both projects should increase staff productivity, so in future biennia the need for limited duration positions to address backlogs should decrease.
- The Governor’s 2019-21 budget is essentially the CSL with minor adjustments to stay within revenue projections. It does not include two limited duration positions requested in the Agency Request budget to address backlogs. It is suggested that the Ways and Means Committee examine the impact on this on backlogs based on more recent data available during the 2019 Session.