

HB 4030 A -A5 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rules

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Meeting Dates: 2/17

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires that a person undergo only one criminal background check during an emergency. Requires the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) to review licensing reciprocity to simplify the process and encourage educators from other states to become licensed in Oregon. Requires TSPC to reduce or suspend professional development requirements for those seeking to renew licenses between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2023. Directs the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and TSPC to review the job application process in Oregon and evaluate options for establishing and maintaining a statewide portal for both licensed and classified jobs in Oregon school districts. Establishes recruitment and retention grant program until January 2, 2024. Establishes reimbursement program for training costs incurred by substitute teachers and instructional assistants until January 2, 2024. Requires State Board of Education (SBE) to suspend nonessential reporting requirements that are not required by federal law until June 30, 2023. Requires TSPC to establish licensing assistance positions to serve the needs of those seeking licensure. Establishes education workforce data system. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A5 Removes the ability for the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to declare an emergency. Establishes a sunset on the provisions relating to background checks of June 30, 2024. Removes provision allowing single background check for persons with licenses that have lapsed during the preceding three years. Removes ability for ODE to reimburse individual educators for training costs.

BACKGROUND:

During 2021, legislators created a work group to review issues relating to labor shortages in Oregon schools. According to the Oregon Employment Department (OED), schools are currently competing for workers with a variety of other industries that may provide lower-stress or lower-risk environments. As other industries raise wages, Oregon's schools are finding it difficult to compete. During the summer of 2021, Oregon's school districts reported over 1,820 job vacancies to the Employment Department, 85 percent of which required education beyond a high school diploma. Oregon has an overall three-year attrition rate for teachers of approximately 36 percent, with higher rates for teachers of color. The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission reports a total of 66,000 active teaching licenses in its system. However, current employment figures indicate that only about 34,000 teachers are working in Oregon's schools.

In the work group meetings, participants discussed pay, teachers spoke about the difficulty of meeting professional development requirements during the current workforce shortage, the challenges of lost planning time, and both substitute teachers and classified staff reported being charged by districts for training required for their jobs. The provisions in House Bill 4030 A represent some of the work group's policy choices for short-term fixes to ease conditions for the state's education workforce.