

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: SB 443

52nd Legislature, 1st Session, 2015

Tracking Number: .199499.1

Short Title: Teacher Career Academy Act

Sponsor(s): Senator Howie C. Morales and Others

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Bill Summary:

SB 443 creates the *Teacher Career Academy Act* in the *Public School Code*. The purpose of the act is to increase the number of high-achieving students who enter the teaching profession by recruiting students in grades 6 through 12 and providing them with information about career opportunities in teaching and the availability of financial assistance for teacher preparation.

Among its provisions, SB 443:

- defines a number of terms:
 - “eligible school” as a public elementary school that enrolls students in grade 6 or a public middle, junior high, or high school;
 - “fund” as the Teacher Career Academy Fund; and
 - “pre-collegiate activities” as activities that support and encourage students to enter the teaching profession;
- requires the Public Education Department (PED) and school district representatives to work with the Higher Education Department (HED), teacher preparation programs and community colleges to develop concurrent enrollment teaching courses in areas such as:
 - teaching techniques;
 - classroom management;
 - child development;
 - learning styles; and
 - cultural diversity; and
- allows school districts to create a Teacher Career Academy program for students who are interested in pre-collegiate activities.

Further, an eligible school has the opportunity to apply to PED for project funding for its program. Applications are required to be in a PED-approved form and shall include:

- the pre-collegiate activities to be offered;
- the number of students to be served;
- the plan for evaluating the success of the program by tracking students:

- throughout their public school and college careers; and
- their employment status after college graduation.

SB 443 also requires PED to establish criteria for awarding money to eligible schools through a competitive application process. Schools that receive an award from the fund shall submit annual reports to PED identifying the number and grade level of students enrolled in pre-collegiate activities, including:

- the number of students concurrently enrolled in teaching courses and in which schools;
- the number of students enrolling in an accredited education program after their graduation from high school; and
- the number of students entering the teaching profession.

Finally, SB 443 creates the Teacher Career Academy Fund as a non-reverting fund in the State Treasury.

Fiscal Impact:

\$500,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Teacher Career Academy Fund for expenditure in FY 16 and subsequent years. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund.

Fiscal Issues:

The fiscal impact report from the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) questions whether schools have the resources to follow students through college and subsequent employment status as required in the act.

Technical Issues:

On page 3, lines 11 and 15, and page 4, line 3, “precollegiate” should be changed to “pre-collegiate” to be consistent with how the term is in the definition section of the bill.

On page 4, line 16, “an” should be changed to “and”.

Substantive Issues:

The bill analysis of the Office of the State Auditor notes teachers are an important factor affecting student learning. Given that more than half of K-12 students in New Mexico perform below grade level, it is important to attract more students into teaching and assure that the state’s colleges and universities prepare high-quality teachers, particularly as New Mexico’s public school districts continue to encounter teacher shortages. Improvement in these areas will enhance further government accountability of good use of educational funds and assure compliance with the state’s educational performance outcome measures.

According to the PED analysis, the department is committed to incentivizing the recruitment, development, and retention of highly effective teachers and school leaders. For example, through *Indian Education Act* appropriations, PED is in the process of executing a contract for the development of a Native American teacher pipeline. While this pipeline is not currently

aimed at secondary students, its focus could be expanded to encompass this aspect to complement the Teacher Career Academy programs established by the act.

According to a hearing in 2012 before the LFC on Teacher and School Leader Preparation Programs, the US Department of Education (USDE) estimated in 2011 that over the next 10 years 1.6 million teachers will retire and need to be replaced by new teachers. This estimate indicates the need for enhanced recruitment, preparation, and retention of great teaching talent in order to transform public education.

Background:

Grow Your Own Program

According to the National Education Association (NEA) Department of Teacher Quality, high school teacher cadet programs began spreading in the mid-1980s amid predictions of pending teacher shortages. A 1996 report (the last known such survey) identified 250 examples of this approach to teacher recruitment. Often resembling the introduction to teaching courses common in colleges and universities, high school teacher cadet courses are usually taught by exemplary teachers from the students' own schools. Students take one or more elective courses about the teaching profession and have practice teaching experiences that include tutoring and mentoring younger students.

Research from the College Board Advocacy & Policy Center indicates that states have developed unique ways to prepare educators to serve in hard-to-staff schools. For example, the Illinois Grow Your Own program identifies, trains, and employs local residents in low-income communities with struggling schools to become teachers in those communities. Each program under this initiative is organized and run by a consortium of institutions, including at least a teacher preparation university or college, a community-based organization, and a school district.

Premier Program – The South Carolina Teacher Cadet Program

Additionally, the South Carolina's Teacher Cadet Program is part of the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement, a statewide center to meet the state's need for high-quality teachers for every child. No other state has a similarly organized program to build and support its teacher workforce.

The South Carolina Teacher Cadet Program was founded out of a concern for the condition of South Carolina's teacher supply pool and a need for a centralized, "homegrown" teacher recruitment effort to increase the number of students in the education pipeline. The program began in South Carolina and has expanded its network to include 33 other states that use the Teacher Cadet curriculum.

Measurable Results of the South Carolina Program

During school year 2011-2012, 72 percent of all public high schools in South Carolina had Teacher Cadet Programs, which served 2,427 students. After completing the course, 41.3 percent of teacher cadets chose teaching as the career they plan to pursue after college.

More than 53,000 students have participated in the Teacher Cadet Program in its 26-year history. Data provided by the South Carolina Department of Education showed that one out of every five

of these cadets had gone on to earn teacher certification, and 4,043 former cadets were employed in a South Carolina public school district during school year 2008-2009.

2014 Interim

In a joint meeting with the LFC in August 2014, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) heard a variety of testimony about the quality, compensation, recruitment, and retention of high-quality educators. The testimony began with a presentation by a representative of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). Among other points, this testimony identified the various components of effective teaching policies – preparation, licensure, salary, supports, and evaluation – and emphasized the interrelationship among them, in that, for example, salary affects recruitment and retention. The NCSL testimony also provided salary data from the NEA for six states in the Southwest, including New Mexico, and noted that those states, together with states in the southeastern United States, have the lowest beginning and average teacher salaries in the country.¹

Further testimony on this topic came from PED representatives who began with a description of PED’s vision for recruiting, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and a contention that the department has delivered on this vision, citing such activities as the teacher and school leader evaluation system and an incentive pay pilot program. The PED testimony also alluded to research indicating a link between highly effective teachers, as rated through a value-added framework, and student performance on standardized metrics.

The PED testimony concluded with an enumeration of issues that the department considers relevant to the discussion of teacher compensation:

- barriers to entry that shrink the state’s teaching pool, including unattractive starting salaries;
- a compensation structure that does not provide an incentive to place the best teachers in high-need areas; and
- salary increases that generally do not distinguish between low-rated and highly rated teachers.

Committee Referrals:

SEC/SFC

Related Bills:

SB 86 *Child Care Teacher Retention*
SB 470 *English Language Learner Teacher Prep Act*
SM 105 *Establish High-Quality Career Pathways*
HB 56 *Child Care Teacher Retention*
HB 373 *English Language Learner Teacher Prep Act*
HM 14 *Establish High-Quality Career Pathways*

¹ The six southwestern states, in descending order of average teacher salaries, are Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma.