

HCS HB 2304 -- SUBSTITUTE TEACHER CERTIFICATION

SPONSOR: Lewis (6)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 16 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2304.

This bill provides a four year certificate for individuals that want to substitute teach. Applicants for certification must complete a background check and also have at least 36 college hours or have completed a 20 hour online training, individuals must also have a high school diploma or equivalence. An alternative route to certification is provided for qualified individuals with technical or business expertise or Armed Forces experience and a superintendent sponsorship.

Until December 31, 2025 this bill allows retired teachers that have a substitute certification to substitute part-time and not have those hours and salary effect their retirement allowance.

Substitute certificates will expire if the individual fails to substitute teach for at least five days or 40 hours in a calendar year, and no individual under 20 years old may substitute in grades nine-12.

The bill also requires that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) develop and maintain an online substitute training program with 20 hours of training related to subjects appropriate for substitute teaching, and authorizes school districts to develop district specific orientations lasting two hours.

The bill provides substitute teachers beginning January 1, 2023 that apply for a fingerprint background check the opportunity to submit the results to up to five different school districts for a specified fee (Section 168.036 RSMo).

The bill adds a web based survey to be developed and maintained by DESE that will collect information from substitutes at the end of each day of teaching. Districts will provide links to substitute teachers to access the survey, which will contain questions regarding the support and interaction with school staff, student health and safety issues, among other relevant questions.

The bill requires that school districts and charter schools

annually provide DESE with information relating to substitute teaching as outlined.

This bill contains an emergency clause.

This bill is similar to HB 1592 (2022) and to HCS HB 608 (2021).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this is an important bill that will create opportunities to increase the number of substitutes available during a time of extreme shortage. Providing the opportunity to submit fingerprint information to multiple districts is cost saving and will increase the number of applicants that will be willing to work for multiple districts.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Lewis; Cheri Pello; Eimee Cook; Ila Jean Farris; Jessica Risenhoover; Terica Donnelly; Andrew Donald Wells, No Left Turn In Education - Missouri; Dustin Fanning, Moberly School District #81; and Arnie C. Dienoff.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that the lack of training requirements for substitutes could be detrimental to the classroom and that rather than lower standards that teacher pay should be increased in order to attract more qualified individuals to substitute.

Testifying against the bill were Ryan J Tinker; Tracy Tegethoff; Blair Panzica; Dana Isom; Eleanor Gund; Elizabeth Collom; Jenna Roberson; Linda Hoechst; Liz Rauls; Lynn Derienzo; Stefanie Buscher; Christy Potthast; Kenneth Derienzo; Laura Deen; and Emily Hornstra.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say adding a survey for substitutes would be helpful in order to assess how school districts can best improve the working environment and retain quality substitutes.

Testifying on the bill was Missouri NEA.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.