

**Date:** February 17, 2005

**To:** Members of the House Subcommittee on Education Finance Structures

**From:** Representative Don Cox, Vice Chair, House Subcommittee on Education Finance Structures

**Subject:** **Workgroup on Professional Certification and the Teachers' Salary Schedule**

Representatives Hunter, Talcott, and I met with stakeholders to discuss ways of aligning the teachers' salary allocation schedule with the new professional certification requirements. In the course of these discussions, it became clear to me that the professional certification is in disarray. The problems with the program need to be addressed before any changes are made to teachers' salary allocations.

The attached document contains our recommendations on addressing the problems we have identified.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From

### Workgroup on Professional Certification and the Salary Allocation Model

- 1) Recommend a task force or study committee to revise the statewide salary allocation model for teachers subject to the Professional Certificate requirement and explore the best options for recognition of the:
  - a. Professional Certificate; and
  - b. Renewals of that certificate through demonstrated success in student learning and contribution to school improvement.
  - c. Require work to be completed by December 2005.

#### Notes:

- a. This study could be incorporated into to Rep. Hunter's bill.
  - b. As part of the exploration of options, the Legislature could authorize a limited number of pilot projects (with reporting back requirements) allowing districts to implement compensation programs that recognize teacher professional growth that is tied directly to student success and school improvement.
  - c. A sample of a salary schedule so constructed is included
- 2) Recommend that implementation of a revised statewide salary allocation model statewide should be delayed until the legislature has approved the processes for obtaining the Professional Certificate; and the ongoing renewal of that certificate. Both processes must be developed and refined so as to be sufficiently rigorous, predictable for teachers, and reliable as an indicator of teacher performance and student learning. The committee finds that there is little or no control by the state over the quality or cost of efforts in higher education to bring beginning teachers to their first professional certificate and recommends that OSPI approve and monitor the program of institutions recommending the Professional Certificate. Without approval, the certificate recommendation would not be honored and SPI should be charged with keeping an updated list of approved institutions on their website.
  - 3) The legislators on the committee further found great deal of ambiguity, confusion, and anger among teachers who are looking to renew their certificates. The processes for renewal lack consistency across the state and teachers do not know, and cannot predict how they will continue to keep a professional certificate valid that is now required for them to continue teaching in Washington.
  - 4) Until steps 1 and 2 above are completed, in order to address the needs of teachers in the Professional Certification pipeline currently, it is recommended that:
    - a. Teachers coming from out-of-state who have a) graduated from an accredited teaching program; b) hold a valid out-of-state teaching certificate; and c) Washington State required experience should be granted reciprocity with a residency certificate and not be required to complete the Professional Certification program, until a specific process is in place for out-of-state candidates.
    - b. OSPI should conduct a review of Professional Certification programs based on concerns raised by participants regarding duplicative and excessive coursework requirements, lack of ties to professional growth,

district and school improvement plans, excess burden, range of costs, etc. The OSPI should report to the Legislature by September 1, 2005, on their findings, by institution of high education, and identify exemplary practices and specific plans for improvement.

- c. The Legislature should appropriate funding related to the attainment of the Professional Certificate such as a flat pay-bump, similar to that provided NBPTS teachers or, at a minimum, locate teachers with the Professional Certification at the BA +30 column of the State Allocation Model, provided that no teacher receive less than a \$3000 increase in annual compensation.
  - d. Teachers holding the Professional Certificate should be given extensions to the five year renewal requirement until the renewal process are in place. This will require either a statutory or rule change.
- 5) OSPI will need to develop a central repository of teacher certificates and documentation for funding as well as a system for monitoring the learning of their students over time.