

Date of Hearing: June 22, 2016

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Patrick O'Donnell, Chair

SB 916 (Allen) – As Amended April 27, 2016

**SENATE VOTE:** 39-0

**SUBJECT:** Teacher credentialing

**SUMMARY:** Authorizes single subject teaching credentials in dance and theatre. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Adds single subject teaching credentials in dance and theatre to the current list of 13 single subject teaching credentials.
- 2) States that a person issued a single subject teaching credential in physical education or dance before the establishment of single subject teaching credentials in dance and theatre is authorized to teach dance or theatre, respectively.
- 3) States that a person pursuing a single subject teaching credential in physical education or English before the establishment of a single subject teaching credential in dance and theatre is not become subject to additional requirements as a result of this bill.
- 4) States that nothing in the act shall be construed to prohibit a school district from employing a person who holds a single subject teaching credential in another subject with an authorization to teach theatre from teaching theatre, or a person who holds a single subject teaching credential in another subject with an authorization to teach dance from teaching dance.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Authorizes the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to issue single subject teaching credentials in agriculture, art, business, English, foreign language, health science, home economics, industrial and technology education, mathematics, music, physical education, science, and social science.
- 2) Authorizes the CTC to issue a multiple or single subject teaching credential with a specified concentration in a particular subject based upon the depth of an applicant's preparation in an important subject of the school curriculum in order to ensure excellence in teaching in specific subjects.
- 3) Authorizes the CTC to issue credentials for teaching specialties, including bilingual education, early childhood education, and special education. Education specialist teaching credentials are to be based upon a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution, completion of a program of professional preparation, and standards that the CTC may establish.
- 4) Requires students to successfully complete a course in visual and performing arts (VAPA), foreign language, or career technical education in order to graduate from high school.

- 5) Establishes that visual and performing arts, including dance, music, theatre, and visual arts are part of the adopted course of study for grades 1-12.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, the CTC anticipates the cost to implement this bill would be between \$400,000 and \$500,000 to develop credential standards and develop both the dance and theatre exams for certification. To the extent the intent of this bill is to no longer allow future physical education and English teachers to be authorized to teach dance and theatre respectively, the CTC would incur additional costs to redevelop those exams. (Test Development and Administration Account)

**COMMENTS:**

*Need for the bill.* The author's office states: "In order to teach dance, a teacher must obtain a credential in physical education, even though the standards for teaching dance are separate from the standards for teaching physical education. Similarly, to teach theatre, an instructor must obtain an English credential, even though an English credential provides no training in theatre instruction. Dance and theatre are the only two subject areas with discrete subject standards that are not taught under their own single-subject credential."

The author's office reports that dance and theatre undergraduate majors are numerous in California, with 73 public and private colleges and universities offering dance majors, and 131 colleges offering theatre majors. The author notes that students who earn degrees in dance or theatre are unable to teach in their respective fields unless they earn a credential in physical education or English.

Proponents of the establishment of these credentials argue that 1) the current system reflects a lack of alignment between the preparation teachers must undergo and the content which they expect to teach, and 2) that this system dissuades individuals wishing to teach dance and theatre from entering the teaching profession, due both to misaligned preparation requirements and the possibility of being assigned to teach outside of their intended subject area.

*History of dance and theatre credentials in California.* According to the California Alliance for Arts Education, in the 1960's teaching credentials in dance and theatre were authorized under the Fisher Act of 1961.

The elimination of these credentials was a result of the Teacher Preparation and Licensing Law of 1970, known as the Ryan Act, which removed the "s" from the word "arts." The effect of this omission (which is believed to have been unintentional) is that the authorization in current law has since been interpreted to authorize credentials only in visual art (and music under separate authorization). As a result, for over forty years California has authorized single subject credentials in music and visual arts, but no single subject credentials specific to dance or theatre. As noted above, under current law individuals seeking to teach dance and theatre must earn physical education and English credentials, respectively.

Over the years there have been a number of legislative attempts to establish single subject credentials in dance and theatre. According to the California Alliance for Arts Education, in the early 1990's Senator Patrick Johnston authored two bills to establish these credentials, but these were withdrawn for lack of support. In the late 1990's Assemblymember Susan Davis authored two bills to establish these credentials but they were vetoed or withdrawn under threat of veto.

The CTC has also attempted to address this issue. In 2013, the Teacher Advisory Panel (TAP) to the CTC recommended the establishment of single subject credentials in dance and theatre, and staff developed a proposal to create a Visual and Performing Arts credential with concentrations in dance, theatre, music, and visual arts. This proposal did not move forward due to stakeholder concerns.

The primary objections raised to the establishment of these credentials have been that 1) the establishment of these credentials represents an unnecessary, and potentially precedent-setting, proliferation of credential types, 2) more narrow credentials may make holders less employable, and 3) more narrow credentials may make it more difficult for districts, particularly smaller districts which have small enrollments in these subjects, to hire qualified teachers.

***Alignment between dance and theatre content standards and credentialing requirements.***

Current law authorizes the establishment of content standards in visual and performing arts, English language arts, and physical education. The CTC aligns its subject matter preparation requirements to the state's content standards.

While credentialing requirements place dance and theatre in physical education and English subjects, the state's academic content standards in those subjects are found in the VAPA standards, which cover music, dance, theatre, and visual arts. This means that while all four of the VAPA disciplines have discrete content standards, two of them have single subject credentials aligned to the standards, and two do not. It also means that teachers undergoing preparation for dance and theatre must be prepared in content standards which are different from those specific to the subject they intend to teach.

The 2013 TAP report to the CTC illustrated the preparation alignment issues in dance and theatre. For dance, the TAP noted that the VAPA framework directs teachers to instruct students on the concepts of time, space, force/energy use, costume, setting, music/rhythm, choreography and cultural context, and that in order to master these concepts students "must be engaged with a wide range of materials and be given ample opportunity to develop and apply their dance concepts, artistic skills, aesthetic sense, and vocabulary." The TAP noted that, in contrast, the physical education framework directs teachers to instruct students on "understanding and mastering the movements needed to perform physical activities and acquiring the knowledge base and habits needed to maintain physical fitness and health." The TAP concluded that the frameworks "clearly emphasize different bodies of knowledge and different applications, each with distinct intellectual and disciplinary roots."

Similarly, the TAP noted that while both the theatre standards and the (2007) English language arts standards emphasize the interpretation and understanding of text and its historical/cultural/social context, the VAPA standards for theatre include a number of additional concepts not found in the English/language arts standards, including "the vocabulary of theatre (acting values, style, genre and theme), the historical and cultural roles of the theatre, the social, cultural, political and artistic contexts that produced genres of and key works in theatre, elements of interpretation and dramatic performance techniques, knowledge of the technical aspects of theatrical productions in multiple media, and knowledge of the key roles in theatrical productions (director, actor, stage manager, costume designer, etc.)." The TAP also noted that the theatre standards include a heavier emphasis on multiple media for the theatre arts (stage, film/video, electronic media) than is included the English/language arts standards.

***Future of the existing authorization.*** While the bill adds the authority for the CTC to issue single subject credentials in dance and theatre, it does not appear to expressly prohibit the continued use of the existing credentials to teach dance and theatre courses. Maintaining this pathway would allow teachers to decide between obtaining a broader or more narrow authorization, and would give districts the same choice in hiring. The continuation of this option was recommended in the 2013 TAP report to the CTC.

***Course enrollment and staffing in visual and performing arts.*** According to the California Department of Education (CDE), enrollment in visual and performing arts courses in 2015-16 totaled nearly 1.3 million students, with the following enrollments: art (572,000), music (510,000), dance (50,000), and theatre (133,000). CDE estimates that this enrollment represents full time equivalent of 3,800 art teachers, 3,300 music teachers, 300 dance teachers, and 900 theatre teachers.

***Prior legislation.*** AB 2254 (Calderon) of the 2013-14 Session would have stated the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation to authorize the development of single subject teaching credentials, one in dance and one in theatre. This bill was never heard in a Committee.

AB 752 (Davis, 1999) would have created an emphasis credential in theatre and dance to holders of English and physical education credentials. This measure passed the Legislature and was enrolled to the Governor, but subsequently withdrawn at the author's request.

AB 1052 (Davis, 1998), similar to this measure, proposed to provide a single subject credential in dance and theatre but was vetoed by Governor Wilson with the following message:

***This bill would require the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to adopt regulations establishing new standards for theatre and dance teachers within existing single subject teaching credentials. Appreciation of the arts is an important part of every child's education, and should be encouraged. But this bill imposes a needless and unrealistic burden upon the holders of most single subject credentials that is wholly unrelated to their chosen discipline. A far more relevant and appropriate approach to achieving the same result was that taken by Senate Concurrent Resolution 31 of 1994.***

SCR 31 (Johnston) of 1994 requested that the Commission review and assess the adequacy of the teaching of dance and theatre in California classrooms, and report its findings to the Legislature.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

California Dance Education Association (sponsor)  
 California Educational Theatre Association (sponsor)  
 California Alliance for Arts Education  
 California Art Education Association  
 California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance  
 California Federation of Teachers  
 California Music Educators Association  
 California Teachers Association  
 City of Santa Monica

Common Sense Kids Action  
County of Los Angeles  
Educational Theatre Association  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
Loyola High School  
National Association for Music Education  
National Art Education Association  
National Dance Education Organization  
Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists  
University of Southern California  
Numerous individuals

**Opposition**

None on file

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