

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 13, 2009

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 6, 2009

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 25, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 544

Introduced by Assembly Member Coto
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Ammiano, Brownley, Buchanan,
Carter, Eng, Miller, Nestande, Portantino, and Solorio)

February 25, 2009

An act to add Section 44262.5 to the Education Code, relating to teacher credentialing.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 544, as amended, Coto. ~~Eminence~~*Teaching* credential: American Indian languages.

Existing law authorizes the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, among other things, to establish professional standards, assessments, and examinations for entry and advancement in the education process. The commission is authorized to issue an eminence credential to any person who has achieved eminence in a field of endeavor taught, or service practiced, in the public schools of California.

This bill would require the commission, upon recommendation by a tribal government of a federally recognized Indian tribe in California, to issue an American Indian languages—~~eminence~~ credential to a candidate who has demonstrated fluency in that tribal language, and met other requirements. The bill would authorize the holder of an American Indian languages—~~eminence~~ credential to teach the American Indian language for which the credential was issued in California public

schools in preschool, kindergarten, grades 1 to 12, inclusive, and in adult education courses, and would make the holder of that credential eligible for a professional clear teaching credential upon completion of a specified period of time *and application and consultation as specified*. The bill would encourage each federally recognized American Indian tribe to develop a written and oral assessment that should be successfully completed before an applicant is recommended for an American Indian languages-~~eminence~~ credential.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares the following:
- 2 (a) Teaching American Indian languages is essential to the
- 3 proper education of American Indian children.
- 4 (b) Preserving American Indian languages is an important part
- 5 of our national heritage and can be of value to all Americans.
- 6 SEC. 2. Section 44262.5 is added to the Education Code, to
- 7 read:
- 8 44262.5. (a) Upon recommendation of the tribal government
- 9 of a federally recognized Indian tribe in California, the commission
- 10 shall issue an American Indian languages-~~eminence~~ credential to
- 11 a candidate who has met the following requirements:
- 12 (1) Demonstrated-~~eminence~~ *fluency* in that tribe’s language
- 13 based on an assessment developed and administered by that
- 14 federally recognized Indian tribe pursuant to subdivision (e).
- 15 (2) Successfully completed a criminal background check
- 16 conducted under Sections 44339, 44340, and 44341 for
- 17 credentialing purposes.
- 18 (3) Submitted an application, fee, and recommendation for the
- 19 credential to the commission through the federally recognized
- 20 Indian tribe.
- 21 (b) The American Indian languages-~~eminence~~ credential shall
- 22 authorize the holder to teach the American Indian language for
- 23 which the credential was issued in California public schools in
- 24 preschool, kindergarten, grades 1 to 12, inclusive, and in adult
- 25 education courses.
- 26 (c) The holder of an American Indian languages-~~eminence~~
- 27 credential who does not also have a valid teaching credential issued

1 by the State of California shall not teach in a public school,
2 including a charter school, any subject other than the American
3 Indian language for which he or she is credentialed.

4 (d) Each American Indian languages-~~eminence~~ credential shall
5 be issued initially for a two-year period and may be renewed for
6 a three-year period upon recommendation of the tribal government
7 ~~and the governing board of the school district~~. Upon completion
8 of the three-year period, the holder of an American Indian
9 ~~languages-eminence credential shall be eligible, upon application,~~
10 ~~for a clear teaching credential for that language.~~ *languages*
11 *credential shall be eligible for a clear teaching credential for that*
12 *language upon application and the recommendation of the tribal*
13 *government, in consultation with the applicant's public school*
14 *employer.*

15 (e) (1) Each federally recognized American Indian tribe is
16 encouraged to develop a written and oral assessment that should
17 be successfully completed before an applicant is recommended
18 for an American Indian languages-~~eminence~~ credential.

19 (2) In developing the language assessment, an Indian tribe
20 should determine all of the following:

21 (A) Which dialects of the tribal language will be included in
22 the assessment.

23 (B) Whether the Indian tribe will standardize its writing system.

24 (C) The standard of knowledge and fluency required to qualify
25 for an American Indian languages-~~eminence~~ credential in that tribal
26 language.

27 (D) Standards for effective teaching methods to be evaluated
28 in the classroom.

29 (3) The assessment should be administered at an appropriate
30 location that does not create hardship for members of the Indian
31 tribe administering the assessment.

32 (f) Upon agreement by the tribe, a tribe recommending a
33 candidate for an American Indian languages-~~eminence~~ credential
34 shall develop and administer a technical assistance program *guided*
35 *by the California Standards for the Teaching Profession*. The
36 program shall be offered by teachers credentialed in an American
37 Indian language who have three or more years of teaching
38 experience. The technical assistance program may consist of direct
39 classroom observation and consultation, assistance in instructional
40 planning and preparation, support in implementation and delivery

1 of classroom instruction, and other assistance intended to enhance
2 the professional performance and development of the American
3 Indian language teacher.
4 (g) Public school personnel responsible for evaluating teachers,
5 in accordance with local governing board policy, shall provide
6 individuals employed to teach on the basis of the American Indian
7 languages credential with information on the teaching personnel
8 evaluation process and the California Standards for the Teaching
9 Profession.