



The Washington State
BOARD OF EDUCATION

March 22, 2023

RE: Teacher Certification Requirement for Private Schools

The State Board of Education has received questions regarding whether teachers are required to be certified in order to hold a teaching position at private schools in Washington. While exceptions to the certification requirement are available for teaching personnel on an individual basis all classroom teachers are required to hold an appropriate Washington state certification (RCW 28A.195.010 (3) and WAC 180-90-160 (1)(c)). The distinction between the requirement for certification and the availability of individual exceptions is an important one as it may have impact on a number of issues.

As noted, exceptions to the requirement may apply under limited circumstances specified in state law. Specifically, a classroom teacher who teaches exclusively religious courses or courses for which no counterpart exists in public schools would not be required under state rules to be certified to teach in Washington (though a school may have requirements that exceed the state minimum).

In addition, in exceptional cases, people of unusual competence but without certification may teach students in subjects defined in RCW 28A.195.010 including occupational education, science, mathematics, language, social studies, history, health, reading, writing, spelling, and the development of the appreciation of art and music so long as a certified person exercises general supervision. In this instance, the position would still require certification; the exception applies based on the qualifications and supervision of the specific individual. This is an exception from a requirement and is subject to conditions set forth in statute and rule and must be annually justified as part of the approval process for the private school.

Sincerely,

Randy Spaulding
Executive Director

Bill Kallappa II, *Chair* • Randy Spaulding, *Executive Director*

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