NEWS FROM
JACK SCOTT
21ST SENATE DISTRICT

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GOVERNOR SIGNS "FAST-TRACK" TEACHER BILL

SB 57 expedites credential process to address teacher shortage – from 2 years to a few months
Testing replaces years of coursework for teacher candidates

Senator Jack Scott (D-Pasadena) announced today that Governor Davis has signed into law SB 57 to dramatically reduce the time necessary to receive a teaching credential for persons who can demonstrate their knowledge and ability to teach in the classroom. The new law will become effective on January 1, 2001.

"I am very pleased that Governor Davis has signed this important law to "fast-track" qualified teachers into our classrooms. SB 57 could cut the time it takes to get a teaching credential in California from 2 years to a few months for capable individuals, " said Senator Scott.

"Many people would make wonderful public school teachers, but are discouraged by the time and expense of teacher training. This bill eliminates bureaucratic barriers for qualified persons -- including persons currently teaching in private schools, community colleges, child development centers, or other settings -- who can demonstrate they already have the skills, knowledge and ability to teach successfully," continued Scott.

Under SB 57, teacher candidates could "challenge" traditional teacher preparation course work by successfully completing tests and classroom observations. Teacher candidates would take a test that covers topics such as teaching methods, learning development, classroom management and reading instruction. The test would be consistent with California's standards for teacher preparation, which are in turn linked to the California's standards for students in grades K-12.

Individuals who passed the written test would continue on a "fast-track" by being observed in a classroom setting. Candidates would also have the opportunity for a "fast track" to a professional clear credential by testing out of beginning teacher induction requirements.

Currently, teacher candidates must complete a teacher preparation program, including student teaching and teacher induction programs to obtain a clear teaching credential. Under SB 57, all credential candidates would still need to meet the existing requirements of a bachelor's degree, subject matter competence, basic skills and character fitness to qualify for a credential.

"We need to do everything possible to encourage teachers into the classroom. This bill takes a huge step forward," concluded Scott.

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