

## **Assembly Bill No. 163**

### **CHAPTER 64**

An act to amend Section 44262.5 of the Education Code, and to amend Section 1 of Chapter 324 of the Statutes of 2009, relating to teacher credentialing.

[Approved by Governor July 13, 2015. Filed with  
Secretary of State July 13, 2015.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 163, Williams. Teaching credential: American Indian language-culture credential.

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 profession. Existing law requires the commission, upon recommendation by a tribal government of a federally recognized Indian tribe in California, to issue an American Indian languages credential to a candidate who has demonstrated fluency in that tribal language and met other requirements.

This bill would instead require the commission, upon recommendation by a tribal government of a federally recognized Indian tribe in California, to issue an American Indian language-culture credential with an American Indian language authorization, or an American Indian culture authorization, or both, to a candidate who has met specified requirements. The bill would authorize the holder of an American Indian language-culture credential to teach the American Indian language, or culture, or both, 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 clear teaching credential after 5 years, upon application and the recommendation of the tribal government, 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 language-culture credential with an American Indian language authorization, American Indian culture authorization, or both, as provided.

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

SECTION 1. Section 44262.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:  
44262.5. (a) Upon recommendation of the tribal government of a federally recognized Indian tribe in California, the commission shall issue

an American Indian language-culture credential to a candidate who has met the following requirements:

(1) (A) For the American Indian language authorization, demonstrated fluency in that tribe's language based on an assessment developed and administered by that federally recognized Indian tribe pursuant to subdivision (e).

(B) For the American Indian culture authorization, demonstrated knowledge in that tribe's culture based on an assessment developed and administered by that federally recognized Indian tribe pursuant to subdivision (e).

(C) Candidates meeting the requirements of both subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall be granted both the American Indian language and the American Indian culture authorizations.

(2) Successfully completed a criminal background check conducted under Sections 44339, 44340, and 44341 for credentialing purposes.

(3) Submitted an application, fee, and recommendation for the credential to the commission through the federally recognized Indian tribe.

(b) The American Indian language-culture credential shall authorize the holder to teach the American Indian language, or culture, or both, for which the credential was issued in California public schools in preschool, kindergarten, grades 1 to 12, inclusive, and in adult education courses.

(c) The holder of an American Indian language-culture credential who does not also have a valid teaching credential issued by the State of California shall not teach in a public school, including a charter school, any subject other than the American Indian language, or culture, or both, for which he or she is credentialed.

(d) Each American Indian language-culture credential shall be issued initially for a two-year period and may be renewed for a three-year period upon recommendation of the tribal government. Upon completion of the three-year period, the holder of an American Indian language-culture credential shall be eligible for a clear teaching credential for that language upon application and the recommendation of the tribal government, in consultation with the applicant's public school employer.

(e) (1) Each federally recognized American Indian tribe is encouraged to develop a written and oral assessment that should be successfully completed before an applicant is recommended for an American Indian language-culture credential.

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

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

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

(C) The standard of knowledge and fluency required to qualify for an American Indian language authorization in that tribal language.

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

(3) In developing the culture assessment, an Indian tribe should determine all of the following:

(A) The candidate's understanding of the tribe's culture and its practices, including, but not limited to, ceremonies and traditions, social institutions and relationships, holidays and festivals, health practices and traditions, patterns of work and leisure, and culinary traditions and practices.

(B) The standard of knowledge required to qualify for an American Indian culture authorization in that tribal culture.

(C) Standards for effective teaching methods to be evaluated in the classroom.

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

(f) Upon agreement by the tribe, a tribe recommending a candidate for an American Indian language-culture credential shall develop and administer a technical assistance program guided by the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. To the extent feasible, the program shall be offered by teachers credentialed in an American Indian language, or culture, or both, who have three or more years of teaching experience. The technical assistance program may consist of direct classroom observation and consultation, assistance in instructional planning and preparation, support in implementation and delivery of classroom instruction, and other assistance intended to enhance the professional performance and development of the teacher of an American Indian language, or culture, or both.

(g) Public school personnel responsible for evaluating teachers, in accordance with local governing board policy, shall provide individuals employed to teach on the basis of the American Indian language-culture credential with information on the teaching personnel evaluation process and the California Standards for the Teaching Profession.

(h) For a candidate who has already received an American Indian languages credential before the effective date of this section, the tribe that recommended the candidate for the American Indian languages credential shall determine if the candidate may add the American Indian culture authorization to the preexisting languages credential, or if the candidate must reapply for the American Indian culture authorization as a new initial credential pursuant to subdivision (a).

SEC. 2. Section 1 of Chapter 324 of the Statutes of 2009 is amended to read:

Section 1. The Legislature finds and declares the following:

(a) Teaching American Indian language and culture is essential to the proper education of American Indian children.

(b) Preserving American Indian language and culture is an important part of our national heritage and can be of value to all Americans.