

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5479

As Reported By House Committee On:

Education

Title: An act relating to time periods for provisional status of certificated employees.

Brief Description: Changing time periods for provisional status for certificated employees.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Benton, West, Hochstatter, Swecker, McDonald and Oke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 4/1/97, 4/4/97 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Johnson, Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Smith; Sterk; Sump and Talcott.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Cole, Ranking Minority Member; Keiser, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Linville and Quall.

Staff: Joe Hauth (786-7111).

Background: During the first two years of employment in a school district, certificated teachers and non-supervisory certificated staff have provisional employment status. The school district superintendent must evaluate the provisional employee annually in terms of instruction, classroom management, professional preparation and scholarship, improvement when needed, the ability to handle discipline and attendance problems, interest in teaching students, and subject matter knowledge. If the school district superintendent determines that the employee's contract should not be renewed, the superintendent must notify the employee accordingly, subject to several due process requirements.

Currently, provisional employees are subject to contract nonrenewal during the first two years of employment. If the employee completed at least two years of

certificated employment in another school district, then the employee is subject to contract nonrenewal only for the first year of employment with the school district.

Summary of Bill: The provisional employment status for teachers and other non-supervisory staff applies to the first three years of employment. Provisional employees with at least two years of certificated employment in another school district remain subject to nonrenewal for the first year of employment with the school district.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The idea for this bill came from a superintendent in a small school district, who said they could not adequately evaluate an employee in two years. Washington has one of the shortest time periods for provisional status. This bill is a step in the right direction to have better quality teachers. The school directors do not oppose a three-year timeline, since it allows more time to make important employment decisions.

Testimony Against: Washington used to have one year provisional status. Now the same arguments are being made for moving two year provisional status to three years. When will three years become four years, and four years become five? Nothing constrains the school district and there are no provisions for remedial actions.

Testified: Senator Benton, prime sponsor; Dan Steele, Washington State School Directors' Association (pro); and Bob Maier, Washington Education Association (con).