

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6781

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 06, 2008

Title: An act relating to mathematics and science teachers.

Brief Description: Regarding mathematics and science teachers.

Sponsors: Senators Tom and Weinstein.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/06/08 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6781 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Eide, Hobbs, Holmquist, Kauffman, McDermott, Oemig, Rasmussen and Weinstein.

Staff: Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

Background: In 2005 the Washington Legislature transferred authority for educator preparation and certification from the State Board of Education to the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB). PESB has identified science and mathematics as teaching shortage areas for 2007-09.

Currently Washington has several programs to recruit teachers. The Alternative Routes Conditional Scholarship Program is a program for districts, or districts in cooperation with educational service districts, to operate partnerships with higher education teacher preparation programs to provide alternative routes for individuals without a teaching certificate to teach in statewide subject matter/geographic shortage areas. The Pipeline for Paraeducators Conditional Scholarship Program is for individuals without a college degree who have at least three years of classroom experience. The Retooling Program is for individuals who have an elementary teaching certificate. A conditional scholarship is awarded for educational expenses leading to an endorsement in a shortage area.

The Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program is designed to encourage outstanding students and paraprofessionals to become teachers, and encourage current teachers to obtain additional endorsements in teacher shortage subjects. The Recruiting Washington Teachers Program is established to recruit and provide training and support for

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high school students to enter the teaching profession, especially in teacher shortage areas and among underrepresented groups and multilingual, multicultural students.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): By September 15, 2008, PESB must submit a report with recommendations for strengthening the state's corps of K-12 mathematics and science teachers to the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), and the Legislature. The report must quantify the demand by detailing the number of K-12 math and science teachers needed statewide and regionally by the 2010-11 school year; specify how the demand will be met by the 2010-11 school year; and specify strategies for improving the retention of math and science teachers and increasing their classroom effectiveness.

PESB's analysis and recommendations must take into account the teacher skills necessary to meet the increased student needs due to the increased K-12 graduation requirements and the revised math and science standards and recommended curricula. At a minimum, PESB must consult with nationally recognized experts and specified representatives on teacher quality, recruitment, and retention. PESB must consider the role of a public-private partnership to meet the demand for math and science teachers and in improving the quality of instruction in these subject areas.

PESB and the Washington State Institute of Public Policy must conduct a study of differential pay for teachers in high-demand subject areas, such as math and science. PESB and the Institute must report their findings and recommendations to the Governor, the SPI, the Legislature, and the Basic Education Finance Task Force by September 1, 2008.

By December 1, 2008, PESB must develop, with various organizations and stakeholders, a collaborative statewide plan for educator recruitment, and submit the plan to the Governor, the SPI, and the Legislature.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): PESB is required to specify how demand will be met with regard to the role of recruitment programs for secondary mathematics and science teachers only. PESB and the Institute must jointly conduct a study of differential pay for teachers in high-demand subject areas. PESB must develop, with various organizations and stakeholders, a collaborative statewide plan for educator recruitment, rather than independently developing a roadmap and timeline for educator recruitment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 29, 2008.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: No matter what field you are in, you need to understand data mining and statistical analysis. We need a systematic study of programs for strengthening the corps of math and science teachers. The study of outcomes will assist Western Washington University in ongoing improvements in the Teach Washington model. One reason we cannot have more rigorous math standards, and keep kids out of remedial math programs in community colleges, is because we do not have enough math

teachers. Other states have started tackling this problem. While there are a variety of resources in place, they need to be unified and accelerated toward a specific goal. Financial incentives make sense. Taking the differential pay study out of the bill could reduce the fiscal note. The report should include all incentives, not just financial, and improve induction of all teachers. Slots in teacher preparation programs are available to prepare math teachers. There are just no students; thus, it is not a capacity issue.

OTHER: The studies do not show differential pay will attract and retain teachers. The whole system needs higher compensation levels.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Tom, prime sponsor; Jane Vroman, Western Washington University; Marc Frazer, Washington Roundtable; Nasue Nishida, PESB; Bob Cooper, Washington Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

OTHER: Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association.