

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2415

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to qualifications for public school principals and vice principals.

Brief Description: Changing qualifications for public school principals and vice principals.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Quall, Talcott, Haigh, Anderson, Rockefeller, Tokuda, Lantz, Romero, McIntire and Chase; by request of Governor Locke, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board of Education and Professional Educator Standards Board).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/30/02, 2/5/02 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/13/02, 97-0.

Passed Senate: 3/4/02, 46-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Expands the type of previous instructional experience principals and vice-principals can have to include experience as educational staff associates.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Haigh, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Cox, McDermott, Rockefeller, Santos, Schindler, Schmidt and Upthegrove.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

The 1977 Legislature enacted a law that requires school districts to employ principals and vice-principals who hold valid teacher and administrator certificates.

The State Board of Education (SBE) adopts the rules governing the certification process for teachers and principals. Under SBE rules, in order to receive initial principal certification, a candidate must hold an approved master's degree, must have completed an approved principal preparation program, and must have previous teaching experience.

The teaching requirements for a candidate that entered a principal preparation program before August 31, 1998, are different from the rules for those who entered after that date. A candidate who entered a program before August 31, 1998 must have previously completed at least 180 days or their equivalent of teaching. The teaching experience could occur in school districts, state agencies, colleges or universities, or in the private school system. A candidate who entered a principal preparation program after August 31, 1998 must have previously completed at least three school years of full-time teaching in a public or private school.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

School districts must hire principals and vice-principals who hold valid administrative certificates. In addition, these administrators must hold or have held either valid teacher or educational staff associate certificates. Persons with educational staff associate certificates must also have demonstrated successful school-based instructional experience. Persons whose certificates were revoked, suspended, or surrendered cannot be employed as public school principals or vice-principals.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: There is a growing demand for knowledgeable principals and assistant principals who can provide the instructional leadership necessary to help all children reach the state's academic standards. The expectations of these building leaders is growing at the same time that the pool of people who want the job is shrinking. The task of attracting and training these leaders is further complicated by the state's decision to move to a performance based model of preparation and certification. At the request of the Senate, the board studied ways to expand the pool of potential principals. After a year of research and deliberation, the board decided to propose a modest incremental step toward expanding the pool of potential principals. The board suggests that school counselors and other educational staff associates who also have demonstrated success in instructing students should be permitted to become principals. This step would help schools recruit new principals while opening a new career path for educational staff associates.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Quall, prime sponsor; Jennifer Wallace, Professional Educator Standards Board; Kristin Bunce, Governor's Office; Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Rainer Houser, Association of Washington School Principals; Gary King, Washington Education Association; and Lindy LaCoq, citizen.