
Education Committee

HB 1244

Brief Description: Providing a salary bonus for teachers who maintain certification from the national board for professional teaching standards.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunter, Talcott, Quall, Lantz, Hunt, Wood, McDermott, Simpson, Anderson and Haigh; by request of Governor Locke.

Hearing Date: 1/29/03

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that provides advanced, voluntary certification for experienced teachers. The board was created as a way for the teaching profession to recognize highly accomplished teaching practices. A certificate awarded by the board is intended to show that a teacher has been judged by his or her peers as one who meets high and rigorous professional standards. The NBPTS is governed by a 63-member board of directors, of whom a majority are classroom teachers. The organization is funded through gifts and grants from foundations, corporations, individuals, the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Science Foundation.

The board certifies teachers in 26 fields using a rigorous process of assessment and evaluation, for which those seeking certification pay a fee. The standards used in the process are developed by committees of teachers and other experts and are structured around student developmental levels and subject areas. There are about 215 educators with NBPTS certification working in Washington schools.

Under rules adopted by the State Board of Education, national board certification will satisfy all state requirements for continuing education and for obtaining the states's professional certificate.

The 2001-03 biennial budget provided funding for a \$3,500 salary bonus for teachers who obtained NBPTS certification. The bonus was intended to provide recognition for the teachers' outstanding performance. The budget language stipulated that the bonuses are not included in pension calculations. In addition, the budget included language stating that the Legislature intends that teachers certificated by the board be limited to four bonus payments.

Educators that seek national board certification in 2003 will be assessed a fee of \$2,300. Scholarship assistance with some or all of the fee is available from foundations, school districts and the federal government. In addition, the state and the Gates and Stuart foundations have joined together to create a support program for national board candidates. Four million dollars was provided to subsidize the certification fee, develop a network of successful candidates, and increase awareness of the process among Washington's teachers. In addition to those efforts, State Farm has donated \$10,000 for fee subsidies and at least seven school districts help candidates pay the fee.

Summary of Bill:

Teachers who have attained certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards will receive a \$3,500 bonus for each year that the teacher maintain board certification. The bonus will not be included in a district's average salary calculation and is exempt from statutory salary limits.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/21/03.

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