

6576

Sponsor(s): Senator Mulliken

Brief Description: Revising educational employee collective bargaining provisions.

SB 6576 - DIGEST

Recognizes the state's paramount duty to provide a basic education to all students residing in Washington.

Recognizes that uninterrupted service of educational employees is vital to the welfare of the state, and that such uninterrupted service must be ensured.

Acknowledges that the state's courts have long considered strikes by public employees, including teachers, to be unlawful, and in order to ensure that no student is denied his or her constitutional right to a basic education, the legislature affirms that strikes by public employees are unlawful.

Declares that it is unlawful for an employee or an employee organization, directly or indirectly, to induce, instigate, encourage, authorize, ratify, or participate in a strike.

Declares that it is unlawful for an employer to conduct a lockout.

Requires that with respect to contracts for the 2004-05 school year and beyond, negotiations between an employer and the exclusive bargaining representative of a unit of employees under chapter 41.59 RCW must commence by May 1st.

Provides that, if by June 30th an agreement has not yet been ratified, the commission shall designate a fact-finder in accordance with rules for such designation adopted by the commission.

Provides that, for the purpose of hearings, investigations and inquiries, the fact-finder may issue subpoenas requiring the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of evidence. On or before July 16th, the fact-finder must issue written findings of fact to the parties and to the commission.

Directs the commission to hold a public fact-finding hearing and make the findings available to the public if the parties have not reached a settlement within three days of their receipt of the findings.

Requires that, beginning the first day following the public fact-finding hearing, the parties must conduct contract negotiations daily until a contract is adopted. The negotiations must be open to the public.