

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2870

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to professional development for instructional assistants.

Brief Description: Providing opportunities for professional development for instructional assistants.

Sponsors: Representatives Liias, Sullivan, Ericks, Williams, Loomis, Simpson, Ormsby, Miloscia, Hasegawa, Roberts, Santos, Quall and Nelson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/29/08, 2/1/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to create a training strand through the Summer Accountability Institutes and January Conference for classified instructional assistants.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Liias, Roach, Santos and Sullivan.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

In the 1999-01 biennium, the Legislature consolidated professional development funds from a variety of sources and provided funding specifically for Summer Accountability Institutes (Summer Institutes) to be organized by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). The Summer Institutes are intended to provide school district staff with training in

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assessment, data analysis, successful teaching models, research on curriculum and instruction, and planning tools to improve instruction.

In recent years, the Summer Institutes have become five-day conferences held at three locations across the state with attendance of 800 to 1,000 teachers and staff at each conference. There is also a three-day January Conference, usually in Spokane. Each conference has strands of presentations focused on a particular theme or target audience. For example, the OSPI was directed to focus at least one institute in 2008 and 2009 specifically on mathematics instruction.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The OSPI, in consultation with various groups representing classified school employees, must develop and offer a training strand through the Summer Institutes and the January Conference that is targeted to classified instructional assistants and designed to help them maximize their effectiveness in improving student achievement.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

A specific reference to the Public School Employees of Washington is replaced by a general reference to various groups representing classified employees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It takes a wide variety of professional educators to provide a quality learning environment. Para-professionals can have tremendous impact and are looking for opportunities to improve their skills. This should cost very little because the Summer Institutes are already funded; the OSPI is simply being asked to develop a training strand for instructional assistants. Both state and federal requirements compel more training for these staff than ever before. There are many organizations representing classified employees, but only one is called out in the legislation. It takes everyone working together to ensure students are learning. Para-professionals provide critical instruction for some of our most challenged students, and we need to ensure they are well trained.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Liias, prime sponsor; Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Education Association; Bob Butts, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Tom Lopp, Public School Employees.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.