
Education Committee

HB 2991

Brief Description: Providing salary bonuses for nationally certified school speech-language pathologists and audiologists.

Sponsors: Representatives Fromhold, Roberts, Simpson and Ormsby.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the salary bonus for instructional staff certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to school speech-language pathologists and audiologists who are nationally certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Hearing Date: 2/21/08

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is a national, nonprofit organization that has developed standards for highly accomplished teaching and a voluntary system to certify teachers who meet those standards. There are also NBPTS certificates for librarians and school counselors. Applicants must have three years of experience, and the certification process involves completion of a portfolio, including a video of classroom instruction, and an online subject matter assessment. It typically takes a year to complete the process.

The Legislature has provided a salary bonus for staff who attain NBPTS certification since 1999 and placed the bonus in statute in 2007. The bonus is \$5,000 in 2007-08 and increases annually by inflation.

To be a school speech-language pathologist or audiologist in Washington, candidates must hold a master's degree from a program accredited by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and complete three quarter hours of course work related to working in schools. The ASHA offers a voluntary national certification for speech-language pathologists and audiologists called the Certificate of Clinical Competence (Certificate). In addition to the master's

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degree, candidates must pass a national examination and complete a mentored clinical fellowship of approximately nine months of full-time experience. To be licensed by the state Department of Health, speech-language pathologists and audiologists must have the equivalent of the Certificate, but state licensure is not required to work in public schools.

There are at least eight states that have provided ASHA-certified school speech-language pathologists and audiologists with a salary bonus that is the same as or similar to the bonus provided to NBPTS-certified instructional staff in that state.

Summary of Bill:

School speech-language pathologists or audiologists who have attained a Certificate from the ASHA are eligible for the salary bonus provided to instructional staff certified by the NBPTS.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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