

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5728

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 28, 2007

Title: An act relating to salary schedules for educational staff associate positions and vocational certified instructors.

Brief Description: Regarding the salary schedule for educational staff associate positions and vocational certified instructors.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, McAuliffe, Weinstein, Tom, Zarelli, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Holmquist and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/26/07, 2/28/07 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5728 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; Holmquist, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Clements, Eide, Hewitt, Hobbs, Kauffman, Oemig, Rasmussen, Weinstein and Zarelli.

Staff: Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

Background: Through the school apportionment process, the state allocates full-time equivalent (FTE) funding to school districts for basic education certificated instructional staff. Certificated instructional staff include educational staff associates (ESA) and vocational educators. Educational staff associates include school speech pathologists or audiologists, school counselors, school nurses, school occupational therapists, school physical therapists, school psychologists, and school social workers.

Funding for all certificated instructional staff salaries is based on a state salary allocation schedule that is implemented in the state's biennial operating budget. The salary allocation schedule is used by the state to account for differences in the education and experience of each district's certificated instructional staff. One factor that the schedule recognizes is the number of years staff has worked within the state school system. Typically, the greater the experience and education of certificated instructional staff, the greater the salary. Actual salaries are negotiated locally, within certain state established constraints.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED SUBSTITUTE AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Early Learning & K-12 Education): Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, nurses, social workers, counselors, and psychologists may include experience in schools and other related nonschool positions as years of service under the state salary allocation schedule. One year of service in a nonschool position will be counted as one year of service. A maximum of five years of nonschool service may be included in the determination of years of service.

Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, vocational certified instructors may include related nonschool experience as years of service if they have a valid vocational certificate acquired from noneducational work experience and a college degree earned prior to the vocational certificate. Such instructors are defined as "nondegreed," and may qualify for years of service for supervisory noneducational work experiences.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Vocational certificated instructors bring more experience and context to the classroom; however, it is very difficult to get experienced vocational teachers because salaries are not competitive with industry salaries. There is also a shortage in ESAs, who often do not take school jobs because the pay is too low or they move to the private sector and contract back at a higher rate; thus, districts resort to contract positions. Employees under contract have less accountability and a high turnover rate, making it hard for students to establish connections with staff. If employees contracting with districts apply for open ESA positions, OSPI does not recognize their previous experience when determining salaries. The bill corrects an inequity in the salary structure and narrows the salary gap. Limiting credit for service to five years of nonschool experience is a good compromise.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Rasmussen, prime sponsor; Gil Mendoza, Tacoma Public Schools; Dennis Kampe, Clark County Skills Center; Adam Brickell, America Speech-Language-Hearing Association; Camille Curry, Washington Occupational Therapy Association; Hans Laudig, Olympia School District; Janice Doyle, School Nurse Organization of Washington; Kathleen Lopp, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education; Kyra Kester, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Dan Steele, Washington State School Director's Association; Nasue Nisuida, Professional Educator Standards Board.