
HOUSE BILL 2298

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Representatives Ericks, Springer, Morrell, Seaquist, Williams, VanDeWege, Hasegawa, Buri, Haler, McDonald, Pettigrew, Walsh, Bailey, Hunter, Linville, Roach, Santos, Rolfes, Green, Sells, Kenney, McCoy, O'Brien, Hinkle, Goodman, Ormsby, Kelley and Simpson

Read first time 02/19/2007. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to tuition and fee assistance for teachers seeking
2 additional education; adding a new section to chapter 28B.15 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that students benefit
6 most from great teachers who are well-educated and knowledgeable in the
7 subjects they teach. As a result, the state's salary schedule provides
8 annual recognition for those with either a master's degree or a
9 doctorate. The legislature also finds that the state is requiring
10 beginning teachers and experienced out-of-state teachers, even those
11 with master's degrees, to meet new rigorous professional certification
12 requirements. The certification process requires these teachers to
13 obtain fifteen quarter credits or more from a college or university
14 participating in the certification process. There is no limit placed
15 on the amount colleges and universities may charge for these credits.
16 The legislature further finds that beginning teachers, who are at the
17 bottom of the salary schedule, often leave college with varying amounts
18 of debt. Although these new teachers are the lowest paid in the

1 system, they are required to take more college courses, often acquiring
2 more debt, to meet the additional educational requirements placed upon
3 them by the professional certification process.

4 The legislature intends to assist these beginning public school
5 teachers with their educational expenses by having state colleges and
6 universities waive tuition for those courses required for a master's
7 degree or professional certification. The legislature further intends
8 that teachers repay the waived tuition with future service in the
9 public schools.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.15 RCW
11 to read as follows:

12 (1) The state universities, regional universities, and The
13 Evergreen State College shall waive tuition and fees for a classroom
14 teacher who has a contract to teach and is employed in one of the
15 state's public schools, who is seeking professional teacher
16 certification under chapter 28A.410 RCW, and who agrees to meet the
17 requirements of subsection (2) of this section. The amount waived need
18 not exceed the minimum number of credits required for the recipient to
19 obtain the degree or certification.

20 (2) A waiver recipient incurs an obligation to repay the waived
21 tuition and fees unless he or she teaches: (a) In the public schools
22 of the state, (b) in a hard to staff subject or a hard to staff school,
23 as defined by the professional educator standards board, and (c) for at
24 least five years after the last year in which the teacher receives a
25 tuition and fee waiver under this section.

26 (3) The universities and college shall report to the higher
27 education coordinating board the names of teachers for whom tuition and
28 fees have been waived and the amount waived for each teacher.

29 (4) The higher education coordinating board shall:

30 (a) Adopt rules to implement these requirements;

31 (b) Provide the universities and college with documents that may be
32 used to ensure that waiver recipients accept their service or repayment
33 obligations;

34 (c) Work with the office of the superintendent of public
35 instruction to create a system that identifies those teachers eligible
36 to receive waivers and provides information about the waivers to those
37 eligible to use them;

1 (d) Report to the legislative education and fiscal committees by
2 November of each even-numbered year with the number of waiver
3 recipients, the total amount waived by each university or college, and
4 the type of master's degree or certification pursued by waiver
5 recipients; and

6 (e) Collect and manage repayments from waiver recipients who do not
7 meet their teaching obligations. Twenty percent of any repayment
8 obligation shall be satisfied for each year that the waiver recipient:

9 (i) Teaches in a public school in the state, and (ii) in a hard to
10 staff subject or hard to staff school, as defined by the professional
11 educator standards board. Any repayments shall be deposited into the
12 account under RCW 28B.102.080. The board may forgive the repayment
13 obligation of a teacher who dies or is totally disabled before meeting
14 his or her repayment obligation.

15 (5) As used in this section, "public school" means an elementary
16 school, a middle school, a junior high school, or a high school, within
17 the public school system referred to in Article IX of the state
18 Constitution.

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