
Education Committee

HB 1889

Brief Description: Regarding paraeducator tutor certification.

Sponsors: Representatives Sullivan, Priest, Ormsby, Santos and Simpson.

Brief Summary of Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish paraeducator tutor certification requirements.• Requires a paraeducator tutor to enroll in approved professional development to maintain certification.

Hearing Date: 2/11/09

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383)

Background:

Paraeducators are classified staff in a school who perform many functions, including providing instructional assistance and tutoring under the supervision of a teacher. There are no state requirements regarding the educational qualifications of paraeducators, although the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has developed recommended core competencies for paraeducators.

Under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, paraeducators who provide instruction and are paid in whole or in part by Title I funds must meet a federal definition of "highly qualified." Since 2006, Title I paraeducators must either:

1. Have completed two years of study at an institution of higher education;
2. Have earned an Associate's Degree (or higher); or
3. Demonstrate competency through an approved formal assessment.

In Washington, there are multiple options for the formal assessment, including an online assessment administered by the Educational Testing Service; a portfolio that is graded by a

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regional review panel; a school district assessment approved by the OSPI; or an approved paraeducator apprenticeship program.

Paraeducators who are not associated with Title I are not required to meet these qualifications, although many districts encourage it to allow for flexibility in staffing.

Summary of Bill:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) must establish paraeducator tutor certification requirements. Certification must be for a five-year period, and in order to maintain certification, a paraeducator must enroll in professional development courses approved by the SPI.

The SPI is encouraged to develop professional development that can be delivered in multiple ways. The SPI is also encouraged to recommend incentives for paraeducator tutors in the 2010 legislative session.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 2/9/2009.

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