

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1631

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to salary increments for academic employees at community and technical colleges.

Brief Description: Providing for academic employee salary increments for community and technical colleges.

Sponsors: Representatives Reykdal, Hope, Sells, Haigh, Seaquist, Rolfes, Santos, Appleton and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/3/11, 2/17/11 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to include funding to cover academic employee salary increments in its biennial budget request.
- Provides that the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' salary increment request be based on 0.8 percent of the academic employees' salary plus the value of associated benefits.
- Specifies how turnover savings and increments may be generated by and allocated between full-time and part-time faculty.
- Allows general salary increase funding and increment funding to be combined to increase academic employee increments.
- Permits Boards of Trustees to use additional funds to fund increments in years when the Legislature does not provide increment funding.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Carlyle, Vice Chair; Hasegawa, Jacks, Probst, Reykdal, Sells and Springer.

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.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Parker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Crouse, Fagan, Warnick and Zeiger.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

Salary increments are pay increases based on years of service and, in some pay systems, additional education.

In some cases employees receive increments even if there is no state funding provided specifically for that purpose. For example, classified employees in the state personnel system receive 5 percent increments for each year of service (up to a cap). The Legislature assumes that state agencies can pay the costs through savings from employee turnover or other resources.

Classified staff in the K-12 system receive increments based on local collective bargaining agreements, but the state funding formulas for K-12 are not adjusted based on these costs. Certificated instructional staff in the K-12 system receive increments based on years of service and education. In this case, the state funding formulas recognize the costs school districts incur through the statewide salary schedule, although districts may operate on a salary schedule that is different than the state's.

Salaries for faculty at community and technical colleges are also established through local collective bargaining agreements. Most salary schedules provide for increments based on some combination of years of service and education. However, state law limits salary increases provided through collective bargaining agreements to the amount or percentage established by the Legislature in the Omnibus Appropriations Act and allocated to the boards of trustees by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). As a result, community and technical colleges may not use turnover savings or other resources to pay for faculty salary increases without a special authorization.

Until the current biennium, the Legislature provided funding for community and technical college faculty increments through provisions in the biennial budget. The Legislature has given special authorization to community and technical colleges to use turnover savings to help fund faculty increments.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature intends that consistent and predictable state funding be provided for community and technical college academic employee salary increases. The SBCTC must include in its biennial budget request an amount sufficient to grant academic employee increments. The biennial budget request of the SBCTC will be based on 0.8 percent of the academic employees' salary plus the value of associated benefits.

The SBCTC will determine how to allocate to the community and technical colleges the appropriations granted for increments, provided that the appropriations generated by part-time faculty salary and benefits are used for part-time faculty increments. How the appropriations are allocated at the district level is subject to collective bargaining. In years in which the Legislature does not provide funding for faculty salary increments, boards of trustees may use additional funds that exceed those provided by the Legislature.

Turnover-savings for full-time faculty are generated only when full-time faculty replace full-time faculty. Similarly, turnover-savings for part-time faculty are generated only when part-time faculty replace part-time faculty. Part-time turnover-savings may only be allocated to part-time faculty. Salary increments allocated due to part-time faculty salaries may be used for part-time general salary increases.

Boards of Trustees may combine general salary increase funding with increment funding to increase academic employee increments. To the extent that general salary funding is used to increase increments, the general salary increase will be reduced by the same amount.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill has been around a long time. Everywhere else in state government, a provision is made for increments except at the community and technical colleges. The 0.8 percent cap is based on a look back at history. In the past, this bill generated problems between part-time and full-time academic employees and, therefore, work was done to address and correct those problems. The Legislature should fund the increments but this bill also addresses the situation where the Legislature, in tough budget times, does not do so. The community and technical college faculty is losing ground to its peers. While there is a similar bill in the Senate, they are not true companions. The Senate bill has a trigger for suspending the increments during fiscal crises. Only the community and technical college faculty do not have reliable increment or salary step increases. It is automatic for all others in the state system. This year, all that is being asked is for authorization. This is not a request for funding at this point. Because the funding has been so irregular in the past, it makes it very difficult. This bill would make the increments formula driven just like everywhere else in state government. This issue creates chaos and tension on campus. A predictable formula should be put in place. Absent a predictable formula and regular increments, it makes it difficult to recruit new faculty and retention also becomes a problem. To take a job at a community and technical college required a considerable pay cut from what the faculty employee had been making in private industry. At the time the employee made the move, it looked like that difference could be made up after three to four years of increment or step increases but it ended up taking seven years. Moreover, the state reports

the employee's income as if a step increase had been granted even when it has not. The steps are bargained locally. Ideally, the Legislature should fund these steps but, in the event the Legislature does not, the use of local funds should be allowed. Community and technical colleges need to be able to pay more to attract necessary faculty, such as nurses. The flexibility to use local funds is needed.

(Opposed) This bill is not fair to adjunct and part-time faculty. When full-time faculty take on an extra load, the full-time faculty benefits at the expense of the part-time faculty. While supporting increments, the provision in the bill which allows local colleges to use tuition money to pay for increments is bad policy. Access to tuition money will vary college by college. There will be haves and have-nots. The bill does not really address the issues of the gap between full-time and part-time faculty. Increments should be built into the budget. The allocation is flawed. Two-thirds of faculty are part-time and the lion's share will go to tenured full-time faculty. There is danger in using temporary funds. For example, several years ago, one college had to do lay offs when fewer students enrolled and, therefore, there was less tuition money.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Reykdal, prime sponsor; Sandra Schroeder, American Federation of Teachers, Washington; Sharon Mitchler, Centralia College; Kathryn Smith, Clover Park Technical College; Carla Naccarato-Sinclair, Washington Education Association and Community College of Spokane; and Louis Watanabe, Washington Education Association and Bellevue College.

(Opposed) Jack Longmate, Olympic College; John Boesenbery, State Board for Technical and Community Colleges; Pamela Traisue, Tacoma Community College; and Dana Rush, Washington Part-Time Faculty Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.