
Education Committee

HB 2799

Brief Description: Authorizing a five-year pilot project for up to six collaborative schools for innovation and success operated by school districts in partnership with colleges of education.

Sponsors: Representatives Sullivan, Santos, Maxwell, Darneille, Hunt, Carlyle, Haigh, Pollet and Kenney; by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a five-year Collaborative Schools for Innovation and Success (CSIS) Pilot Project where colleges of education and school districts select a low-performing elementary school and implement models of instruction and educator preparation.
- Establishes a process for an application of intent; selection of up to six CSIS Pilot Projects, specifically including the largest school districts in Eastern and Western Washington; and development of a comprehensive Innovation and Success Plan for each school.
- Provides for the allocation of planning and implementation grants, subject to appropriated funds, for three of the CSIS Pilot Projects, but authorizes the other three to participate without state funding.

Hearing Date: 2/29/12

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Educator Certification. Educator certification programs must be approved by the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) and may be offered by institutions of higher education or other entities. There are teacher certification programs at each of the six public four-year institutions of higher education in Washington, as well as 13 independent institutions. Institutions offer initial or residency certification concurrently with a bachelor's degree, as a certificate-only option, or through Master's in Teaching programs. Six institutions also offer alternative routes to teacher certification which are partnerships between the institution, school

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districts, and other entities. These are designed for school paraprofessionals to become teachers, or for individuals with bachelor's degrees and other working experience to change careers.

Several national organizations, including the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, have advocated for an approach to teacher preparation modeled after clinical residency and internship programs used in medical professions. Professional Development Schools are close collaborations between a college of education and a K-12 school where a cohort of teacher candidates is trained on-site, working with mentor teachers and college faculty to form a professional learning community at the school. Once certified, new teachers continue to receive intensive support through an induction program. Some large urban school districts, including Boston and Chicago, have targeted this model at high-needs schools as a way simultaneously to recruit and develop teachers with the background and skills to serve those schools, and to implement research-based strategies for school improvement.

Waivers. The State Board of Education (SBE) may grant waivers of some statutory program requirements of Basic Education, including minimum instructional hours, the length of the school year, and student-teacher ratios, if the waivers are necessary to implement a school improvement or restructuring plan. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) is also authorized to grant waivers of administrative rules under these circumstances. Legislation enacted in 2011 allows school districts to seek these waivers to implement an Innovation School or Innovation Zone proposal, subject to approval of the proposal by the SPI through a competitive application process. The SBE also grants waivers from credit-based graduation requirements established in administrative rules.

There are no statutory processes for waiving requirements regarding educator certification programs. However, most of these requirements are established by the PESB in administrative rules rather than in statute.

Required Action Framework. Legislation enacted in 2010 established a process for identifying and designating certain low-performing schools to receive federal school improvement grants. The process includes a comprehensive academic performance audit with specified elements, and development of a Required Action Plan in collaboration with staff, parents, unions, students, and other representatives of the community. If necessary to implement a Required Action Plan, the school district and employee organizations must reopen collective bargaining agreements. In the event the school district and employee organizations are unable to agree, a process is outlined involving first an appointed mediator, and then consideration of disputed issues by the superior court. The superior court must enter an order selecting the proposal that best responds to the issues raised in the academic performance audit.

Summary of Bill:

The Collaborative Schools for Innovation and Success (CSIS) Pilot Project is established. The purpose is for colleges of education and school districts to develop and implement:

- research-based models of instruction proven to close the opportunity gap and improve student learning in low-performing schools; and
- research-based models of educator preparation and professional development proven to build an educator workforce with the knowledge, skills and background to serve students in low-performing schools.

A college of education is defined as an institution of higher education in Washington with educator preparation and certification programs approved by the PESB.

The two school districts in Western and Eastern Washington with the largest number of enrolled students may each enter an agreement with a college of education to participate in the CSIS Pilot Project. Any other school district may enter an agreement with a college of education and submit an application to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the PESB to participate. The college and district must select an elementary school to be the CSIS school. The school must be among the lowest-achieving schools in the district as measured by district, state, or federal criteria, including criteria measuring the educational opportunity gap, and must not have previously received grant funds for school improvement.

Colleges and districts must submit a joint application of intent to the OSPI and the PESB by July 1, 2012. The required content of the application is specified. The OSPI and the PESB must approve the two Western and Eastern Washington applications, but may comment and make suggestions for improvement. By August 1, 2012, the OSPI and the PESB select up to four additional applications. Subject to funding, the OSPI allocates planning and implementation grants to the two Western and Eastern Washington applicants, plus one of the additional selected applicants. The remaining selected applicants may participate in the CSIS Pilot Project, but without state funding.

After an application of intent is approved, the college and district conduct a comprehensive needs assessment that includes the elements of an academic performance audit. Based on the needs assessment, an Innovation and Success Plan (Plan) is developed in collaboration with school staff, parents, and community members. A Plan must include:

- the proposed program for instruction, wraparound services, resource deployment, and professional development;
- a family and community engagement strategy;
- professional learning communities among school staff and higher education faculty;
- intensive preparation of teacher and principal candidates using research-based practices and a particular focus on skill development for students with special learning needs;
- identification of private and community partners;
- identification of the metrics to be used to assess student achievement and educator skill development in the school, and specific improvement goals for the term of the pilot project;
- any waivers to be requested from the SBE, the OSPI, or the PESB;
- identification and completion of any modifications to collective bargaining agreements necessary to implement the Plan, using the statutory process established under the Required Action Framework; and
- a project budget.

Each CSIS Pilot Project must submit a completed Plan to the OSPI and the PESB by March 15, 2013. The OSPI and the PESB must provide notification of whether a Plan is approved by May 1, 2013. If a Plan is not approved, the college and district have 30 days to revise and resubmit their Plan.

Approved Plans are implemented over five years, beginning in the 2013-14 school year through the 2017-18 school year.

Each CSIS Pilot Project must submit an annual progress report by December 1 that describes best practices, lessons learned, adjustments planned and implemented, and suggestions for expanding the use of best practices to a larger scale. The OSPI and the PESB compile and summarize the reports and forward them to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature.

Subject to funding, the OSPI must contract with a northwest educational research organization for an outcomes evaluation of the CSIS Pilot Project. An interim evaluation is due December 1, 2015, with a final evaluation due September 1, 2018. The OSPI and the PESB must recommend by December 1, 2018, whether to modify, continue, or expand the CSIS Pilot Project.

The CSIS Pilot Project is repealed June 30, 2019.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

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