
HOUSE BILL 2164

State of Washington 62nd Legislature 2011 2nd Special Session

By Representatives Maxwell, Dammeier, Lytton, Probst, Reykdal, Springer, Wilcox, Billig, Haigh, Kenney, Ladenburg, Santos, Kagi, Seaquist, Tharinger, and Dahlquist

Read first time 12/09/11. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to encouraging school districts to loop groups of
2 students and teachers in successive grade levels; adding a new section
3 to chapter 28A.410 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

6 (a) There is evidence that the practice of keeping a group of
7 students with the same teacher in successive school years and grade
8 levels, or looping, has positive academic and social benefits for
9 students;

10 (b) There is also evidence that ninth grade is a particularly
11 difficult transition year, a time when many students experience
12 emotional and social challenges as well as declines in attendance and
13 grades. Furthermore, if students must repeat ninth grade, their
14 chances of eventually dropping out of school increase significantly;

15 (c) Even though looping could address some of the academic and
16 social challenges of ninth grade, school districts are less likely to
17 try this instructional strategy for middle school students; and

18 (d) Teacher certification requirements may be a contributing factor

1 to districts' reluctance to loop students and teachers between middle
2 school and ninth grade.

3 (2) Therefore, the legislature intends to encourage school
4 districts to consider looping as a strategy to improve student
5 achievement and reduce dropouts by removing any barriers imposed by
6 state teacher certification requirements.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.410
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) The professional educator standards board shall permit school
10 districts to assign teachers to classes other than in their areas of
11 endorsement without requiring a supplemental assistance plan,
12 additional coursework, or application for a waiver if:

13 (a) The purpose of the assignment is intentionally to keep a group
14 of students with the same teacher or teachers between one or more
15 middle school grades and ninth grade as part of a program to improve
16 students' academic and social outcomes;

17 (b) The school district determines the teacher has sufficient
18 knowledge and skills to be a competent instructor in the assigned
19 classes; and

20 (c) Each such assignment is approved by a formal vote of the local
21 school board for each teacher so assigned.

22 (2) School districts must report annually to the professional
23 educator standards board on the number of teachers assigned outside
24 their area of endorsement under this section for the previous school
25 year, but the board shall maintain and display the number separately
26 from other reported out-of-endorsement assignments.

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