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**SSB 6129** - H AMD **957**

By Representative Bergquist

 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the following:

"NEW SECTION. **Sec.** The legislature acknowledges that paraeducators have become a significant resource to students who need additional education assistance. The legislature further recognizes that there is significant variability in paraeducator standards, training, and opportunity for professional development. A carefully constructed paraeducator development program would place the highest qualified paraeducators working with the highest need students. Such a program when combined with a career ladder could offer paraeducators real opportunities for upward mobility. Since paraeducators more closely reflect the cultural diversity of the student population, a development program and career ladder would be likely to encourage more paraeducators to become teachers. Training teachers how to work with a paraeducator in their classrooms could increase paraeducators' ability to teach students who need additional assistance.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.** (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall convene a work group to examine the use of paraeducators across school districts, including their roles and types of assignments in the classroom and the variation in paraeducator deployment in support of teachers. The work group must include paraeducators, teachers, school and school district administrators, school directors, and representatives of their respective associations. The superintendent of public instruction shall submit the findings of the work group to the professional educator standards board by August 31, 2014, to inform the work of the board and the work group established under subsection (2) of this section.

 (2)(a) The professional educator standards board shall simultaneously convene a work group to design program specific minimum employment standards for paraeducators, professional development and education opportunities that support the standards, a paraeducator career ladder, an articulated pathway for teacher preparation and certification, and teacher professional development on how to maximize the use of paraeducators in the classroom.

 (b) The work group convened by the professional educator standards board must include representatives of:

 (i) The professional educator standards board; the Green River Community College center of excellence for careers in education; educational service districts; community and technical college paraeducator apprenticeship and certificate programs; colleges of education; teacher, paraeducator, principal, school director, and administrator associations; career and technical education; special education parents and advocacy organizations; community-based organizations representing immigrant and refugee communities and communities of color; the educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability committee; and the office of the superintendent of public instruction; and

 (ii) A maximum of two paraeducators from each program for which specific minimum employment standards will be designed.

 (3) By January 10, 2015, the work group convened by the professional educator standards board shall submit a report to the education committees of the legislature that recommends:

 (a) Multiple options for assuring minimum employment standards and professional development opportunities for paraeducators who work in:

 (i) English language learner programs, transitional bilingual instruction programs, and federal limited English proficiency programs; and

 (ii) The learning assistance program and federal disadvantaged program;

 (b) A career ladder that encourages paraeducators to pursue advanced education and professional development as well as increased instructional ability and responsibility;

 (c) An articulated pathway for teacher preparation that includes:

 (i) Paraeducator certificate and apprenticeship programs that offer course credits that apply to transferrable associate degrees and are aligned with the standards and competencies for teachers adopted by the professional educator standards board;

 (ii) Associate degree programs that build on and do not duplicate the courses and competencies of paraeducator certificate programs, incorporate field experiences, are aligned with the standards and competencies for teachers adopted by the professional educator standards board, and are transferrable to bachelor's degree in education programs and teacher certification programs;

 (iii) Bachelor's degree programs that lead to teacher certification that build on and do not duplicate the courses and competencies of transferrable associate degrees;

 (iv) Incorporation of the standards for cultural competence developed by the professional educator standards board under RCW 28A.410.270 throughout the courses and curriculum of the pathway, particularly focusing on multicultural education and principles of language acquisition; and

 (v) A comparison of the current status of pathways for teacher certification to the elements of the articulated pathway, highlighting gaps and recommending strategies to address the gaps;

 (d) Professional development for certificated employees that focuses on maximizing the success of paraeducators in the classroom.

 (4) The work group convened by the professional educator standards board must submit a final report of its recommendations to the education committees of the legislature by January 10, 2016, concerning:

 (a) Multiple options for assuring minimum employment standards and professional development opportunities for basic education and special education paraeducators; and

 (b) Appropriate professional development and training to help paraeducators meet the employment standards.

 (5) This section expires June 30, 2016.

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

 The professional educator standards board and the state board for community and technical colleges may exercise their respective authorities regarding program approval to implement the articulated pathway for teacher preparation and certification recommended pursuant to section 2, chapter . . ., Laws of 2014 (section 2 of this act) in approved teacher certification programs and certificate and degree programs offered by community and technical colleges.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.50 RCW to read as follows:

 Beginning with the 2016-17 academic year, any community or technical college that offers an apprenticeship program or certificate program for paraeducators must provide candidates the opportunity to earn transferrable course credits within the program. The programs must also incorporate the standards for cultural competence, including multicultural education and principles of language acquisition, developed by the professional educator standards board under RCW 28A.410.270.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.** If specific funding for the purposes of this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by June 30, 2014, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and void."

 Correct the title.

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|  |  EFFECT:   Makes the following changes to the underlying bill: Shortens the legislative intent section for the bill by removing data about hours of instruction provided by paraeducators; removing findings about paraeducator knowledge, skills, and commitment to education; and removing findings about paraeducator training being reduced due to budget cuts. Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to convene a work group to examine the use of paraeducators across school districts and submit a report with its findings to the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) by August 31, 2014, in order to inform the work of the PESB work group. Adds up to two paraeducators from each program for which standards will be developed and a representative of school directors to the PESB work group. Directs the PESB work group to examine options for assuring minimum employment standards. Requires community and technical college apprenticeship and certificate programs to provide transferrable course credits and include standards for cultural competence beginning in the 2016-17 academic year, rather than the 2015-16 academic year. Removes the appropriation of $150,000. Adds a null and void clause. |

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