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## Education Committee

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### HB 2358

**Brief Description:** Adopting a definition of professional learning.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Lytton, Carlyle, Dahlquist, Haigh, Pettigrew and Tarleton.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Defines professional learning as a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement.
- Provides additional descriptions of effective professional learning.

**Hearing Date:** 1/29/14

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

#### Background:

According to a meta-analysis of research conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, general professional development for teachers such as workshops, seminars, and conferences does not have a positive benefit-to-cost ratio in terms of improving student achievement, although professional development that is focused on improving teaching in a specific academic content area such as mathematics, reading, or science does show benefits.

Some states, including Michigan, Kentucky, Idaho, and New Jersey, have adopted statewide definitions and standards for high-quality professional development or professional learning, and then encourage or require professional learning activities by schools and school districts to meet them. The definitions and standards in these states have been informed by the work of a national organization called Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council).

#### Summary of Bill:

Professional learning is defined as a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement. It must

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comprise learning that is aligned with student learning and educator development needs, and with school, school district, or state improvement goals. It must have as its primary focus the improvement of teachers' and school leaders' effectiveness in assisting all students to meet the state learning goals.

Professional learning includes the work of established teams of school staff or third-party providers who are engaged in a continuous cycle of improvement that is focused on ongoing reviews of data, defining educator learning goals based on these data, and regularly assessing the effectiveness of the professional learning.

Professional learning must incorporate evidence-based strategies that improve educator effectiveness and student achievement, including job-embedded coaching or other forms of assistance to support educators' transfer of new knowledge and skills to their work. It may be supported by external expert assistance or additional activities that include courses, workshops, institutes, networks, and conferences.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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