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HOUSE BILL 2661

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State of Washington                      63rd Legislature                      2014 Regular Session

By Representatives Seaquist and Magendanz

Read first time 01/23/14. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to the Washington research institute for teaching  
2 excellence; adding new sections to chapter 28B.35 RCW; adding a new  
3 section to chapter 28B.77 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    (1) The legislature finds that teaching is  
6 the most important state-funded variable in student achievement and  
7 that identifying and replicating excellent teaching practices will  
8 greatly improve student achievement.

9            (2) The legislature finds that research on effective teaching  
10 practices is limited. An institute dedicated to researching effective  
11 teaching practices would assist policymakers to make evidence-based  
12 decisions that improve the effectiveness of teachers and student  
13 success.

14            (3) The legislature intends to create an institute for the purpose  
15 of researching effective teaching practices and considers the  
16 appropriate home to be Washington State University, as the institution  
17 of higher education with the largest college of education.

1           NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.35 RCW  
2 to read as follows:

3           (1) The Washington research institute for teaching excellence is  
4 created, and shall be hosted by Washington State University.

5           (2) The mission of the institute is to conduct research on teaching  
6 to inform policy decisions related to teaching and to improve the  
7 practice of teaching in K-12 and higher education, including teacher  
8 preparation. The institute must:

9           (a) Conduct research on teacher effectiveness including a focus on  
10 individualized instruction, the diverse cultural, social, and economic  
11 background of learners, and variations in regional needs;

12           (b) Identify and disseminate best practices in teaching for  
13 replication or adaptation; and

14           (c) Provide information to policymakers on strategies to improve  
15 teaching practices.

16           (3) The institute must report to the education and higher education  
17 committees of the legislature biannually on research conducted and the  
18 status of research partnerships with other state agencies.

19           (4) For the purposes of this section, "best practices in teaching"  
20 means methods of education practice that show direct evidence of  
21 improved student performance. A best practice may be identified in the  
22 following areas:

23           (a) Instructional pedagogy;

24           (b) Class size;

25           (c) Teacher supports;

26           (d) Team teaching;

27           (e) A system of organizational strategies such as lab schools,  
28 charter schools, and online and other distance learning or alternative  
29 approaches to delivering instruction; and

30           (f) Other novel approaches to improve student performance.

31           (5)(a) The institute must seek grants from federal and private  
32 sources to conduct research related to teaching effectiveness, best  
33 practices in teaching, excellence in teacher preparation, and  
34 continuing education, with the aim of becoming primarily supported  
35 through nonstate funds.

36           (b) The institute must place a priority on seeking grants that  
37 would fund fellowships lasting three to twelve months in length for

1 researchers in the doctoral program at the college of education at  
2 Washington State University and provide credit towards the doctoral  
3 programs.

4 (6) Procedures developed for obtaining student records for the  
5 purposes of the institute's research must be in compliance with the  
6 family educational and privacy rights act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. Sec.  
7 1232g.

8 (7) The following state agencies are required to assist the  
9 institute in achieving its mission by providing staff expertise, data,  
10 and research: The education data center in the office of financial  
11 management, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the  
12 professional educator standards board, the state board of education,  
13 the state board for community and technical colleges, the student  
14 achievement council, and the workforce training and education  
15 coordinating board.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.35 RCW  
17 to read as follows:

18 (1) The Washington research institute for teaching excellence shall  
19 be administered by a director appointed by the dean of the college of  
20 education at Washington State University and approved by the governing  
21 board established under subsection (2) of this section. The director  
22 shall oversee the operations of the institute and employ staff, as  
23 necessary, to perform the duties and functions of the institute.

24 (2) The institute's director and staff shall be guided by a  
25 governing board composed of representatives of an organization that  
26 represents the colleges of education in the state.

27 (3) The student achievement council in chapter 28B.77 RCW shall  
28 conduct research in partnership with the institute to assist in  
29 fulfilling the institute's mission and shall provide staff expertise,  
30 data, and research for this purpose.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.77 RCW  
32 to read as follows:

33 The student achievement council shall provide staff expertise,  
34 data, and research to the Washington research institute for teaching  
35 excellence created in section 2 of this act in partnership with staff

1 of Washington State University to support the mission, duties, and  
2 functions of the institute.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** If specific funding for the purposes of  
4 sections 3 and 4 of this act, referencing sections 3 and 4 of this act  
5 by bill or chapter number and section numbers, is not provided by June  
6 30, 2014, in the omnibus appropriations act, sections 3 and 4 of this  
7 act are null and void.

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