
SENATE BILL 5959

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

By Senators McAuliffe, Rolfes, Mullet, Billig, Chase, Hasegawa, McCoy, Kline, and Conway

Read first time 01/13/14. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to professional educator learning days; amending
2 RCW 28A.150.200; adding a new section to chapter 28A.150 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes that research
6 shows that an inspiring and informed educator and strong school-based
7 principal leadership are important school-related factors influencing
8 student achievement. The legislature further recognizes that the
9 ongoing educational reform efforts enacted by the legislature,
10 including the teacher and principal evaluation efforts, the common core
11 state standards for instruction and assessment, school-level reform
12 approaches, and other reform programs and activities, present new
13 challenges for principals and educators.

14 (2) The legislature finds that because research shows that high-
15 quality educators are so important for student success, that ongoing
16 training and professional development is essential to support educators
17 and increase student learning. The legislature further finds that part
18 of the plan for meeting the constitutional obligations to fully fund a
19 program of basic education must therefore include increased

1 professional development and training in order to give educators and
2 principals the tools they need to be successful with the new reforms
3 already established. The legislature further finds that the Washington
4 state institute for public policy reported that content-specific
5 professional development is much more effective than general training.
6 The legislature also finds that providing a clear topic for
7 professional development each biennium will better align and support
8 educators across the state's school districts and schools and will
9 ensure state resources are used in a manner that is proven to
10 positively impact student learning.

11 (3) Therefore, the legislature intends to provide additional time
12 and resources for content-specific professional learning days for each
13 state-funded certificated instructional staff and school building-based
14 administrator to increase his or her knowledge and skills in the areas
15 of current and future educational reforms. The legislature further
16 intends to phase-in time and resources for state-funded classified
17 employees who are engaged in student instruction.

18 (4) The goal of the legislature is to provide a sufficient number
19 of professional learning days necessary to meet the needs in
20 Washington's schools and to designate the professional learning days to
21 be part of basic education.

22 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.150.200 and 2009 c 548 s 101 are each amended to
23 read as follows:

24 (1) The program of basic education established under this chapter
25 is deemed by the legislature to comply with the requirements of Article
26 IX, section 1 of the state Constitution, which states that "It is the
27 paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education
28 of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or
29 preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex," and is adopted
30 pursuant to Article IX, section 2 of the state Constitution, which
31 states that "The legislature shall provide for a general and uniform
32 system of public schools."

33 (2) The legislature defines the program of basic education under
34 this chapter as that which is necessary to provide the opportunity to
35 develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the state-
36 established high school graduation requirements that are intended to
37 allow students to have the opportunity to graduate with a meaningful

1 diploma that prepares them for postsecondary education, gainful
2 employment, and citizenship. Basic education by necessity is an
3 evolving program of instruction intended to reflect the changing
4 educational opportunities that are needed to equip students for their
5 role as productive citizens and includes the following:

6 (a) The instructional program of basic education the minimum
7 components of which are described in RCW 28A.150.220;

8 (b) The program of education provided by chapter 28A.190 RCW for
9 students in residential schools as defined by RCW 28A.190.020 and for
10 juveniles in detention facilities as identified by RCW 28A.190.010;

11 (c) The program of education provided by chapter 28A.193 RCW for
12 individuals under the age of eighteen who are incarcerated in adult
13 correctional facilities; (~~and~~)

14 (d) Transportation and transportation services to and from school
15 for eligible students as provided under RCW 28A.160.150 through
16 28A.160.180; and

17 (e) Professional learning days as provided under section 3 of this
18 act.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.150
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 (1)(a) Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, the legislature shall
22 annually provide additional time and resources for high-quality,
23 content-specific, professional learning days for each state-funded
24 certificated instructional staff and school building-based
25 administrator to increase knowledge and skills in the areas of current
26 and future educational reforms. The minimum funding for a professional
27 learning day must be equivalent to the aggregate amount provided for
28 the state-funded salaries for each certificated instructional staff and
29 school-based administrator in the school district for one full school
30 day. School districts must be required to expend the funds on
31 professional learning activities but the learning is not required to be
32 accomplished in one full school day and it may be organized in whatever
33 time blocks the district chooses so long as the total time equates to
34 one full school day. The learning improvement day must take place
35 outside of the minimum one hundred eighty-day school calendar.

36 (b) For the 2014-15 school year, the funds provided for a
37 professional learning day must be used for professional development on

1 the teacher and principal evaluation program under RCW 28A.405.100.
2 School districts may select the topic for the professional learning day
3 for certificated instructional staff who are not subject to evaluation
4 under RCW 28A.405.100.

5 (c) For the 2015-16 school year, the funds provided under this
6 section shall be used for professional development on the best
7 practices for instruction of the common core state standards. School
8 districts may select the topic for the professional learning day for
9 certificated instructional staff who do not provide instruction in the
10 content areas or grade levels addressed by the common core state
11 standards.

12 (d) After the 2015-16 school year:

13 (i) The topics for the professional learning days must be specified
14 in the omnibus appropriations act; and

15 (ii) The legislature will begin phasing-in a professional learning
16 day for state-funded classified employees who are engaged in student
17 instruction.

18 (2) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to
19 implement this section.

20 (3) The funding provided under this section shall be deemed to be
21 part of the legislature's definition of basic education under Article
22 IX of the state Constitution.

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