

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1867

As Passed House:
February 10, 2016

Title: An act relating to the frequency of evaluations for certain classroom teachers.

Brief Description: Concerning the frequency of evaluations for certain classroom teachers.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Bergquist, Orwall, Pollet, S. Hunt and Tarleton).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/18/16, 1/28/16 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/10/16, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Reduces the frequency of comprehensive summative evaluations required for classroom teachers, with Professional Certification and/or National Board Certification, who received a Level 3 or above on their last comprehensive summative evaluation.
- Requires the steering committee to recommend rules and guidance to streamline the process for the focused evaluation in order to significantly reduce the burden on teachers and principals, and their evaluators by July 1, 2016.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Ortiz-Self, Vice Chair; Magendanz, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Stambaugh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Griffey, Hargrove, Hayes, S. Hunt, Kilduff, Klippert, Kuderer, McCaslin, Orwall, Pollet, Rossetti and Springer.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

Teacher Certifications.

Washington has two levels of certification for classroom teachers. The first tier is the Residency Certification, which is achieved after completion of an approved preparation program and passage of basic skills and content knowledge tests. Teachers have up to seven years to obtain a second-tier certificate, called the Professional Certification. This certification process requires a minimum of two years of experience, demonstration of positive impact on student learning, and a specified process of additional professional development.

National Board Certification is a voluntary advanced teaching credential that is valid in Washington for 10 years. A teacher can only apply for this rigorous certification after attaining three years of experience. Washington offers a monetary bonus to eligible K-12 public school teachers who become National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs). With over 6,000 NBCTs, Washington has the fourth largest group of NBCTs in the nation.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation System.

Legislation adopted in 2010 (*i.e.*, Engrossed Second Substitute (ESSB) 6696, enacted as chapter 235, Laws of 2010) and in 2012 (*i.e.*, ESSB 5895, enacted as chapter 35, Laws of 2012) required development and implementation of new classroom teacher and principal four-level rating evaluation systems with eight specified minimum criteria. The four-levels are unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, or distinguished. Teachers and principals receive a performance rating for each criteria and an overall rating for the entire evaluation, called the comprehensive summative evaluation performance rating. The 2015-16 school year is the first year that this evaluation system is in use statewide.

All teachers and principals must be evaluated each year. Every four years, the evaluation must be comprehensive and use all eight criteria. In the intervening years, evaluations are focused, zeroing in on a specific evaluation criterion for professional development. A teacher or principal may be transferred from a focused evaluation to a comprehensive summative evaluation at the request of the teacher or principal, or at the direction of the teacher's or principal's evaluator.

Annual comprehensive summative evaluations must be given in the following cases:

- new teachers and principals in the first three years of employment;
- new principals in the first year of employment, if previously employed as a principal by another district in Washington for three or more consecutive school years; and
- teachers or principals receiving a Level 1 or Level 2 rating in the previous year.

A steering committee composed of teachers, principals, administrators, school board members, and parents created models for implementing the evaluation system criteria, professional development programs and evaluator trainings. The committee continues to examine implementation issues and refine the tools used for the evaluation system.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Classroom teachers who hold a valid Professional Certificate, or who are NBCTs, or both, and have received a rating of Level 3 or above in their last comprehensive summative evaluation must receive a comprehensive summative evaluation at least once every six years.

By July 1, 2016, the steering committee created must recommend to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) rules and guidance to streamline the process for the focused evaluation in order to significantly reduce the burden on teachers and principals, and their evaluators.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The state has been implementing the new evaluation system for one year. Many educators like the system and find it has great rigor. Some do not think it is necessary for great teachers to go through the comprehensive summative evaluation process each year. When educators are doing a great job, the state wants them to keep doing what they are doing. This bill would give those great teachers an opportunity to go through a shorter evaluation process every few years. And when educators are not doing a great job, the state wants to make sure that principals have the time to spend helping those teachers improve. New teachers want to become better teachers, but are limited in their contact time with administrators who could really mentor them.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The focused evaluation was not intended to be as time consuming as the comprehensive summative evaluation, but it turns out that it is. The steering committee is looking into why this is and what training the principals need to perform the focused evaluations. A few things have changed since the bill was written last year. A NBCT must renew every five years, rather than every 10 years. Also, there are no longer short and long form evaluations being used. Any locally bargained evaluation should be tied to the instructional framework. The teacher should be able to ask for a locally bargained evaluation.

Many school districts have added building administrators to address the additional workload of the new evaluation system. Some principals are interested in looking more closely at the requirements of the focused evaluation. Some principals are interested in not having the multiple evaluation tools available under the old system, especially the new principals who are not familiar with the old system.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Bergquist, prime sponsor.

(Other) Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; and Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.