

HOUSE BILL REPORT

E2SSB 6455

As Reported by House Committee On: Education

Title: An act relating to expanding the professional educator workforce by increasing career opportunities in education, creating a more robust enrollment forecasting, and enhancing recruitment efforts.

Brief Description: Expanding the professional educator workforce by increasing career opportunities in education, creating a more robust enrollment forecasting, and enhancing recruitment efforts.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Dammeier, Rolfes, Litzow, Billig, Rivers, Conway and McAuliffe).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/23/16, 2/25/16 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Engrossed Second Substitute Bill
(As Amended by Committee)**

- Requires the development and implementation of a comprehensive, statewide initiative to increase the number of qualified individuals who apply for teaching positions in Washington, including recruiting activities and creating statewide recruitment and hiring services.
- Creates a grant program to fund recruitment specialists in teacher preparation programs.
- Requires that certain out-of-state teachers be issued a Washington Professional Certificate.
- Provides that certain retired teachers, may work as substitute teachers, or mentors or advisers to student teachers for up to 867 hours per year without a suspension of their pension benefits.
- Expands Alternative Route to Teacher Certification (Alternative Route) programs.
- Requires plans for placement of resident student teachers.

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.

- Expands the Educator Retooling Conditional Scholarship to teachers pursuing endorsements in elementary education or early childhood education.
- Requires districts to report the number of teachers they plan to hire in the following year.
- Increases teacher mentoring support.
- Adds financial aid for individuals wishing to teach in subject or geographic shortage areas or Title I schools.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Ortiz-Self, Vice Chair; Reykdal, Vice Chair; Magendanz, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Stambaugh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Griffey, Hargrove, Harris, Hayes, Kilduff, Kuderer, McCaslin, Orwall, Pollet, Rossetti and Springer.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Klippert.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Teacher Preparation, Certification, and Endorsement.

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), a 13-member board, is responsible for the policy and oversight of Washington's system of educator preparation and certification. The PESB has approved teacher preparation programs at 21 institutions of higher education. Some programs offer certificates, while other programs offer bachelor's, master's, or doctor's degrees.

Teaching Certificates. There are two levels of teacher certification: (1) residency, which requires completion of an approved teacher preparation program; and (2) professional, which requires a minimum of two years of experience, and either completion of an external, uniform assessment adopted by the PESB, called the ProTeach Portfolio, or completion of a certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, called the National Board Certificate (NBC).

The PESB has an expedited professional certification process for out-of-state teachers who have five years or more of successful teaching experience to demonstrate skills and impact on student learning commensurate with Washington requirements for professional certification. The PESB has determined that teachers from out-of-state with a NBC may be awarded the Professional Certificate.

Teacher Shortage Areas. The PESB designates official shortage areas based on periodic analysis of educator supply and demand in Washington. An endorsement is the subject area

in which a certified educator is authorized to teach, along with designated grade levels for that area. There are 39 endorsements in Washington, not including a large number of career and technical education endorsements. The current endorsement shortage areas, as defined by the PESB, include: special education, mathematics, and science.

Alternative Route Programs. The Alternative Route to Teacher Certification (Alternative Route) program is designed to fill subject matter or geographic need shortage areas by allowing individuals with work and life experience to segue into teaching through flexible, expedient teacher preparation programs. In these programs, school districts, or districts in cooperation with an Educational Service District (ESD), work in partnership with teacher preparation programs to offer shortened, field-based preparation programs with a mentored internship. There are Alternative Route programs at eight higher education institutions.

Educator Retooling Conditional Scholarship. The Educator Retooling Conditional Scholarship (Educator Retooling) program is limited to current K-12 teachers. In order to receive conditional scholarship awards teachers and individuals certificated with an elementary education endorsement must pursue an endorsement in a subject or geographic endorsement shortage area, as defined by the PESB (endorsement shortage area), including mathematics, science, special education, bilingual education, English language learner, computer science education, or environmental and sustainability education. The annual scholarship, which may not exceed \$3,000, is for the cost of tuition, test fees, and educational expenses, including books, supplies, and transportation for the endorsement pathway being pursued.

Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is the primary agency charged with overseeing K-12 public education in Washington. The OSPI provides leadership and support for educators to ensure engaged and effective teaching and learning for all students in public schools.

The Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) program provides professional development and mentor support for beginning educators and educators on probation. Grant funding for the BEST program is administered by the OSPI. The BEST program includes professional development for beginning educators and mentors, release time for beginning educators and mentors to work together, orientation or individualized assistance before the start of the school year, and program evaluation.

Financial Aid Programs.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) administers the majority of the state's student financial aid programs.

State Need Grant. The State Need Grant program provides need-based financial aid to income-eligible undergraduate students at eligible public and private institutions of higher education. Eligible students have a household income that is less than 70 percent of the state's median household income. The State Need Grant award values are based on the tuition and fee rates at Washington's public institutions of higher education and are prorated by income category and part-time enrollment.

Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship Program. The Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship Program (Program) was created in 1987. The Program is designed to encourage into the teaching profession individuals who demonstrate outstanding academic achievement, leadership ability, willingness to commit to providing teaching service in shortage areas, and who are likely to be good role models for students. Participants in the Program incur an obligation to repay the conditional scholarship, with interest and an equalization fee, unless they teach for two years in an approved education program for each year of scholarship received. However, participants who teach in a designated teacher shortage area have one year of loan canceled for each year they teach in the shortage area. The Program was last funded in fiscal year 2010 at \$1 million annually.

Postretirement Employment Options.

Washington retirement systems have various rules relating to the conditions under which a retiree may return to work for a retirement system-participating employer and continue to receive pension benefits. For members of the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS), pension benefits will generally be suspended after a member works for more than 867 hours per year with a participating employer. The TRS Plans 2 and 3 have an unreduced retirement age of 65. Early retirement benefits begin at age 55 with 20 or 10 years of service, respectively. An improved early retirement formula, or factor, (ERF) was established in 2000, to permit members with 30 years of service to receive a pension reduced by 3 percent per year from age 65 to the member's age at retirement, rather than a full actuarial reduction. Members retiring under this provision are able to work for up to 867 hours per year without suspension of benefits, just like those retiring at age 65. Another ERF was established in 2008 that allows members to retire with unreduced pensions beginning at age 62, but members are unable to work for a state retirement system employer until age 65 without immediate suspension of benefits. In 2012 an ERF for certain members hired after May 1, 2013, was established that would reduce benefits for early retirees by 5 percent per year—more than the earlier ERF formulas—but also allow retired members to work for up to 867 hours per year without suspension of benefits.

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTB), a nine-member board, provides planning, coordination, evaluation, monitoring, and policy analysis for the state training system as a whole, and advice to the Governor and the Legislature concerning the state training system, in cooperation with the state training system and the WSAC.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Recruitment to (or Back to) the Teaching Profession.

Superintendent's Initiative. Subject to a specific appropriation, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with ESDs and school district staff, must develop and implement a comprehensive, statewide initiative to increase the number of qualified individuals who apply for teaching positions in Washington. In developing and implementing the initiative, the SPI must:

- include a teacher recruitment component that targets groups of individuals who may be interested in teaching in Washington public schools, such as: college students who

- have not chosen a major, out-of-state teachers, military personnel and their spouses, and individuals with teaching certificates who are not currently employed as teachers;
- contract for the development of a statewide system to provide recruitment and hiring services, including a centralized hiring portal, to small school districts, and a statewide central application depository that can be accessed by small school districts for purposes of hiring teachers and other certificated positions;
 - create or enhance an existing website that provides useful information to individuals who are interested in teaching in Washington; and
 - take other actions to increase the number of qualified individuals who apply for teaching positions in Washington.

Recruitment by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. Subject to a specific appropriation, the WTB, in collaboration with the PESB, must work with appropriate public agencies, school districts and ESDs, and other parties to disseminate information designed to increase recruitment into PESB-approved teacher preparation programs. The information must be disseminated statewide using existing channels. This section expires July 1, 2019.

Recruitment Specialists. Subject to a specific appropriation, the PESB must create and administer the Recruitment Specialists Grant program to provide funds to PESB-approved teacher preparation programs to hire, or contract with, recruitment specialists that focus on recruitment of individuals who are from a traditionally underrepresented group among teachers in Washington when compared to the common school population. This section expires July 1, 2018.

Out-of-State Teachers. The PESB must include a method to determine the comparability of rigor between the Washington professional certification process and the second-level teacher certification process of other states in its identification of an expedited professional certification process for experienced out-of-state teachers. The PESB must issue a Professional Certificate to out-of-state teachers with five years or more of successful teaching experience if the teacher holds: (1) a valid NBC, or (2) a second-level teacher certificate from another state that has been determined to be comparable to the Washington Professional Certificate.

Retired Teachers. Until August 1, 2020, certain teachers who have retired under the alternate early retirement provisions may be employed without a suspension of benefits for up to 867 hours per school year, provided that the retired teacher reenters employment more than one calendar month after his or her accrual date and after the effective date of this section, and is employed exclusively as either:

1. a substitute teacher in an instructional capacity; or
2. a mentor to teachers or an adviser to students in PESB-approved teacher preparation programs if the retired teacher has received appropriate training as defined by the OSPI, including training for a NBC or other specialized training.

A school district that employs a retired teacher exclusively as a substitute teacher under (1) above must compensate its substitute teachers at an amount that is equal to or greater than the full daily amount allocated by the state to the district for substitute teacher compensation.

These provisions expire July 1, 2021.

Alternative Routes. Subject to a specific appropriation, the PESB must convene meetings between school districts that do not have Alternative Route programs and the nearest PESB-approved teacher preparation program to determine whether the districts and institutions can partner to apply to the PESB to operate an Alternative Route program. Subject to a specific appropriation, the public institutions with PESB-approved teacher preparation programs that do not have PESB-approved Alternative Route programs must submit proposals to the PESB to offer such programs by September 1, 2016. If approved, the institutions must implement an Alternative Route program according to a timeline suggested by the PESB. This section expires July 1, 2017.

Mentoring Teachers.

Placement of Resident Teachers. By July 1, 2018, institutions of higher education with PESB-approved Alternative Route programs must develop a plan describing how the institution will partner with school districts in the general geographic region of the school, or where its programs are offered, regarding placement of resident teachers. The plans must be developed in collaboration with districts desiring to partner with the institutions, and may include use of unexpended federal or state funds to support residencies and mentoring for students who are likely to continue teaching in the district in which they have a supervised student teaching residency. The plans must be updated at least biennially.

Beginning Educator Support Team Program. It is specified that a mentor is an educator who has achieved appropriate training in assisting, coaching, and advising beginning teachers or student teaching residents as defined by the OSPI, such as a NBC or other specialized training. Candidates in Alternative Route programs are offered support through the BEST program. Funds are prioritized to school districts with a large influx of beginning teachers. The BEST program must have a goal to provide beginning teachers from underrepresented populations with a mentor who has strong ties to underrepresented populations. The OSPI must notify districts about the BEST program and encourage them to apply for program funds.

Mentor Training. In fiscal year 2017, the OSPI must collaborate with the PESB and the PESB-approved teacher preparation programs to develop mentor training program goals. Once developed, the PESB-approved teacher preparation programs are encouraged to develop and implement curricula that meet the mentor training program goals. This section expires July 1, 2019.

Financial Aid Programs.

Educator Retooling Conditional Scholarship. Teachers pursuing endorsements in elementary education or early childhood education are made eligible for the Educator Retooling program.

Teacher Shortage Conditional Grant. Subject to a specific appropriation, the Teacher Shortage Conditional Grant (conditional grant) program is established within the Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program. The purpose of the conditional grant program is to encourage individuals to become teachers by providing

financial aid to individuals enrolled in professional educator standards-approved teacher preparation programs. The WSAC must develop and adopt rules to administer the program.

As part of its rule-making process, the WSAC must collaborate with the PESB, the Washington State School Directors' Association, and the PESB-approved teacher preparation programs to develop a framework for the conditional grant program, including eligibility requirements, contractual obligations, conditional grant amounts, and loan repayment requirements.

In developing the eligibility requirements, the WSAC must consider: whether the individual has a financial need, is a first-generation college student, or is from a traditionally underrepresented group among teachers in Washington; whether the individual is completing an Alternative Route program; whether the individual plans to obtain an endorsement in subject shortage area; the characteristic of any geographic shortage area that the individual plans to teach in; and whether a school district has committed to offering the individual employment once the individual obtains a Residency Certificate.

In developing the contractual obligations, the WSAC must consider requiring the individual to: obtain a Residency Certificate; teach in an endorsement shortage area; and commit to teach for five school years in an approved education program with a need for a teacher with such an endorsement at the time of hire.

In developing the conditional grant award amounts, the WSAC must consider whether the individual is: enrolled in a public or private institution of higher education, a resident, in a baccalaureate or postbaccalaureate program, or in an Alternative Route program. In addition, the award amounts must not result in a reduction of the individual's federal or state grant aid, including Pell grants, State Need Grants, College Bound Scholarships, or Opportunity Scholarships.

In developing the repayment requirements for a conditional grant that is converted into a loan, the terms and conditions of the loan must follow the interest rate and repayment terms of the federal Direct Subsidized Loan program. In addition, the WSAC must consider the following repayment schedule, including interest and an equalization fee:

- 85 percent of the conditional amount if less than one school year of teaching is completed;
- 75 percent of the conditional amount if less than two school years of teaching are completed;
- 55 percent of the conditional amount if less than three school years of teaching are completed; and
- 40 percent of the conditional amount if less than four school years of teaching are completed.

By November 1, 2018, and November 1, 2020, the WSAC must submit reports to the Legislature that recommend whether the conditional grant program should be continued, modified, or terminated, and that include information about the recipients of the grants under this program.

Residency Grant. Subject to a specific appropriation, the WSAC must administer a Student Teaching Residency Grant program to provide additional funds to individuals completing residencies at public schools in Washington. To qualify for the grant, recipients must be enrolled in a PESB-approved teacher preparation program, be completing or about to start a student teaching residency at a Title I school, and demonstrate financial need as defined by the WSAC and consistent with the income criteria required to receive the State Need Grant.

Other Provisions.

Reporting Requirement. By June 15 of each year, school districts must report to the OSPI the number of classroom teachers the district projects will be hired in the following school year.

Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Second Substitute Bill:

The amended bill removes all underlying language and inserts language that:

- allows certain retired teachers to work as substitute teachers, or mentors or advisers for up to 867 hours per year without suspension of their benefits, until August 1, 2020;
- expands the Educator Retooling program to individuals wishing to obtain endorsements in elementary education or early childhood education;
- requires certain public institutions of higher education to implement an Alternative Route program;
- requires plans for placement of resident student teachers;
- expands the BEST program;
- requires development of mentor training program goals for teacher preparation program curricula;
- requires development of a conditional grant program to provide financial aid to individuals in teacher preparation programs;
- creates a grant program to provide additional funds to student teaching residents at Title I schools who demonstrate financial need;
- requires the development and implementation of a comprehensive, statewide initiative to increase the number of qualified individuals who apply for teaching positions in Washington, including recruiting activities and creating statewide recruitment and hiring services;
- requires that certain out-of-state teachers be issued a Washington Professional Certificate; and
- requires districts to report the number of teachers they plan to hire in the following year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available. New fiscal note requested on February 25, 2016.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Washington has a teacher shortage and a substitute teacher shortage. Many younger teachers are leaving the profession. To expand K-3 class sizes, the state needs more teachers. The Senate and the House of Representatives (House) have been working on the same issues and have the same concerns. It is hoped that the two chambers can work together to address the critical substitute shortage and laying the foundation for teacher recruiting. This bill has a tuition and fee waiver that was not included in any House bill, but it is a helpful recruitment strategy. Some people like making the tuition waiver for classified staff the same as that for certificated employees.

Some people like the language around out-of-state teachers being qualified for the Professional Certificate if they have a continuing or advanced certificate from another state. This bill also expires this provision, which is good. Some people prefer the House version of the reciprocity provision allowing out-of-state teachers to receive the Professional Certificate. These people do not want the state to lower standards for those coming in from out-of-state.

Some people like the substitute teacher language in the bill and would like flexibility in the number of hours that a retired teacher can work. It would also be good to allow retired teachers to work as mentors. The biggest need is classroom substitutes—the more hours the better. For small districts it would be difficult to pay substitute teachers at the state rate of \$152 per day. The state will reimburse up to four days per employee at this rate, but teachers can get up to 12 days of sick leave and other leave annually. Thus, the state does not reimburse the district for all the days that a teacher might miss in a year. Some counties only pay \$105 per day and are still at a deficit from what the state is funding. Increasing the required pay to \$152 per day would increase that deficit.

The recruitment programs should have more stakeholders at the table, including the teacher preparation programs, the professional educator associations, and the PESB. Some people like opening up the paraeducator pipeline. This creates a career ladder for paraeducators.

The caseload forecast at the school district level will help districts correctly estimate the number of teachers that need to be hired in the following year. Some districts hire professional demographers to examine the multitude of factors that are necessary to forecast school enrollments accurately. However, not all districts can afford this. There other approaches besides doing this at the state level, such as through ESDs. The first few weeks of the school year can be very tumultuous if forecasting support is not provided to school districts. Some people like the caseload forecasting piece, because having a forecast at state level means that teacher preparation programs can see what the demand will be down the road. The caseload forecast for small districts would be helpful.

There are policies that were in the House bill that should be included in this bill, including the conditional grant program, the Residency Grant program, and the expansion of the BEST program. These programs should be as broadly available as possible to attract a diverse array of individuals. There are other mentoring piece that were in the House version that are not in this bill. Mentoring is a key to maintaining people in the profession, which is cheaper than hiring new employees and recruiting.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The weakening of the licensure system in this bill is not good. This state already has reciprocity and the NBC teachers already receive the Professional Certificate. Washington has spent much time, research, and resources to develop a high quality system. It should be clear that the Professional Certificate is not the entry-level certificate. The PESB has been a model state for reciprocity at the entry level and has one of the most open systems. An individual who has completed a teacher preparation program in another state does not even need to have a certificate from that state to obtain an entry-level certificate in Washington. That individual then has up to seven years to obtain the Professional Certificate. There is not adequate evidence that people from out-of-state will not come to Washington because they have to do the required assessment for obtaining Professional Certification. This assessment is the only measure that shows that teachers are making a difference for kids. There is evidence that teachers who do better on this assessment are better teachers and have more successful students. Washington is a leader, there is only one other state using this rigorous assessment for its second-level certification. The PESB already has it in rule that it will accept comparable certificates.

Many teachers support the waivers for classified staff, the conditional scholarship, the central application deposit, and the support of Alternative Route programs.

Many teachers support the expansion of the number of hours allowed for retired teachers coming back as substitute teachers. If bill goes up to 12,00 hours, then it might be good to add in other retiree programs that are currently capped at 867 hours. There is a pool of people out there who would have been locked out of schools. It would be good to look closely at the hour limitation, but consider the other retirement programs when raising the number above 867. If the hours are not increased, then the Legislature will have to revisit the problem next January.

The state funds each district four substitute days for each employee. Districts are overstaffed, so they are already in the hole for substitute costs. To insist that schools use local monies to pay for substitute teachers is an unfunded mandate. All substitute teachers would have to be paid at the rate required in this bill if retired teachers have to be paid at this rate.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Dammeier, prime sponsor; Bob Butts, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Bob Cooper, Washington Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; Gene Sementi, West Valley School District, and Eastern Washington Quality Schools Coalition; and Doug Nelson, Public School Employees of Washington.

(Other) Julie Salvi, Washington Education Association; Jennifer Wallace, Professional Educator Standards Board; and Fred Yancey, Washington Association of School Administrators.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.