

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1570

As of Second Reading

Title: An act relating to creating flexibility for the educator retooling conditional scholarship program.

Brief Description: Creating flexibility for the educator retooling conditional scholarship program.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Gregory, Bergquist, S. Hunt, Reykdal, Kilduff, Ortiz-Self and Pollet; by request of Governor Inslee).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/02/15, 70-27; 4/29/15, 63-32; 6/30/15, 54-44.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: The Educator Retooling Program (Program) provides conditional scholarships for certain educators to support teachers to earn a math or science endorsement. The conditional scholarship is a loan that is forgiven for teaching service in the endorsement area added through the Program. The scholarship funds may be used to pay for the endorsement test, university administration for the pedagogy assessment, and tuition for coursework. Teaching service must be in a Washington state K-12 public school. The state must forgive the loan obligation entirely if the recipient teaches in the shortage area endorsement area added through the program in a Washington State public school for two years per each scholarship. Teachers may receive multiple loans if they are pursuing endorsements in both mathematics and science. Eligible veterans or National Guard members must be given preference when selecting scholarship recipients. Each candidate is allowed up to \$3,000 per scholarship, per fiscal year. The scholarships are awarded on a first come first served basis, subject to appropriation, and no funding was provided for the program in the 2013-15 biennium.

Schools in Washington that do not meet certain performance criteria under federal and state accountability provisions must develop and implement school improvement plans and are designated as Priority Schools and Focus Schools. Priority Schools are identified based on the performance of all students in the school and Focus Schools are identified based on the

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performance of student subgroups. For the 2014-15 school year there are 113 Priority schools and 162 Focus Schools.

In the 2013-14 school year there were 110,579 English language learner students identified for service statewide which is an increase of more than 32 percent since the 2005-06 school year. English language learner student enrollment has increased by more than 5 percent per year in each of the past three years in more than 130 schools across the state.

Summary of Bill: Current K–12 teachers and individuals holding an elementary school education certificate may receive a conditional scholarship to pursue special education, bilingual education, English language learner, computer science education, or environmental and sustainability education endorsements, in addition to mathematics and science endorsements.

When selecting scholarship recipients, the Professional Educator Standards Board must also give preference to teachers assigned to schools implementing a required state or federal plan for improvement and to teachers assigned to schools in which enrollment of English language learner students has increased by an average of more than 5 percent per year over the previous three years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.