

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1867

As of February 24, 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: Passed House: 2/10/16, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/23/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Alia Kennedy (786-7405)

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 completing three years of teaching. A teacher with a National Board Certification may use the certification in place of other requirements to obtain the Professional Certificate.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation System. In 2010 and 2012, legislation was enacted that required the 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.

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.

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 Bill: Classroom teachers who hold a Professional Certificate, a National Board Certification, 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.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Annual focused teacher evaluations are more time consuming than anticipated. Some annual evaluations take as long as the comprehensive evaluation. Evaluations can seem like a burden to teachers who are scoring highly. The current evaluation process requires teachers to continue being evaluating in areas where they are proficient. That time should be spent on teachers who may need extra help. The evaluation process is overwhelming on principals. Less time-intensive evaluations for high scoring teachers recognizes teachers exceeding the standards and gives them the opportunity to be innovative in the classroom. A five-year evaluation schedule would also work because it would align with the recertification timeline.

CON: This is why students in America are not learning. It is a failure in our country. The education system needs to teach heritage and this is on the evaluation.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Bergquist, Sponsor; Representative McCaslin; Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association.

CON: Grazyna Prouty, Washington certified teacher (continuing contract in Tahoma 2005/2006-2010-2011), ESL (ELL), Bilingual).

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.