

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6388

C 153 L 18
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning paraeducators.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Mullet and Rivers).

Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on Education

Background: Paraeducators provide instructional services to students while working under the direct supervision of instructional certificated staff. These services can include direct instruction of children in small and large groups, individualized instruction, testing children, recordkeeping, and preparation of materials. Paraeducators are categorized under Washington law as classified instructional employees.

Paraeducator Requirements. Requirements for paraeducators are set by state and federal law. School districts may apply additional requirements. The Legislature passed ESHB 1115 (2017), which created new standards for paraeducator certification in Washington State. Beginning on September 1, 2018, paraeducators must be at least 18 years of age, and:

- receive a passing grade on the education testing service paraeducator assessment; or
- hold an associates of arts degree; or
- have earned 72 quarter credits or 48 semester credits at an institution of higher learning; or
- completed a registered apprenticeship program.

Paraeducators may also receive specialized certificates, as set by the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB).

Beginning September 1, 2019, school districts must provide a four-day fundamental course of study on state standards of practice to paraeducators who have not completed the course. School districts must use best efforts to provide the course before paraeducators begin work.

Paraeducator Board. The 2017 legislation also created the nine-member Paraeducator Board, administered by PESB. The Paraeducator Board has powers and duties to, among other things, adopt minimum employment requirements for paraeducators and paraeducator

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.

standards of practice, establish requirements and policies for paraeducator certificates, and approve certification courses.

Summary: Effective Dates for Paraeducator Qualifications. Paraeducators working for a district before or during the 2017-18 school year must meet minimum employment requirements by the date of hire for the 2019-20 school year. Persons that have not previously worked as a paraeducator for a district must meet these requirements by the date of hire for the 2018-19 school year or any subsequent school year.

Fundamental Course of Study. For paraeducators hired for the 2018-19 school year, school districts must provide the fundamental course of study for paraeducators by September 1, 2020. For those hired for the 2019-20 school year, districts must provide the course by September 1, 2021. In addition, school districts must implement fundamental course of study requirements only in school years for which state funding is specifically appropriated for this purpose.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	1	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	48	1	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 7, 2018