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## Education Committee

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### HB 1479

**Brief Description:** Building capacity within the educator workforce to improve student mental health and well-being.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Senn, Ortiz-Self, Harris, Dolan, Orwall, Stonier, Cody, Riccelli, Slatter, Callan, Fey, Eslick, Kilduff, Bergquist, Doglio, Paul, Reeves, Pollet, Hudgins, Davis, Leavitt, Macri and Steele.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to convene a work group to recommend standards and professional development courses on student mental health and well-being for educators and paraeducators.
- Requires the PESB to implement certain recommendations of the work group beginning July 1, 2021.
- Tasks the PESB and the University of Washington Bothell with the development of a series of online courses for school staff related to behavioral health.
- Requires that, every four years, school districts use one state-funded professional learning day to improve the effectiveness of district staff in addressing student mental health needs and in implementing best practices in social-emotional learning.
- Directs the PESB to report to the Legislature with the outcomes of the social-emotional learning micro-credential piloted in four educator preparation programs in the 2018-19 school year.

**Hearing Date:** 2/5/19

**Staff:** Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

#### Background:

Educator and Paraeducator Standards. Each educator role, such as teacher, administrator, school nurse, and school counselor, has a different set of knowledge and skills unique to that role. The

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Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) requires that educator preparation programs prepare candidates to meet certain knowledge, skill, and performance standards.

The Paraeducator Board was created in 2017 to adopt minimum employment standards for paraeducators and paraeducator standards of practice. Beginning September 1, 2019, when funding is provided by the state, all school districts must provide courses that meet the standards of practice to paraeducators working in school districts. Paraeducators who complete the courses receive a general paraeducator certificate.

Every five years, educators and paraeducators must complete continuing education requirements to renew their certifications and certificates, respectively. For some educators, continuing education in specific subjects is required. For example, school physical and mental health professionals must complete training on youth suicide screening and referral.

Professional Learning. Professional learning is a comprehensive, sustained, job-embedded, and collaborative approach to improving educators' effectiveness in raising student achievement. State funding for professional learning days for certificated instructional staff must be provided to school districts as follows:

- one professional learning day in the 2018-19 school year;
- two professional learning days in the 2019-20 school year; and
- three professional learning days in the 2020-21 school year.

Some professional learning activities can be used to meet continuing education requirements for educator certification and paraeducator certificate renewal.

Social-Emotional Learning. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing and applying the skills, attitudes, behavior and knowledge that afford individuals the opportunity to identify and regulate emotions and behaviors, form meaningful relationships, and make responsible decisions. In 2016, the OSPI designed SEL professional learning modules to develop educators, administrators, other professionals, and students' families knowledge of SEL and integrating it in classrooms.

Micro-credential. During the 2018-19 school year, the PESB is piloting a micro-credential in SEL in four educator preparation programs. The micro-credential is based on select activities from the OSPI's SEL modules. Educators can earn the micro-credential by demonstrating competency, or skills, related to SEL in their classrooms. The educators work is reviewed by a group of trained educators who determine if competency has been reached.

### **Summary of Bill:**

Work Group Recommendations and Report. The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) must convene a work group to make recommendations for standards and professional development courses on student mental health and well-being. The members of the work group are specified.

The work group must recommend knowledge, skill, and performance standards related to student mental health and well-being, and a plan or outline for a continuing education program that meets these standards. The standards and continuing education program must be designed for

educators and paraeducators. The work group must develop a plan for either: (1) a system of educator and paraeducator supports and incentives designed to promote use of the recommended continuing education program; or (2) conditioning educator certification renewal and paraeducator certificate renewal on completion of the recommended continuing education program. The work group must also recommend a plan to align required and available professional learning to improve educator and paraeducator competency in supporting student mental health and well-being, and a system of supports and professional learning needed to provide building administrators the skills needed to lead and implement safe, healthy, and inclusive school climate work.

The work group must submit a preliminary report to the Legislature that describes its activities and recommends student mental health and well-being standards, by January 10, 2020. One year later, the work group must submit a final report to the Legislature that describes its activities and makes recommendations related to its other duties.

Implementation of Work Group Recommendations. Beginning July 1, 2021, the PESB must, based on the recommendations of the work group:

- adopt knowledge, skill, and performance standards related to student mental health and well-being;
- require that educators meet the student mental health and well-being standards, beginning July 1, 2022; and
- implement a continuing education program that meets the student mental health and well-being standards.

Beginning July 1, 2022, based on the recommendations of the work group, the Paraeducator Board must include knowledge, skill, and performance standards related to student mental health and well-being in the Paraeducator Standards of Practice.

Online Course Development. The PESB must collaborate with the University of Washington Bothell on the development of a series of online courses for school staff related to behavioral health. The standards for the online courses must be consistent with the student mental health and well-being standards recommended by the work group. Among other things, the online courses must: (1) teach participants relevant laws, including laws around restraint; (2) provide foundational knowledge in behavioral health, mental health, and mental illness; (3) describe how to assess, intervene upon, and refer behavioral health and substance use issues; (4) and teach approaches to promote health and positively influence student health behaviors.

Professional Learning Days. In either the 2019-20 or 2020-21 school year, and every four years thereafter, school districts must use one of the state-funded professional learning days to improve the effectiveness of school district staff in addressing student mental health needs and in implementing best practices in social-emotional learning (SEL).

Report on Micro-credential Pilot. By September 1, 2019, the PESB must report to the Legislature with the outcomes of the SEL micro-credential pilot. The report must describe the content of and standards for the program, include the number of program participants and the number who earned a micro-credential, and summarize any feedback received from program participants and preparation programs implementing the program. The report must also examine any barriers to implementing the SEL micro-credential more broadly.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 30, 2019.

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