

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1264

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As of February 27, 2020

**Title:** An act relating to secondary traumatic stress in public school staff.

**Brief Description:** Concerning secondary traumatic stress in public school staff.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Ortiz-Self, Orwall, Bergquist, Santos, Dolan, Lovick, Peterson, Reeves, Sells, Stanford, Appleton, Callan, Wylie and Pollet).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/04/19, 96-0; 1/16/20, 96-0.

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/24/20.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to identify or develop online training modules to support teachers affected by secondary traumatic stress.
- Requires the training modules to be included on a menu of topics that may be implemented on professional learning days if the number of days are increased.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Ailey Kato (786-7434)

**Background:** Vicarious or Secondary Trauma. In 2009, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) created a training tool that defined vicarious or secondary trauma. Vicarious trauma often carries many of the same symptoms as first-hand trauma or post-traumatic stress disorder. Vicarious means to feel through the experience of others; a secondary rather than primary experience. The training tool described self-care as an ethical obligation and is necessary to recognize and prevent the impact of vicarious trauma.

Professional Learning Days. Professional learning means a comprehensive, sustained, job-embedded, and collaborative approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement. Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, the Legislature was

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required to phase in funding for professional learning days for certificated instructional staff. At a minimum, the state must allocate funding for:

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

**Summary of Bill:** Online Training Modules. OSPI must identify or develop online training modules, available on its website, to support teachers affected by secondary traumatic stress. At a minimum, the modules must:

- describe the signs and symptoms of secondary traumatic stress;
- outline the reasons why teachers and other staff might be at risk for this type of stress and include a self-assessment;
- describe the impact of this stress on various life domains;
- teach how to craft a self-care plan and how to overcome barriers to self-care; and
- include an appendix of resources on secondary traumatic stress and self-care.

Professional Learning Days. Beginning in fiscal year 2021, if the number of state-allocated professional learning days for either certificated instructional staff or classified staff is increased beyond the number allocated in fiscal year 2020, OSPI must include the training modules on the menu of topics that may be implemented on the additional days.

**Appropriation:** The bill contains a null and void clause requiring specific funding be provided in an omnibus appropriation act.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Schools are microcosms of the world. Teachers are facing a lot of stress and trauma such as lockdowns, death, divorce, homelessness, child abuse, and bullying. Hearing stories about these topics on a daily basis takes a toll. Secondary traumatic stress and compassion fatigue can cause burnout and teachers to leave the profession. This bill provides support for teachers so they gain skills to address and navigate workplace stress. Supporting teachers in this way will enhance school climate overall.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self, Prime Sponsor; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; Camille Goldy, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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