

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1264

As of March 2, 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, 2/28/20 [DP-WM].
Ways & Means: 2/29/20.

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.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Holy, Hunt, McCoy, Mullet, Padden, Pedersen, Salomon and Wagoner.

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Kayla Hammer (786-7305)

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.

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.

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 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 (Early Learning & K-12 Education): 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 (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self, Prime Sponsor; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; Camille Goldy, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): No one.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means): PRO: Educators deal with children experiencing trauma regularly and this particular issue of secondary traumatic stress has been brought up regularly amongst focus groups. The funding estimated by OSPI seems adequate for the ongoing support and maintenance of the training module system and the agency is well equipped to do this work. This training would be beneficial to staff so educators can learn how to deal with their own issues in order to better handle the issues brought to them by their students.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Ways & Means): No one.