

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## EHB 1942

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As of February 21, 2022

**Title:** An act relating to the provision of the paraeducator fundamental course of study.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the provision of the paraeducator fundamental course of study.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Donaghy, Stonier, Santos, Simmons, Riccelli, Wicks, Ormsby and Kloba.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/12/22, 98-0.

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/21/22.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies the deadlines and in-person requirements for providing the paraeducator fundamental course of study.

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

**Staff:** Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

**Background:** Paraeducators. 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 of children, and preparation of materials. Paraeducators are categorized under Washington law as classified instructional employees.

Paraeducator Fundamental Course of Study. The paraeducator fundamental course of study is a four-day course on the state paraeducator standards of practice. School districts must provide the fundamental course of study to paraeducators who have not completed the course, either in the district or in another district within the state.

At least one day of the fundamental course of study must be provided in person. School

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districts must use best efforts to provide the course before the paraeducator begins to work with students and their families.

School districts are only required to provide to paraeducators the number of days of the fundamental course of study for which state funding is specifically provided. Since the 2019-20 school year, the state has appropriated funding for school districts to provide two days of the fundamental course of study each year.

School districts, when funding is appropriated, must provide the four-day fundamental course of study by the following deadlines:

- for paraeducators hired on or before September 1st:
  - the first two days of the course must be provided by September 30th of that year;
  - the second two days of the course must be provided within six months of the date of hire;
- for paraeducators hired after September 1st in districts with 10,000 or more students:
  - the first two days of the course must be provided within four months of the date of hire;
  - the second two days of the course must be provided within six months of the date of hire or by September 1st of the following year, whichever is sooner; and
- for paraeducators hired after September 1st in districts with fewer than 10,000 students:
  - the entire course must be provided by September 1st of the following year.

**Summary of Bill:** At least two days of the four-day fundamental course of study must be provided in person and up to two days of the fundamental course of study may be provided as synchronous online instruction. School districts are encouraged to provide the entire four-day fundamental course of study in person.

Subject to the funding limitations, school districts must provide the four-day fundamental course of study by the following deadlines:

- the first day of the course must be provided within 30 days of a paraeducator's date of hire; however, a school district that has a particular challenge or hardship meeting this deadline for a paraeducator hired after September 1st must provide the first day of the course within 60 days of the paraeducator's date of hire;
- the second day of the course must be provided within six months of a paraeducator's date of hire; and
- the third and fourth days of the course must be provided within one year of a paraeducator's date of hire; school districts are encouraged to provide the third and fourth days of the course within six months of a paraeducator's date of hire.

**Appropriation:** None.

**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: Giving school districts more time to provide training will benefit paraeducators and students. Paraeducators should be able to do this training at their own pace within the set guidelines. The online option will help to make sure paraeducators receive the training.

CON: This bill will lead to less effective training for paraeducators. The bill would necessitate full-day trainings that would not benefit paraeducators, would require schools to hire substitutes, and would exacerbate staffing issues.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Brandy Donaghy, Prime Sponsor; Loren Sickles.

CON: Emily Young, Lake Washington School District.

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