
SENATE BILL 6082

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Senators Nobles, Wellman, Kuderer, Lias, Lovick, Mullet, Pedersen, Randall, Saldaña, Stanford, Valdez, and C. Wilson; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Read first time 01/09/24. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to increasing compensation for Washington
2 paraeducators; adding new sections to chapter 28A.400 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

6 (a) Paraeducators play an essential role in Washington's public
7 school system, often serving as the primary instructional support for
8 our most vulnerable student populations;

9 (b) Recognizing the important role paraeducators play, the
10 legislature passed House Bill No. 1115 in 2017 establishing common
11 statewide standards for paraeducators increasing the training
12 requirements and expectations of the profession;

13 (c) There is a need and a value for our state's paraeducators to
14 receive specialized training in specific areas such as instruction
15 for English language learners and special education;

16 (d) Paraeducators often represent more racial diversity in
17 Washington's schools than the diversity in the state's certificated
18 teaching population; and

19 (e) Paraeducator attrition rates from the state's public school
20 workforce have increased dramatically over time; for example, the
21 paraeducator attrition rate after the 2021-22 school year was 23

1 percent, which is over twice as high as the attrition rate after the
2 2008-09 school year of eight percent.

3 (2) Therefore, the legislature intends to increase state funding
4 for paraeducator compensation, benefiting Washington's students
5 statewide, while simultaneously incentivizing paraeducators to remain
6 in the profession.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.400
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) Beginning in the 2024-25 school year, the state allocation
10 for paraeducator salaries is increased to provide an additional
11 statewide average of \$7 per hour per full-time equivalent
12 paraeducator hired by school districts as reported in the 2022-23
13 school year. The statewide allocation for paraeducator salaries must
14 be adjusted by the same salary inflationary increases provided to
15 certificated educators under RCW 28A.400.205 and for regional
16 differences in the cost of hiring staff as specified in RCW
17 28A.150.410, including benefits as provided in section 506 of the
18 2023 omnibus operating appropriations act.

19 (2) Funding provided for paraeducator salaries under this section
20 must be expended only for the support of paraeducator salaries.

21 (3) For school districts who receive additional funding under
22 this section, a school district's average ratio of full-time
23 equivalent paraeducators to full-time equivalent students may not be
24 less than the school district's average ratio of full-time equivalent
25 paraeducators to full-time equivalent student from the 2018-19 school
26 year.

27 (4) In accordance with the criteria adopted by the office of the
28 superintendent of public instruction under this section, the
29 superintendent of public instruction may grant waivers to school
30 districts from the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, on
31 the basis that a school district is at risk of entering into binding
32 conditions, has experienced double levy failure, or is found to be in
33 significant financial distress as further defined by the office of
34 the superintendent of public instruction.

35 (5) For purposes of this section the following definitions apply:

36 (a) "Paraeducator" has the same meaning as in RCW 28A.413.010.

37 (b) "Full-time equivalent paraeducator" means a paraeducator
38 working on a school year contract averaging 1,274 hours base over 182
39 days.

1 (6) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to
2 implement this section.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.400
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, the hourly wage for
6 paraeducators who complete the fundamental course of study, as
7 provided in RCW 28A.413.060, must not be less than \$22.69 per hour,
8 to be adjusted for regional differences in the cost of hiring staff
9 as specified in RCW 28A.150.410.

10 (2) Beginning in the 2027-28 school year, the hourly wage for
11 paraeducators who hold a valid general paraeducator certificate, as
12 provided in RCW 28A.413.070, must not be less than \$29.12 per hour,
13 to be adjusted for regional differences in the cost of hiring staff
14 as specified in RCW 28A.150.410.

15 (3) Beginning in the 2028-29 school year, the hourly wage for
16 paraeducators with a subject matter certificate under RCW
17 28A.413.080, an advanced paraeducator certificate under RCW
18 28A.413.090, or a certified behavior technician credential as
19 outlined in WAC 246-805-310 must not be less than \$35.56 per hour, to
20 be adjusted for regional differences in the cost of hiring staff as
21 specified in RCW 28A.150.410.

22 (4) Minimum salary requirements described in this section apply
23 to all paraeducators regardless of full-time or part-time employment
24 status.

25 (5) For purposes of this section, "paraeducator" has the same
26 meaning as in RCW 28A.413.010.

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