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**Ways & Means Committee**

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**HB 2343**

**Brief Description:** Achieving savings in education programs.

**Sponsors:** Representative Haigh.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

Makes several K-12 programs subject to available funding:

- Diagnostic assessments tools.
- Certain classified staff training.
- Certain professional development programs.
- Coordination for career and technical student organizations.
- Inflationary adjustments to national board certification bonuses.
- Certain teacher mentorship and assistance activities.

**Hearing Date:** 4/14/09

**Staff:** Ben Rarick (786-7349)

**Background:**

**Diagnostic Assessment Tools**

In the 2007-09 Operating Budget, funding was provided to make diagnostic assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, and science in elementary, middle, and high school grades available to school districts. The budget provided \$4.9 million to support two forms of diagnostic tools: a) the development and implementation of classroom-based diagnostic assessments and progress monitoring tools for all subject areas included in the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), and b) allocations to school districts to purchase diagnostic tools which supplemented the progress monitoring tools developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

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Diagnostic assessments are distinguished from standardized assessments in that they emphasize formative rather than summative information about student progress. They typically provide information to educators more quickly than a standardized assessment, and are often used to make mid-course modifications in instruction and identify specific subject-area strands where students are struggling.

### **Classified Staff Training**

The Paraprofessional Training Program has provided professional development to paraeducators statewide since 1999. Training is provided at the district and regional levels to address time, budget, and geographic travel constraints of school districts and paraeducators. The funding supports grants to all of the Educational Service Districts (ESDs) to provide the regional paraeducator training opportunities. The fiscal year 2008 appropriation for this program was \$548,000. All nine ESDs are currently participating in the program. The professional development opportunities are designed to prepare paraeducators to assist certified teachers in the classroom, and includes content on the following topics: a) reading and literacy, b) mathematics; c) behavior management; d) autism; e) English Language Learners; and f) student motivation.

### **Professional Development Programs**

The OSPI must create partnerships with ESDs and institutions of higher education to develop and deliver professional development learning opportunities for educators that fulfill the goals of a statute that pertains to the expected outcomes of Learning Improvement Days.

### **Career and Technical Student Organizations**

The state provides funding to the OSPI to assist with statewide coordination of a variety of career and technical student organizations (CTSOs). They include Future Farmers of America (FFA), Skills USA-VICA, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Washington State DECA – an Association of Marketing Students, and Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). This funding levels provides about \$20,000 to each CTSO for statewide coordination expenses.

### **National Board Bonus Inflationary Increases**

Teachers in the state of Washington who earn certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) are eligible for two bonuses above their base teacher salary. A base bonus of \$5,000 for NBPTS certified teachers was established beginning in the 2007-2008 school year and, by statute, is to be adjusted for inflation every year thereafter. Additionally, NBPTS certified teachers are also eligible for an additional \$5,000 bonus if they work in a high poverty school, which is defined as an elementary school with a free or reduced priced lunch eligibility rate exceeding 70 percent of enrollment, a middle school rate exceeding 60 percent of enrollment, and a high school rate exceeding 50 percent of enrollment.

### **Teacher Mentorship and assistance activities**

The Teacher Assistance (Peer Mentoring) Program (TAP) provides beginning educators with mentoring support as they acclimate to the profession. The program is designed to improve the retention of new teachers in the teaching profession. The program provides a variety of services and supports to new teachers, including: a) orientation to school and district culture and professional expectations; b) mentorship from veteran teachers or educational staff associates; c) release time for the mentor to observe and provide feedback to the mentee; d) professional development on topics relevant to the needs of beginning teachers, such as classroom management, and tailoring instruction to specialized populations of students; and e) assistance in developing a professional growth plan.

An amount of \$2.348 million was allocated for fiscal year 2009 in the operating budget. During the 2007-08 school year, according to OSPI, 2,745 beginning teachers received assistance from the Teacher Assistance Program.

**Summary of Bill:**

The OSPI's duty to implement several K-12 programs is made subject to available funding. The affected programs are:

- Diagnostic assessments tools.
- Classified staff training.
- Certain professional development programs established in RCW 28A.415.350.
- Coordination for career and technical student organizations.
- Adjustments to national board certification bonuses.
- Certain teacher mentorship and assistance activities required by RCW 28A.415.250.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on April 11, 2009.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2009.