

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5947

As Reported By House Committee On:

Higher Education

Title: An act relating to faculty salary increments for community and technical colleges.

Brief Description: Providing a specific funding mechanism for making additional community and technical college faculty salary increment awards.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Bauer, Kohl, Moyer, Palmer, Prince, Sheldon, Gaspard, Snyder, Drew, Sutherland and Winsley; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/20/96, 2/23/96 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Mulliken, Vice Chairman; Mason, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Blanton; Delvin; Goldsmith; Mastin; Scheuerman and Sheahan.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: Salary increments are pay increases which are based on years of service and, in some pay systems, educational attainment.

Classified employees within the state personnel system receive 5 percent increments for each year of service for a total of five steps for each position. Classified employee increments are not funded by the Legislature with the assumption that employee turnover and other savings are sufficient to support the increases. Classified staff in the K-12 system receive increments based on local collective bargaining agreements. Increments are not funded through the state funding formula; turnover and other locally available sources are used for classified increment costs.

Certificated instructional staff in the K-12 system receive step increments for longevity and educational attainment; these increments are funded through the state allocation system. Although the allocation formula is used for state funding purposes, salaries for certificated staff are negotiated at the local level through collective

bargaining. However, approximately two-thirds of the school districts have adopted the state allocation schedule.

Faculty salaries in community colleges are negotiated through collective bargaining. State law limits salary increases related to these agreements to the percentage established by the Legislature in the appropriations act. The law further states that the collective bargaining agreements are not binding upon future actions of the Legislature. Because the increases are limited to specific appropriations, the use of turnover savings for salary increments is prohibited. Consequently, increments have been foregone when no salary increases have been provided. Subsequent salary increases were then obligated, by the local agreements, to fund the deferred increments. As a result, there were periods when faculty no longer eligible for increments received little or no cost-of-living adjustments even though legislative appropriation was provided for salary increases. This situation occurred in 1986 and 1987.

The Legislature has provided funds specifically for community college faculty increments in 1991, 1992, and 1994. At these times language was included in the appropriations act which overrode the statutory provision prohibiting the use of turnover savings for faculty increments.

Faculty at Washington's public four-year institutions receive salary steps as the basis for performance increases in response to market conditions. However, increments as used in the K-12 and community college systems are not integral to their policies nor funded by the Legislature in the institution's budget.

Summary of Bill: It is the Legislature's intent that community college faculty increment costs, less turnover savings, be funded by legislative appropriation up to the amount of 1.5 percent of the faculty salary base.

The biennial budgets submitted by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges shall include the cost to fund faculty increments calculated on the basis of an estimate of turnover savings which may be applied to cost. The board will distribute the funds, recognizing turnover savings, in a fair and equitable manner. The board will convene a task force to advise the board on guidelines for fair and equitable distribution.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: We need a uniform policy for community college faculty. The funding has been sporadic which makes it difficult to negotiate. The estimated cost is \$1.5 million per year. Passage of this legislation will reduce the disparity between the community college faculty and K-12 instructors. This bill goes a long way to correct inequities. The bill will establish a regular funding mechanism.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Dr. Henry Kirk, President, Centralia Community College (pro); Carolyn Keck, Community College Trustees Association (pro); Lenore Vest, Washington Education Association (pro); Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Federation of Teachers (pro); and Laura Siebuhr and Susan Hoyne, faculty members Centralia Community College (pro).