

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1778

As Passed House

March 11, 1997

Title: An act relating to the formula for determining certificated instructional staff salaries in basic education and special education programs.

Brief Description: Changing the formula for determining average salaries for certificated instructional staff.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Huff, H. Sommers, Alexander, Benson, Clements, Wensman and O'Brien; by request of Office of Financial Management).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/19/97, 2/25/97 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/11/97, 77-20.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Huff, Chairman; Alexander, Vice Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Wensman, Vice Chairman; H. Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Doumit, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gombosky, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Benson; Chopp; Cody; Crouse; Dyer; Kenney; Kessler; Lambert; Linville; Lisk; Mastin; McMorris; Parlette; Poulsen; Regala; D. Schmidt; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott and Tokuda.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Carlson and Keiser.

Staff: Jack Daray (786-7178).

Background: The state makes payments to school districts for basic education (apportionment program) certificated instructional staff salaries based on a state salary allocation schedule. This salary allocation schedule is used by the state to account for differences in the education and experience of each district's certificated instructional staff. Typically, the greater the experience and education of such staff, the higher the pay.

State funding for special education certificated instructional staff is based on state salary allocations for basic education staff. The experience and education of special education staff is not included in the calculation of the average salary for state allocation purposes. As a result, the special education program is over-funded in some school districts and under-funded in others. This problem was created in 1995 when the Legislature changed the special education funding formula to be based on a percentage of basic education funding per student.

There is a state salary compliance law which states that the actual average salary paid to a district's basic education certificated instructional staff may not exceed the district's average salary used by the state for basic education allocation purposes.

Summary of Bill: Special education certificated instructional staff are included with basic education certificated instructional staff in determining a school district's average salary for state allocation purposes.

The state salary compliance law is amended to combine basic and special education staff in determining a school district's maximum average salary for certificated instructional staff in these programs.

The change in state salary cost calculations and allocations would be approximately \$11.5 million in 1997-99.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This bill would correct the problem of penalizing districts with junior staff. The proposed remedy would penalize districts with senior staff. The best way to implement this is in a year when there is a salary increase. If it is implemented in a zero year, some districts would receive less money.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Alan Jones, Office of Financial Management; and Karen Davis, Washington Education Association.