
SENATE BILL 5546

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators Llias, Hasegawa, Chase, Conway, Rolfes, McAuliffe, Kohl-Welles, and Keiser

Read first time 01/23/15. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing competitive wages for beginning
2 teacher salaries; amending RCW 28A.400.200; and creating a new
3 section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The Washington Constitution establishes
6 "the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the
7 education of all children" Providing quality education for all
8 children in Washington requires well-qualified and dedicated school
9 employees. In *McCleary v. State of Washington*, the supreme court
10 found that the state allocation for salaries fell short of the actual
11 cost of recruiting and retaining high quality educators. The number
12 one priority identified by the state's compensation technical work
13 group was the need to increase starting salaries for educators in
14 order to attract a wider pool of the highest quality candidates. A
15 comparable wage analysis indicated that beginning salaries allocated
16 by the state were more than fifteen thousand dollars below what was
17 needed for competitive salaries among comparable professions. In the
18 supreme court's *McCleary* order from January 9, 2014, which was filed
19 after the work of the compensation technical working group, the
20 supreme court found that "the inescapable fact is that salaries for
21 educators in Washington are no better now than when this case went to

1 trial." The legislature intends to ensure that beginning teacher
2 salaries are amply funded to attract and retain the highest quality
3 educators by increasing state allocations and districts' minimum pay
4 requirements for beginning educators to the comparable wage
5 established by the compensation technical work group as adjusted for
6 inflation.

7 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.400.200 and 2010 c 235 s 401 are each amended to
8 read as follows:

9 (1) Every school district board of directors shall fix, alter,
10 allow, and order paid salaries and compensation for all district
11 employees in conformance with this section.

12 (2)(a) Salaries for certificated instructional staff shall not be
13 less than the salary provided in the appropriations act in the
14 statewide salary allocation schedule for an employee with a
15 baccalaureate degree and zero years of service(~~(+and)~~).

16 (b) Salaries for certificated instructional staff with a master's
17 degree shall not be less than the salary provided in the
18 appropriations act in the statewide salary allocation schedule for an
19 employee with a master's degree and zero years of service.

20 (c)(i) In the 2017-18 school year, the minimum salary for any
21 level of experience and education provided in any salary allocation
22 model used in state funding formulas for certificated instructional
23 staff allocations shall not be less than the beginning educator pay
24 recommendations from the compensation technical working group report
25 from 2012 adjusted for inflation since the release of the report.

26 (ii) For the 2015-16 school year through the 2017-18 school year,
27 the phase in of the new minimum salary allocation shall be made in
28 generally equal annual increments necessary to achieve the full phase
29 in of beginning educator pay recommendations adjusted for inflation
30 by the 2017-18 school year.

31 (iii) The compensation technical working group's salary
32 allocation recommendations were based on comparable wage analyses
33 from the time of the report. When fully enacted in the 2017-18 school
34 year, the minimum salary allocation for any level of experience and
35 education shall adjust the forty-eight thousand six hundred eighty-
36 seven dollars beginning educator allocation recommended in the report
37 for annual cost-of-living increases from the 2011-12 school year to
38 the 2017-18 school year using the cost-of-living index.

1 (iv) For the purposes of this subsection (2)(c), "cost-of-living
2 index" means, for any school year, the previous calendar year's
3 annual average consumer price index, using the official current base,
4 compiled by the bureau of labor statistics, United States department
5 of labor for the state of Washington. If the bureau of labor
6 statistics develops more than one consumer price index for areas
7 within the state, the index covering the greatest number of people,
8 covering areas exclusively within the boundaries of the state, and
9 including all items shall be used for the cost-of-living index in
10 this section.

11 (3)(a) The actual average salary paid to certificated
12 instructional staff shall not exceed the district's average
13 certificated instructional staff salary used for the state basic
14 education allocations for that school year as determined pursuant to
15 RCW 28A.150.410.

16 (b) Fringe benefit contributions for certificated instructional
17 staff shall be included as salary under (a) of this subsection only
18 to the extent that the district's actual average benefit contribution
19 exceeds the amount of the insurance benefits allocation provided per
20 certificated instructional staff unit in the state operating
21 appropriations act in effect at the time the compensation is payable.
22 For purposes of this section, fringe benefits shall not include
23 payment for unused leave for illness or injury under RCW 28A.400.210;
24 employer contributions for old age survivors insurance, workers'
25 compensation, unemployment compensation, and retirement benefits
26 under the Washington state retirement system; or employer
27 contributions for health benefits in excess of the insurance benefits
28 allocation provided per certificated instructional staff unit in the
29 state operating appropriations act in effect at the time the
30 compensation is payable. A school district may not use state funds to
31 provide employer contributions for such excess health benefits.

32 (c) Salary and benefits for certificated instructional staff in
33 programs other than basic education shall be consistent with the
34 salary and benefits paid to certificated instructional staff in the
35 basic education program.

36 (4) Salaries and benefits for certificated instructional staff
37 may exceed the limitations in subsection (3) of this section only by
38 separate contract for additional time, for additional
39 responsibilities, for incentives, or for implementing specific
40 measurable innovative activities, including professional development,

1 specified by the school district to: (a) Close one or more
2 achievement gaps, (b) focus on development of science, technology,
3 engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning opportunities, or (c)
4 provide arts education. Beginning September 1, 2011, school districts
5 shall annually provide a brief description of the innovative
6 activities included in any supplemental contract to the office of the
7 superintendent of public instruction. The office of the
8 superintendent of public instruction shall summarize the district
9 information and submit an annual report to the education committees
10 of the house of representatives and the senate. Supplemental
11 contracts shall not cause the state to incur any present or future
12 funding obligation. Supplemental contracts shall be subject to the
13 collective bargaining provisions of chapter 41.59 RCW and the
14 provisions of RCW 28A.405.240, shall not exceed one year, and if not
15 renewed shall not constitute adverse change in accordance with RCW
16 28A.405.300 through 28A.405.380. No district may enter into a
17 supplemental contract under this subsection for the provision of
18 services which are a part of the basic education program required by
19 Article IX, section 3 of the state Constitution.

20 (5) Employee benefit plans offered by any district shall comply
21 with RCW 28A.400.350 (~~and~~), 28A.400.275, and 28A.400.280.

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