AN ACT Relating to expanding the current and future educator workforce supply through evidence-based strategies to improve and incentivize the recruitment and retention of highly effective educators, especially in high-need subject, grade-level, and geographic areas, and to establish a cohesive continuum of high quality professional learning from preparation programs to job embedded induction, mentoring, collaboration, and other professional development opportunities; and creating new sections.

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

PART I

EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT

NEW SECTION. Sec. 101. (1) The legislature finds that, when the office of the superintendent of public instruction surveyed school district principals and human resource directors in the fall of 2016, districts reported that they are struggling to hire qualified classroom teachers and substitutes. The legislature finds that Washington produced nearly two thousand five hundred teachers in 2015, however, the estimated annual shortfall in needed teachers is expected to be approximately three thousand five hundred annually if current trends continue.
(2) The legislature acknowledges that a comprehensive effort is needed to repair the current, disjointed system for attracting the following individuals into certificated educator professions: High school students and undergraduate students who have not chosen a career, subject matter experts looking for a career change, former military personnel, paraeducators and other classified staff, and educators from out-of-state. The legislature finds that discrete efforts are being made at the state and local level to solve the educator shortage, but these efforts need to be streamlined and performed in concert, in order to enhance the recruitment effect.

(3) The legislature finds that effective educators who share their love of learning inspire students into the teaching profession. The legislature further finds that every category and level of educator should support and inspire the next generation into careers in education.

(4) The legislature recognizes that the state is facing a short-term recruitment problem with the immediate need to fill classroom vacancies, but that it must also plan to solve its long-term recruitment problem by creating a pipeline of interested individuals entering, and remaining in, the educator workforce.

PART II
EDUCATOR RETENTION

NEW SECTION. Sec. 201. (1) The legislature finds that problems with educator retention within a school or school district are largely an issue of school and district climate. The legislature recognizes certain actions from the legislature, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, and school districts communicate trust and respect for educators, including creating opportunities for professional dialogue and fostering learning environments. The legislature finds that educators are professionals who should be trusted to make decisions about their own professional development.

(2) The legislature finds that the most successful education systems have robust, well-educated workforces, thus mentoring and professional learning opportunities for educators should be systematized. The legislature acknowledges that teachers in these successful education systems do not spend all their hours teaching, rather the teachers are provided with time for professional
development, collaboration with colleagues, mentoring and being mentored, and researching to improve the profession. The legislature further finds that effective educators should have the chance to share their experiences with beginning educators. The legislature acknowledges that effective educators desire the opportunities to communicate their experiences with others as a way to express the joy they often associate with being an educator and with teaching and as a way to strategize solutions to difficult professional experiences. The legislature further finds that educators who are given time to collaborate with their colleagues through professional learning communities are more satisfied with their chosen career and tend to stay in the same school or district.

(3) The legislature recognizes that educators have never been under the demands and scrutiny that they are under now. The legislature acknowledges that the demands on educators must be balanced with an encouragement of their excitement for the profession. The legislature further finds that most educators want to improve students' lives through education, and the school system should empower educators to be able to carry out this desire.

PART III

EVALUATION OF EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

NEW SECTION. Sec. 301. (1) The legislature finds that the process for evaluating educator effectiveness should be considered as a method for awarding additional compensation to educators. The legislature further finds that professional growth should be rewarded with increased compensation.

(2) The legislature recognizes that the four-level rating evaluation system implemented for classroom teachers and principals should be the model for improving the effectiveness of all educators. The legislature finds that this evaluation system is working and is growing the skill sets that will keep teachers and principals in the profession.

(3) The legislature finds that certain educator certification requirements do not improve educator effectiveness to the extent that the four-level evaluation system does.
PART IV
EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

NEW SECTION. Sec. 401. (1) The legislature finds that there is a misalignment between what is required of educators and what they are rewarded for. The legislature acknowledges that parallel pathways for obtaining the various educator certificates should require similar effort and be rewarded equally.

(2) The legislature finds that educators should be appropriately compensated or acknowledged for completing requirements to maintain their educator certificates.

PART V
INCENTIVES AND ASSISTANCE FOR EDUCATORS

NEW SECTION. Sec. 501. The legislature finds that incentives, encouragements, assistance, and supports for educators must be related explicitly and directly back to the legislature's objectives for educator recruitment, retention, professional learning, evaluation for effectiveness, and certification.

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