

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2775

As Reported by House Committee On:

Education
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to bonuses for certain instructional staff certified by the national board for professional teaching standards.

Brief Description: Regarding bonuses for instructional staff certified by the national board for professional teaching standards.

Sponsors: Representatives Barlow, Moeller, Wood, O'Brien, Ormsby, Hasegawa, Green, Seaquist, Goodman, Roberts, Lantz, Sullivan, McIntire and Kelley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/31/08, 2/1/08 [DP];

Appropriations: 2/11/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Reduces the school poverty threshold for nationally-certified instructional staff to receive an additional \$5,000 bonus from 70 percent free or reduced lunch (FRL) in all schools to 60 percent FRL in middle schools and 50 percent FRL in high schools.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Lias, Roach and Sullivan.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Santos.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is a national, nonprofit organization that has developed standards for highly accomplished teaching and a voluntary system to certify teachers who meet those standards. There are also NBPTS certificates for librarians and school counselors.

In 2007 the Legislature provided in statute that certificated instructional staff who have attained NBPTS certification will receive a bonus each year they maintain the certification. The bonus is \$5,000 in 2007-08 and increases annually by inflation. Those NBPTS-certified staff in an instructional assignment in a school where at least 70 percent of the students qualify for federal free or reduced lunch (FRL) receive an additional \$5,000 bonus.

According to figures from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), there are 148 individuals eligible to receive the additional bonus. Of the 287 schools in the state that meet the poverty threshold, a disproportionate number are elementary schools. There are 200 elementary schools, 35 middle schools, and 22 high schools with 70 percent FRL students.

Summary of Bill:

Beginning with the 2007-08 school year, the school poverty threshold of 70 percent FRL students for NBPTS-certified staff to receive an additional \$5,000 bonus is reduced to at least 60 percent FRL students in middle schools and at least 50 percent FRL students in high schools.

The OSPI must adopt a standard definition of elementary, middle, and high schools when implementing these provisions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Middle and high school teachers have a hard time qualifying for the additional bonus because older students tend not to sign up for free or reduced lunch, even if they are poor. There are many examples where all of the feeder elementary schools reach the threshold, but the middle or high school does not. These are the same children, and these schools face the same challenges. We need to recognize the challenges of poverty and provide the very best teachers in these schools.

(Concerns) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Barlow, prime sponsor; Kelly Cannard, Vancouver School District; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; Michaela Miller, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Kim McClung, Kent-Meridian High School.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 32 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Dunshee, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Chandler, Cody, Conway, Darneille, Ericks, Fromhold, Grant, Green, Haigh, Hinkle, Hunt, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Kretz, Linville, McIntire, Morrell, Pettigrew, Priest, Ross, Schmick, Schual-Berke, Seaquist, Sullivan and Walsh.

Staff: Ben Rarick (786-7349).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Education:

A null and void clause was added, making the bill null and void unless funded in the budget.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The national board bonuses provide an effective tool to attract and retain high quality teaching staff. The issue is that high schools and middle schools are under-represented among schools with free and reduced price lunch eligibility rates exceeding 70 percent. During the summer, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction looked at several solutions, including other data sources. There are a number of other data sources that would work but the formula might become unnecessarily complicated. This change would address the issue in a relatively simple way. The bonuses are in statute now and the number of teachers pursuing National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification has increased substantially this year. Correcting this issue will be important to attract good teachers to teach in the schools they are needed most.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jennifer Priddy, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.