

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6418

As Passed Senate, February 18, 2014

Title: An act relating to creating flexibility for the educator retooling conditional scholarship program.

Brief Description: Creating flexibility for the educator retooling conditional scholarship program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Litzow, Fain, Dammeier, Angel, Tom, Bailey, Becker and Mullet).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/24/14, 1/27/14 [DPS-WM].
Passed Senate: 2/18/14, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6418 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Rolfes, Assistant Ranking Member; Billig, Brown, Cleveland, Fain, Hill, Mullet and Rivers.

Staff: Eric Wolf (786-7405)

Background: The Professional Educator Standards Board offers a conditional scholarship to current K-12 teachers and individuals having an elementary education certificate but who are not employed in positions requiring their certificate to pursue endorsements in high-demand mathematics and science endorsement areas. Current K-12 teachers may use the conditional scholarship money to pursue endorsements in secondary mathematics or science, or both, and middle-level mathematics or science, or both. Individuals with an unused elementary education certificate may use the conditional scholarship money to pursue endorsements in middle-level mathematics or science, or both. Each conditional scholarship recipient may receive up to \$3,000 per fiscal year for each conditional scholarship obtained to pay for endorsement tests and any observation or applicable coursework needed to attain the new endorsement.

The conditional scholarship is a loan that is forgiven for teacher service in the same endorsement area a scholarship recipient obtains certification. Teaching service must be in a

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Washington K-12 public school. The state forgives the loan obligation entirely if the recipient teaches in the endorsement area for two years per each scholarship they obtain. Teachers may receive multiple loans if they are pursuing endorsements in both mathematics and science.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Retooling to Teach Mathematics and Science Conditional Scholarship Program is renamed the Educator Retooling Conditional Scholarship Program.

Current K-12 teachers and individuals having an elementary education certificate but who are not employed in positions requiring an elementary education certificate may receive a conditional scholarship to pursue special education, bilingual education, or English language learner endorsements in addition to mathematics and science endorsements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill creates flexibility in the scholarship program. The program was designed to help obtain mathematics and science endorsements when those areas were in critical demand. Now special education, bilingual education, and English language learner (ELL) endorsement needs are critical. Districts face the challenge of tight budgets and the scholarship program has helped districts by allowing them to retrain teachers so that they meet the needs of students in areas with teacher shortages. ELL is the fastest growing student population; one in four students will be an ELL in coming years. This bill will help close the opportunity gap.

Persons Testifying: PRO: David Brenna, Professional Educator Standards Board; Lucinda Young, WA Education Assn.; Emily Murphy, OneAmerica.