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**HOUSE BILL 2921**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2016 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Hickel, Stambaugh, Zeiger, Caldier, Kochmar, Haler, Magendanz, and Pollet

AN ACT Relating to expanding the professional educator workforce by increasing career opportunities in education, creating a more robust enrollment forecasting, and enhancing recruitment efforts; amending RCW 41.32.765, 41.32.875, 43.88C.010, 28A.660.050, and 28A.410.250; creating new sections; making an appropriation; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature acknowledges that the state is facing an unpreceded shortage of teachers and substitute teachers. According to a study by the professional educator standards board, nearly half of all new teachers leave the workforce within the first five years of teaching. The legislature recognizes that strengthening the educator workforce is essential to successfully implement ongoing educational reforms and increase student achievement. In order to accomplish this, the legislature finds an immediate need for allowing retired teachers to reenter the workforce without penalty of pension benefits, adequate student enrollment forecasting, additional funding for the alternative routes and educator retooling programs, and enhancements to recruitment.

**PART I**

**RETURNING TEACHERS**

**Sec.**  RCW 41.32.765 and 2012 1st sp.s. c 7 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) NORMAL RETIREMENT. Any member with at least five service credit years of service who has attained at least age sixty-five shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.760.

(2) EARLY RETIREMENT. Any member who has completed at least twenty service credit years of service who has attained at least age fifty-five shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.760, except that a member retiring pursuant to this subsection shall have the retirement allowance actuarially reduced to reflect the difference in the number of years between age at retirement and the attainment of age sixty-five.

(3) ALTERNATE EARLY RETIREMENT.

(a) Any member who has completed at least thirty service credit years and has attained age fifty-five shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.760, except that a member retiring pursuant to this subsection shall have the retirement allowance reduced by three percent per year to reflect the difference in the number of years between age at retirement and the attainment of age sixty-five.

(b) On or after September 1, 2008, any member who has completed at least thirty service credit years and has attained age fifty-five shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.760, except that a member retiring pursuant to this subsection shall have the retirement allowance reduced as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Retirement  Age | Percent  Reduction | |
| 55 | 20% |  |
| 56 | 17% |  |
| 57 | 14% |  |
| 58 | 11% |  |
| 59 | 8% |  |
| 60 | 5% |  |
| 61 | 2% |  |
| 62 | 0% |  |
| 63 | 0% |  |
| 64 | 0% |  |

Any member who retires under the provisions of this subsection is ineligible for the postretirement employment provisions of RCW 41.32.802(2) until the retired member has reached sixty-five years of age. For purposes of this subsection, employment with an employer also includes any personal service contract, service by an employer as a temporary or project employee, or any other similar compensated relationship with any employer included under the provisions of RCW 41.32.800(1). Beginning July 1, 2016, and until June 30, 2018, employment with an employer for the purposes of this subsection shall not include employment as a substitute teacher as defined in RCW 41.32.010.

The subsidized reductions for alternate early retirement in this subsection as set forth in section 2, chapter 491, Laws of 2007 were intended by the legislature as replacement benefits for gain-sharing. Until there is legal certainty with respect to the repeal of chapter 41.31A RCW, the right to retire under this subsection is noncontractual, and the legislature reserves the right to amend or repeal this subsection. Legal certainty includes, but is not limited to, the expiration of any: Applicable limitations on actions; and periods of time for seeking appellate review, up to and including reconsideration by the Washington supreme court and the supreme court of the United States. Until that time, eligible members may still retire under this subsection, and upon receipt of the first installment of a retirement allowance computed under this subsection, the resulting benefit becomes contractual for the recipient. If the repeal of chapter 41.31A RCW is held to be invalid in a final determination of a court of law, and the court orders reinstatement of gain-sharing or other alternate benefits as a remedy, then retirement benefits for any member who has completed at least thirty service credit years and has attained age fifty-five but has not yet received the first installment of a retirement allowance under this subsection shall be computed using the reductions in (a) of this subsection.

(c) Members who first become employed by an employer in an eligible position on or after May 1, 2013, are not eligible for the alternate early retirement provisions of (a) or (b) of this subsection. Any member who first becomes employed by an employer in an eligible position on or after May 1, 2013, and has completed at least thirty service credit years and has attained age fifty-five shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.760, except that a member retiring pursuant to this subsection shall have the retirement allowance reduced by five percent per year to reflect the difference in the number of years between age at retirement and the attainment of age sixty-five.

**Sec.**  RCW 41.32.875 and 2012 1st sp.s. c 7 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) NORMAL RETIREMENT. Any member who is at least age sixty-five and who has:

(a) Completed ten service credit years; or

(b) Completed five service credit years, including twelve service credit months after attaining age forty-four; or

(c) Completed five service credit years by July 1, 1996, under plan 2 and who transferred to plan 3 under RCW 41.32.817;

shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.840.

(2) EARLY RETIREMENT. Any member who has attained at least age fifty-five and has completed at least ten years of service shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.840, except that a member retiring pursuant to this subsection shall have the retirement allowance actuarially reduced to reflect the difference in the number of years between age at retirement and the attainment of age sixty-five.

(3) ALTERNATE EARLY RETIREMENT.

(a) Any member who has completed at least thirty service credit years and has attained age fifty-five shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.840, except that a member retiring pursuant to this subsection shall have the retirement allowance reduced by three percent per year to reflect the difference in the number of years between age at retirement and the attainment of age sixty-five.

(b) On or after September 1, 2008, any member who has completed at least thirty service credit years and has attained age fifty-five shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.840, except that a member retiring pursuant to this subsection shall have the retirement allowance reduced as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Retirement  Age | Percent  Reduction | |
| 55 | 20% |  |
| 56 | 17% |  |
| 57 | 14% |  |
| 58 | 11% |  |
| 59 | 8% |  |
| 60 | 5% |  |
| 61 | 2% |  |
| 62 | 0% |  |
| 63 | 0% |  |
| 64 | 0% |  |

Any member who retires under the provisions of this subsection is ineligible for the postretirement employment provisions of RCW 41.32.862(2) until the retired member has reached sixty-five years of age. For purposes of this subsection, employment with an employer also includes any personal service contract, service by an employer as a temporary or project employee, or any other similar compensated relationship with any employer included under the provisions of RCW 41.32.860(1). Beginning July 1, 2016, and until June 30, 2018, employment with an employer for the purposes of this subsection shall not include employment as a substitute teacher as defined in RCW 41.32.010.

The subsidized reductions for alternate early retirement in this subsection as set forth in section 4, chapter 491, Laws of 2007 were intended by the legislature as replacement benefits for gain-sharing. Until there is legal certainty with respect to the repeal of chapter 41.31A RCW, the right to retire under this subsection is noncontractual, and the legislature reserves the right to amend or repeal this subsection. Legal certainty includes, but is not limited to, the expiration of any: Applicable limitations on actions; and periods of time for seeking appellate review, up to and including reconsideration by the Washington supreme court and the supreme court of the United States. Until that time, eligible members may still retire under this subsection, and upon receipt of the first installment of a retirement allowance computed under this subsection, the resulting benefit becomes contractual for the recipient. If the repeal of chapter 41.31A RCW is held to be invalid in a final determination of a court of law, and the court orders reinstatement of gain-sharing or other alternate benefits as a remedy, then retirement benefits for any member who has completed at least thirty service credit years and has attained age fifty-five but has not yet received the first installment of a retirement allowance under this subsection shall be computed using the reductions in (a) of this subsection.

(c) Members who first become employed by an employer in an eligible position on or after May 1, 2013, are not eligible for the alternate early retirement provisions of (a) or (b) of this subsection. Any member who first becomes employed by an employer in an eligible position on or after May 1, 2013, and has completed at least thirty service credit years and has attained age fifty-five shall be eligible to retire and to receive a retirement allowance computed according to the provisions of RCW 41.32.840, except that a member retiring pursuant to this subsection shall have the retirement allowance reduced by five percent per year to reflect the difference in the number of years between age at retirement and the attainment of age sixty-five.

**PART II**

**STUDENT ENROLLMENT FORECASTING**

**Sec.**  RCW 43.88C.010 and 2015 c 128 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The caseload forecast council is hereby created. The council shall consist of two individuals appointed by the governor and four individuals, one of whom is appointed by the chairperson of each of the two largest political caucuses in the senate and house of representatives. The chair of the council shall be selected from among the four caucus appointees. The council may select such other officers as the members deem necessary.

(2) The council shall employ a caseload forecast supervisor to supervise the preparation of all caseload forecasts. As used in this chapter, "supervisor" means the caseload forecast supervisor.

(3) Approval by an affirmative vote of at least five members of the council is required for any decisions regarding employment of the supervisor. Employment of the supervisor shall terminate after each term of three years. At the end of the first year of each three-year term the council shall consider extension of the supervisor's term by one year. The council may fix the compensation of the supervisor. The supervisor shall employ staff sufficient to accomplish the purposes of this section.

(4) The caseload forecast council shall oversee the preparation of and approve, by an affirmative vote of at least four members, the official state caseload forecasts prepared under RCW 43.88C.020. If the council is unable to approve a forecast before a date required in RCW 43.88C.020, the supervisor shall submit the forecast without approval and the forecast shall have the same effect as if approved by the council.

(5) A councilmember who does not cast an affirmative vote for approval of the official caseload forecast may request, and the supervisor shall provide, an alternative forecast based on assumptions specified by the member.

(6) Members of the caseload forecast council shall serve without additional compensation but shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120 while attending sessions of the council or on official business authorized by the council. Nonlegislative members of the council shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(7) "Caseload," as used in this chapter, means:

(a) The number of persons expected to meet entitlement requirements and require the services of public assistance programs, state correctional institutions, state correctional noninstitutional supervision, state institutions for juvenile offenders, ((~~the common school system,~~)) long-term care, medical assistance, foster care, and adoption support;

(b) The number of students who are eligible for the Washington college bound scholarship program and are expected to attend an institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.92.030;

(c) The number of children who are eligible, as defined in RCW 43.215.405, to participate in, and the number of children actually served by, the early childhood education and assistance program; and

(d) The number of persons expected to meet entitlement requirements in the common school system, by school district and in total statewide. In determining district level forecasts, the council must consider a geographic information system solution and providing districts the ability to adjust the final forecast.

(8) The caseload forecast council shall forecast the temporary assistance for needy families and the working connections child care programs as a courtesy.

(9) The caseload forecast council shall forecast youth participating in the extended foster care program pursuant to RCW 74.13.031 separately from other children who are residing in foster care and who are under eighteen years of age.

(10) Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions provided in RCW 43.88.020 apply to this chapter.

**PART III**

**"GROW YOUR OWN" TEACHERS**

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.660.050 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 9 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for these purposes, the conditional scholarship programs in this chapter are created under the following guidelines:

(1) The programs shall be administered by the student achievement council. In administering the programs, the council has the following powers and duties:

(a) To adopt necessary rules and develop guidelines to administer the programs;

(b) To collect and manage repayments from participants who do not meet their service obligations; and

(c) To accept grants and donations from public and private sources for the programs.

(2) Requirements for participation in the conditional scholarship programs are as provided in this subsection (2).

(a) The alternative route conditional scholarship program is limited to interns of professional educator standards board-approved alternative routes to teaching programs under RCW 28A.660.040. For fiscal year 2011, priority must be given to fiscal year 2010 participants in the alternative route partnership program. In order to receive conditional scholarship awards, recipients shall:

(i) Be accepted and maintain enrollment in alternative certification routes through a professional educator standards board-approved program;

(ii) Continue to make satisfactory progress toward completion of the alternative route certification program and receipt of a residency teaching certificate; and

(iii) Receive no more than the annual amount of the scholarship, not to exceed eight thousand dollars, for the cost of tuition, fees, and educational expenses, including books, supplies, and transportation for the alternative route certification program in which the recipient is enrolled. The council may adjust the annual award by the average rate of resident undergraduate tuition and fee increases at the state universities as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

(b) The pipeline for paraeducators conditional scholarship program is limited to qualified paraeducators as provided by RCW 28A.660.042. In order to receive conditional scholarship awards, recipients shall:

(i) Be accepted and maintain enrollment at a community and technical college for no more than two years and attain an associate of arts degree;

(ii) Continue to make satisfactory progress toward completion of an associate of arts degree. This progress requirement is a condition for eligibility into a route one program of the alternative routes to teacher certification program for a mathematics, special education, or English as a second language endorsement; and

(iii) Receive no more than the annual amount of the scholarship, not to exceed four thousand dollars, for the cost of tuition, fees, and educational expenses, including books, supplies, and transportation for the alternative route certification program in which the recipient is enrolled. The student achievement council may adjust the annual award by the average rate of tuition and fee increases at the state community and technical colleges.

(c) The educator retooling conditional scholarship program is limited to current K-12 teachers. In order to receive conditional scholarship awards:

(i) Individuals currently employed as teachers shall pursue an endorsement in a subject or geographic endorsement shortage area, as defined by the professional educator standards board, including but not limited to((~~,~~)) mathematics, science, special education, elementary education, early childhood education, bilingual education, English language learner, computer science education, or environmental and sustainability education; or

(ii) Individuals who are certificated with an elementary education endorsement shall pursue an endorsement in a subject or geographic endorsement shortage area, as defined by the professional educator standards board, including but not limited to((~~,~~)) mathematics, science, special education, bilingual education, English language learner, computer science education, or environmental and sustainability education; and

(iii) Individuals shall use one of the pathways to endorsement processes to receive an endorsement in a subject or geographic endorsement shortage area, as defined by the professional educator standards board, including but not limited to((~~,~~)) mathematics, science, special education, bilingual education, English language learner, computer science education, or environmental and sustainability education, which shall include passing an endorsement test plus observation and completing applicable coursework to attain the proper endorsement; and

(iv) Individuals shall receive no more than the annual amount of the scholarship, not to exceed three thousand dollars, for the cost of tuition, test fees, and educational expenses, including books, supplies, and transportation for the endorsement pathway being pursued.

(3) The Washington professional educator standards board shall select individuals to receive conditional scholarships. In selecting recipients, preference shall be given to eligible veterans or national guard members. In awarding conditional scholarships to support additional bilingual education or English language learner endorsements, the board shall also give preference to teachers assigned to schools required under state or federal accountability measures to implement a plan for improvement, and to teachers assigned to schools whose enrollment of English language learner students has increased an average of more than five percent per year over the previous three years.

(4) For the purpose of this chapter, a conditional scholarship is a loan that is forgiven in whole or in part in exchange for service as a certificated teacher employed in a Washington state K-12 public school. The state shall forgive one year of loan obligation for every two years a recipient teaches in a public school. Recipients who fail to continue a course of study leading to residency teacher certification or cease to teach in a public school in the state of Washington in their endorsement area are required to repay the remaining loan principal with interest.

(5) Recipients who fail to fulfill the required teaching obligation are required to repay the remaining loan principal with interest and any other applicable fees. The student achievement council shall adopt rules to define the terms for repayment, including applicable interest rates, fees, and deferments.

(6) The student achievement council may deposit all appropriations, collections, and any other funds received for the program in this chapter in the future teachers conditional scholarship account authorized in RCW 28B.102.080.

**PART IV**

**TEACHER RECRUITMENT**

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.410.250 and 2005 c 498 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

The agency responsible for educator certification shall adopt rules for professional certification that:

(1) Provide maximum program choice for applicants, promote portability among programs, and promote maximum efficiency for applicants in attaining professional certification;

(2) Require professional certification no earlier than the fifth year following the year that the teacher first completes provisional status, with an automatic two-year extension upon enrollment;

(3) Grant professional certification to any teacher who attains certification from the national board for professional teaching standards;

(4) Permit any teacher currently enrolled in or participating in a program leading to professional certification to continue the program under administrative rules in place when the teacher began the program;

(5) Provide criteria for the approval of educational service districts, beginning no later than August 31, 2007, to offer programs leading to professional certification. The rules shall be written to encourage institutions of higher education and educational service districts to partner with local school districts or consortia of school districts, as appropriate, to provide instruction for teachers seeking professional certification;

(6) Encourage institutions of higher education to offer professional certificate coursework as continuing education credit hours. This shall not prevent an institution of higher education from providing the option of including the professional certification requirements as part of a master's degree program;

(7) Provide criteria for a liaison relationship between approved programs and school districts in which applicants are employed;

(8) Identify an expedited professional certification process for out-of-state teachers who have five years or more of successful teaching experience ((~~to demonstrate skills and impact on student learning commensurate with Washington requirements for professional certification. The rules may require these teachers, within one year of the time they begin to teach in the state's public schools, take a course in or show evidence that they can teach to the state's essential academic learning requirements~~)). A professional certificate must be issued to these experienced out-of-state teachers if:

(a) The teacher holds a valid teaching certificate issued by the national board for professional teaching standards; or

(b) The teacher has a second-level teacher certificate from another state; and

(9) Identify an evaluation process of approved programs that includes a review of the program coursework and applicant coursework load requirements, linkages of programs to individual teacher professional growth plans, linkages to school district and school improvement plans, and, to the extent possible, linkages to school district professional enrichment and growth programs for teachers, where such programs are in place in school districts. The agency shall provide a preliminary report on the evaluation process to the senate and house of representatives committees on education policy by November 1, 2005. The board shall identify:

(a) A process for awarding conditional approval of a program that shall include annual evaluations of the program until the program is awarded full approval;

(b) A less intensive evaluation cycle every three years once a program receives full approval unless the responsible agency has reason to intensify the evaluation;

(c) A method for investigating programs that have received numerous complaints from students enrolled in the program and from those recently completing the program;

(d) A method for investigating programs at the reasonable discretion of the agency; and

(e) A method for using, in the evaluation, both program completer satisfaction responses and data on the impact of educators who have obtained professional certification on student work and achievement.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with school districts, educational service districts, and other state agencies, shall develop and implement a comprehensive, statewide initiative to increase the number of qualified individuals who apply for teaching positions in Washington. In developing and implementing the initiative, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, in partnership with the employment security department, shall:

(a) Develop and implement a teacher recruitment campaign that targets individuals with teaching certificates who are not employed as teachers, undergraduate college students who have not chosen a major, out-of-state teachers, military personnel and their spouses, and other groups of individuals who may be interested in teaching in Washington public schools;

(b) Incorporate certificated positions into the employment security department's existing web-based depository for job applications that allows for access by school districts in the state for purposes of hiring teachers and other certificated positions; and

(c) Create or enhance an existing web site that provides useful information to individuals who are interested in teaching in Washington.

(2) This section expires July 1, 2018.

**PART V**

**MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The sum of one million dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, from the general fund to the professional educator standards board in support of the alternative route and educator retooling programs under chapter 28A.660 RCW.

**--- END ---**