
SENATE BILL 5415

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators McAuliffe, Mullet, Chase, Rolfes, McCoy, Billig, Lias, Fraser, Cleveland, Keiser, and Conway

Read first time 01/21/15. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to professional educator learning days; amending
2 RCW 28A.150.200; adding a new section to chapter 28A.150 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes that
6 research shows that an inspiring and informed educator and strong
7 school-based principal leadership are important school-related
8 factors influencing student achievement. The legislature further
9 recognizes that the ongoing educational reform efforts enacted by the
10 legislature, including the teacher and principal evaluation efforts,
11 the common core state standards for instruction and assessment,
12 school-level reform approaches, and other reform programs and
13 activities, present new challenges for principals and educators.

14 (2) The legislature finds that because research shows that high-
15 quality educators are so important for student success, that ongoing
16 training and professional development is essential to support
17 educators and increase student learning. The legislature further
18 finds that part of the plan for meeting the constitutional
19 obligations to fully fund a program of basic education must therefore
20 include increased professional development and training in order to
21 give educators and principals the tools they need to be successful

1 with the new reforms already established. The legislature further
2 finds that the Washington state institute for public policy reported
3 that content-specific professional development is much more effective
4 than general training. The legislature also finds that providing a
5 clear topic for professional development each biennium will better
6 align and support educators across the state's school districts and
7 schools and will ensure state resources are used in a manner that is
8 proven to positively impact student learning.

9 (3) Therefore, the legislature intends to provide additional time
10 and resources for content-specific professional learning days for
11 each state-funded certificated instructional staff and school
12 building-based administrator to increase his or her knowledge and
13 skills in the areas of current and future educational reforms. The
14 legislature further intends to phase-in time and resources for state-
15 funded classified employees who are engaged in student instruction.

16 (4) The goal of the legislature is to provide a sufficient number
17 of professional learning days necessary to meet the needs in
18 Washington's schools and to designate the professional learning days
19 to be part of basic education.

20 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.150.200 and 2009 c 548 s 101 are each amended to
21 read as follows:

22 (1) The program of basic education established under this chapter
23 is deemed by the legislature to comply with the requirements of
24 Article IX, section 1 of the state Constitution, which states that
25 "It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for
26 the education of all children residing within its borders, without
27 distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex,"
28 and is adopted pursuant to Article IX, section 2 of the state
29 Constitution, which states that "The legislature shall provide for a
30 general and uniform system of public schools."

31 (2) The legislature defines the program of basic education under
32 this chapter as that which is necessary to provide the opportunity to
33 develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the state-
34 established high school graduation requirements that are intended to
35 allow students to have the opportunity to graduate with a meaningful
36 diploma that prepares them for postsecondary education, gainful
37 employment, and citizenship. Basic education by necessity is an
38 evolving program of instruction intended to reflect the changing

1 educational opportunities that are needed to equip students for their
2 role as productive citizens and includes the following:

3 (a) The instructional program of basic education the minimum
4 components of which are described in RCW 28A.150.220;

5 (b) The program of education provided by chapter 28A.190 RCW for
6 students in residential schools as defined by RCW 28A.190.020 and for
7 juveniles in detention facilities as identified by RCW 28A.190.010;

8 (c) The program of education provided by chapter 28A.193 RCW for
9 individuals under the age of eighteen who are incarcerated in adult
10 correctional facilities; (~~and~~)

11 (d) Transportation and transportation services to and from school
12 for eligible students as provided under RCW 28A.160.150 through
13 28A.160.180; and

14 (e) Professional learning days as provided under section 3 of
15 this act.

16 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 28A.150
17 RCW to read as follows:

18 (1)(a) Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, the legislature
19 shall annually provide additional time and resources for high-
20 quality, content-specific, professional learning days for each state-
21 funded certificated instructional staff and school building-based
22 administrator to increase knowledge and skills in the areas of
23 current and future educational reforms. The minimum funding for a
24 professional learning day must be equivalent to the aggregate amount
25 provided for the state-funded salaries for each certificated
26 instructional staff and school-based administrator in the school
27 district for one full school day. School districts must be required
28 to expend the funds on professional learning activities but the
29 learning is not required to be accomplished in one full school day
30 and it may be organized in whatever time blocks the district chooses
31 so long as the total time equates to one full school day. The
32 learning improvement day must take place outside of the minimum one
33 hundred eighty-day school calendar.

34 (b) For the 2015-16 school year, the funds provided for a
35 professional learning day must be used for professional development
36 on the teacher and principal evaluation program under RCW
37 28A.405.100. School districts may select the topic for the
38 professional learning day for certificated instructional staff who
39 are not subject to evaluation under RCW 28A.405.100.

1 (c) For the 2016-17 school year, the funds provided under this
2 section shall be used for professional development on the best
3 practices for instruction of the common core state standards. School
4 districts may select the topic for the professional learning day for
5 certificated instructional staff who do not provide instruction in
6 the content areas or grade levels addressed by the common core state
7 standards.

8 (d) After the 2016-17 school year:

9 (i) The topics for the professional learning days funded under
10 this section must be specified in the omnibus appropriations act; and

11 (ii) The legislature will begin phasing-in a professional
12 learning day for state-funded classified employees who are engaged in
13 student instruction.

14 (A) The initial funds provided under this subsection (1)(d)(ii)
15 shall be used for professional development on best practices for
16 classified employees engaged with students with disabilities who
17 receive special education and students who are English language
18 learners.

19 (B) The professional development topics in subsequent years must
20 be specified in the omnibus appropriations act.

21 (2) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to
22 implement this section.

23 (3) The funding provided under this section shall be deemed to be
24 part of the legislature's definition of basic education under Article
25 IX of the state Constitution.

--- END ---