
Appropriations Committee

ESSB 6189

Brief Description: Concerning eligibility for school employees' benefits board coverage.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Wellman, Mullet, Pedersen, Zeiger, Kuderer, Das, Short and Wilson, C.).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee to study the number and types of part-time employees that are eligible for School Employees' Benefits Board coverage.
- Direct the Health Care Authority to analyze changes to the requirement that employers pay premiums when employees waive coverage.
- Prohibits dual enrollment in School Employees' Benefits Board and Public Employees' Benefits Board plans.

Hearing Date: 2/29/20

Staff: David Pringle (786-7310).

Background:

In 2017 Engrossed House Bill 2242 was enacted, consolidating healthcare benefits for all eligible school employees under the School Employees' Benefits Board (SEBB). The SEBB is responsible for determining the terms of employee and dependent eligibility and enrollment policies, subject to the condition that employees anticipated to work at least 630 hours per year qualify for coverage.

In 2018 Engrossed Second Substitute Bill 6241 was enacted, which included various provisions related to the administration of the benefits, including a requirement that school employers make contributions for employee health care even when the employee has waived coverage. The same provision exists under the Public Employees' Benefits Board (PEBB). Benefits under the SEBB began January 1, 2020.

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.

Summary of Bill:

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee will conduct a study to identify the number and types of part-time employees and their eligibility for SEBB benefits. The report is due to the Legislature by September 1, 2021.

The Health Care Authority must analyze the impacts of changes to the requirement that school employers remit premiums for employees that waive medical coverage. The analysis is due to the Legislature by September 1, 2021.

When school districts report annually to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction on data related to substitute teachers they must include the hours worked by each substitute and the number that were eligible for SEBB benefits.

Beginning with the 2022 plan year, dual coverage under the SEBB and benefits provided under the PEBB is prohibited for the same type of coverage. The SEBB and the PEBB shall adopt policies to reflect this single enrollment requirement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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