

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6296

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As of February 5, 2020

**Title:** An act relating to health care benefits for public school employees.

**Brief Description:** Concerning health care benefits for public school employees.

**Sponsors:** Senators Padden, Pedersen, Holy, Wellman, Wagoner, Wilson, C. and Mullet.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Ways & Means: 1/23/20.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows school employees in a job sharing position receive a prorated portion of the employer contribution towards benefits under the School Employees' Benefits Board.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Staff:** Amanda Cecil (786-7460)

**Background:** In 2017, EHB 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. All eligible employees receive the same level of employer contribution towards their benefits. Benefits under SEBB began January 1, 2020.

School districts must have a policy on the job sharing by district employees.

**Summary of Bill:** Beginning with benefits for the 2020-2021 school year, an employee in a job sharing position who is eligible for benefits provided under the SEBB will receive a prorated portion of the employer contribution consistent with the district's job sharing plan.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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*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.*

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Job-sharing in teaching positions was added in the 1980s. It is a good system for the children by allowing for two teachers to be fully invested in their education. It also allows teachers that do not want to work part time an option for that. Many districts have eliminated their job-sharing programs because of the cost of SEB Board benefits. By splitting the employer share of the benefits cost job-sharing will remain an affordable option for districts.

CON: Consolidating K12 healthcare is a significant change and change is hard. Job-sharing is important practice but not providing these people with benefits is a step backward. Employees working the same hours should get the same amount of employer support.

OTHER: SEBB was included in the McCleary bill but was not a required change. This is an underfunded mandate as the state does not provide funding for every person that was made eligible for benefits. Additional funding should be provided.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Mike Padden, Prime Sponsor; Kelli Black, citizen; Lisa Mularski, citizen; Dan Steele, Washington Association of School Administrators, Washington Association of School Business Officials; Gene Sementi, West Valley School District.

CON: Julie Salvi, Washington Education Association.

OTHER: Dave Mastin, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.