

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1632

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Education*

Title: An act relating to transcript review.

Brief Description: Studying certificated instructional employees' college transcripts to determine credits earned but not recognized on the state allocation model.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Winsley, Peery, Brough, Pruitt, Silver, Orr, Vance, Miller, Tate, Wood, Wynne, Edmondson, Horn, Broback, Holland, Moyer, Mitchell, Paris, McLean, Rasmussen, Cole, Scott and R. Johnson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, February 25, 1991, DPS.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION**

Majority Report: *That Substitute House Bill No. 1632 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*

Signed by 18 members: Representatives Peery, Chair; G. Fisher, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; Vance, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Betrozoff; Broback; Brumsickle; Cole; Dorn; Holland; P. Johnson; Jones; Neher; Orr; Rasmussen; Roland; H. Sommers; and Valle.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: Education credits that are recognized on local school district salary schedules, but not on the state allocation schedule, are known as "soft credits." The term "soft credit" is used because these credits are funded by "soft" local funds.

Soft credits fall into two major categories:

- 1) In-service credits earned before August 31, 1987: The 1987 Legislature provided state funding for in-service credits, but only for those credits obtained after August 31, 1987. In-service credits earned before this date are not funded by the state.

- 2) Pre-BA credits: If certificated employees took more than the minimum number of credits required for graduation, some local school districts will count these on their local schedules. The state allocation schedule only recognizes credits earned after a BA is obtained.

In recent years, approximately 100 school districts have begun using the state allocation schedule -- with its definition of eligible credits -- as the district's salary schedule. Unless the bargaining agreement specifically provides for employees with soft credits, employees with soft credits may see a reduction in pay. While many districts have attempted to address this issue, others have not. As a result, many requests have been made that the state allocation schedule fund these soft credits. The cost to the state of funding these soft credits, however, is not known.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) shall conduct a random sample survey of school districts in order to estimate the number of credits earned by certificated instructional staff prior to obtaining their first bachelor's degree. Based on the sample, SPI shall estimate the additional statewide cost of defining a bachelor's degree as 180 college quarter hours, or its equivalent, for purposes of the statewide allocation schedule.

Results of the survey and the cost estimates shall be submitted to the Legislature by December 1, 1991.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: Instead of completing a sample survey on a large number of different types of soft credits, the survey will identify only pre-BA credits since they are considered to be the most significant issue.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 6, 1991.

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

Testimony For: The salary of many individuals in school districts that have adopted the state's allocation schedule has dropped substantially because the state does not fund pre-BA college credits. For many teachers, it was necessary to take more than 180 credits to get a teaching credential. In addition, others believed that having additional educational expertise would be useful: now they are being punished.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Doug Cowan, Clover Park School District (in favor); Dorie Redal, University Place Education Association (in favor); Ethel Wellington Peak, University Place Education Association (in favor); and Bob Maier, Washington Education Association (in favor).