

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1668

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to educational staff associate positions.

Brief Description: Determining years of service for educational staff associate positions.

Sponsors: Representatives Hunter, Talcott, Schual-Berke, Tom, Linville, Quall, Anderson, Upthegrove and Santos.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/24/03, 3/3/03 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Revises the state teacher salary allocation schedule to recognize years of service outside the school system for educational staff associates.
- Phases in the recognition of outside experience over several years.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; McDermott, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Tom, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Cox, Haigh, Hunter, McMahan, Rockefeller and Santos.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

Through the apportionment process, the state makes payments to school districts for basic education certificated instructional staff. Besides teachers, certificated instructional staff include other professionals called educational staff associates who meet certification requirements adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE). They include school nurses, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, school counselors, and school social workers.

Funding for all certificated instructional staff salaries are based on a state salary

allocation schedule that is implemented in the state's biennial operating budget. The salary allocation schedule is used by the state to account for differences in the education and experience of each district's certificated instructional staff. One factor that the schedule recognizes is the number of years a certificated instructional staff person has worked within the state school system. It will also recognize years of experience teaching in an approved private school if certification is required to teach in that school and if the school is located in the state. Typically, the greater the experience and education of such staff, the greater the allocation from the state for salary purposes. Actual salaries are negotiated locally, within certain state established constraints. However, about 240 school districts use the state salary allocation schedule to determine salaries for certificated instructional staff.

Summary of Bill:

Beginning in the 2003-2004 school year, the state teacher salary allocation schedule will recognize years of professional experience obtained outside the state school system by educational staff associates. The staff associates included are: school nurses, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, social workers, counselors, and psychologists.

Until the 2005-2006 school year, every two years of service outside the school system will count as one year of school service on the state salary allocation schedule. Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, each year of service outside the school system will count as one year of school service.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Educational staff associates partner with classroom teachers to help children achieve in school. Many of the associates come into the school system with valuable experience in hospital and clinic settings. They may bring with them expertise with a broad range of disabilities, brain and orthopedic injuries, and other conditions that affect children. The current salary schedule doesn't recognize or compensate them for any of the experience they bring into the system. As a result, a number of districts cannot attract the skilled associates they need. These districts must rely on agencies that provide temporary workers instead. The proposed legislation provides equity, promotes staff stability, and meets the needs of school districts and the children they serve.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Representative Hunter, prime sponsor; Barbara Bicknell-Porter, Washington Education Association, Occupational Therapist, Auburn School District; Karen Kellett, Washington Education Association, Physical Therapist, Auburn School District; Tony Ono, Physical Therapist, Kent School District; Rose Racicot, Washington Occupational Therapist Association, Kent School District; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; and Jennifer Wallace, Professional Educator Standards Board.