

6156-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Commerce & Trade (originally sponsored by Senators Pflug and Mulliken)

Brief Description: Providing for education during teacher strikes.

**SB 6156-S - DIGEST**

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Recognizes the state's paramount duty to provide a basic education to all students residing in Washington.

Recognizes that uninterrupted service of educational employees is vital to the welfare of the state, and that such uninterrupted service must be ensured.

Acknowledges that the state's courts have long considered strikes by public employees, including teachers, to be unlawful, and in order to ensure that no student is denied his or her constitutional right to a basic education, the legislature affirms that strikes by public employees are unlawful.

Declares that it is unlawful for an employee or an employee organization, directly or indirectly, to induce, instigate, encourage, authorize, ratify, or participate in a strike.

Declares that it is unlawful for an employer to conduct a lockout.

Requires the attorney general to petition the superior court for the county in which the labor dispute exists to enjoin a strike or lockout that occurs or is threatened to occur on any days of the school calendar. The injunction shall be filed on behalf of the students who are being harmed because they are being denied an education as a result of the labor dispute. The court shall grant a temporary injunction under this act if the attorney general demonstrates any potential harm to students.

Provides that, beginning with contracts for the 2004-05 school year, negotiations between an employer and the exclusive bargaining representative of a unit of employees under this chapter must commence by May 1st in the year in which the collective bargaining agreement has expired or will expire. If by June 30th, an agreement has not yet been reached, the commission must appoint a mediator for the purpose of assisting the employer and the exclusive bargaining representative in reconciling their differences and resolving the controversy on terms which are mutually acceptable.

Provides that if the parties have not reached agreement by June 30th for the coming school year, until the dispute is resolved, the parties must participate in mediation, fact-finding, negotiation, or related activities at least daily.