

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3068

As Reported by House Committee On: Education

Title: An act relating to providing access to alternative routes to certification for the recruiting Washington teachers program.

Brief Description: Providing access to alternative routes to certification for the recruiting Washington teachers program.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos, Priest, Sullivan, Upthegrove, Maxwell, Morrell, Wallace, Ormsby, Kenney and Simpson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/29/10, 2/2/10 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides that, if scholarship funds are available after qualified paraeducators have been accepted, individuals who participated in one of the Recruiting Washington Teachers programs for high school students can participate in the Pipeline for Pareducators conditional scholarship program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Maxwell, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Hope, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dammeier, Fagan, Hunt, Johnson, Liias, Orwall, Probst, Santos and Sullivan.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

In 2001 the Legislature authorized alternative routes to teacher certification, which are offered through partnerships between institutions of higher education and school districts. Conditional scholarships are available for alternative route candidates.

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.

One of the alternative routes (Route One) is designed for classified school employees with an associate degree and three years of experience to earn a bachelor's degree and teaching certification in special education, bilingual education, or English Language Learner (ELL) education.

In 2007 the Legislature created an additional route called Pipeline for Paraeducators that would assist classified school employees without any degree to first earn a transferrable associate degree, and then enroll in a Route One program to earn a bachelor's degree and teaching certification. The Pipeline for Paraeducators program is also intended to recruit mathematics teachers. One program is offered at Green River Community College and a second at South Seattle Community College. Thus far, participation has been limited. Only 11 scholarships were offered in 2007-08, and none since.

Also in 2007 the Legislature re-established the Recruiting Washington Teachers (RWT) program to recruit and provide training and support for high school students to enter the teaching profession, particularly in shortage areas and among under-represented groups. There are currently four grant-funded RWT programs that operate as partnerships between school districts, higher education, and community organizations. There are no scholarships available to provide a further incentive for these students to enter teaching.

Summary of Bill:

If there are scholarship funds available in the Pipeline for Paraeducators program after qualified paraeducators have been accepted, individuals who participated in one of the RWT programs can participate in the Pipeline for Paraeducators program. These individuals also qualify to continue their teaching credential and receive scholarships through a Route One alternative route program. Mathematics is added as a possible teaching certification for Route One candidates.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The RWT was established to address teacher shortages and provide opportunities for under-represented students to explore teaching as a career. It also helps identify students at risk of dropping out to engage them in a career-focused program and enable them to see a future for themselves. The four programs are very appealing. Some of these students are finding that teaching offers a noble, honorable, and rewarding career. However, lack of scholarships is a barrier for these students. The RWT is the only program of its kind to

attract students of color into the teaching profession. This is a key strategy to end the achievement gap. The scholarships in the bill are small, but the support for future teachers is appreciated. Paraprofessionals are still the priority for the program; this bill does not take from one group to give to another. But the resources could be better utilized if we could get the RWT candidates involved.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In Support) Representative Santos, prime sponsor; Erin Jones, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; and David Brenna, Professional Educator Standards Board.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.