
Education Committee

SB 6138

Brief Description: Concerning the beginning educator support team program.

Sponsors: Senators Hasegawa, Nguyen and Wilson, C.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes providing support for mentor educators and beginning educators of underrepresented populations one of the stated purposes of the Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) Program.
- Establishes an additional priority criterion that the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must apply when awarding BEST Program grant funds to schools and districts.

Hearing Date: 2/25/20

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Established in 2013, the Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) Program provides professional development and mentor support for beginning principals, beginning educational staff associates, beginning teachers, and candidates in an alternative route teacher certification program. The BEST Program must include specified components, for example:

- the provision of a trained and qualified mentor for each program participant;
- a goal to provide program participants from underrepresented populations with a mentor who has strong ties to underrepresented populations;
- ongoing professional development; and
- a program evaluation that identifies program strengths and gaps, the retention of beginning educators, and positive impact on student growth for program participants.

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.

A mentor educator in the BEST Program is a teacher, educational staff associate, or principal who has been selected using mentor standards developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and:

- has successfully completed training in assisting, coaching, and advising beginning principals, beginning educational staff associates, beginning teachers, or student teachers; and
- is participating in ongoing mentor skills professional development.

Grant funding for the BEST Program is administered by the OSPI and is subject to state funding. The grant funds are provided on a competitive basis to individual school districts, consortia of school districts, or state-tribal compact schools. In allocating funds, the OSPI must give priority to:

- schools and districts identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement as required under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act;
- school districts with a large influx of beginning principals, beginning educational staff associates, or beginning classroom teachers; and
- school districts that demonstrate an understanding of the research-based standards for beginning educator induction developed by the OSPI.

Summary of Bill:

The statutory purpose of the BEST Program is modified to include a stated objective of providing support for mentor educators and beginning educators of underrepresented populations.

An additional priority criterion is established for the OSPI to apply when awarding BEST Program grant funds to school districts. In addition to other priorities, the OSPI must give priority to schools and districts that have taken action or have specific plans in place to provide BEST Program participants from underrepresented populations with a mentor who has strong ties to underrepresented populations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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