

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5413

As of February 15, 2019

Title: An act relating to the pipeline for paraeducators conditional scholarship program.

Brief Description: Concerning the pipeline for paraeducators conditional scholarship program.

Sponsors: Senators Keiser, King, Wellman, Holy, Das, Saldaña, Wilson, C., Hasegawa and Hunt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/13/19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires candidates for the Pipeline for Paraeducators Conditional Scholarship to have at least one year of class room experience.
- Establishes candidates for the scholarship are expected to complete their associate of arts degree in no more than four years.
- Requires award recipients maintain enrollment for no more than four years.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

Background: Paraeducators. Paraeducators provide instructional services to students while working under the direct supervision of instructional certificated staff. These services can include direct instruction of children in small and large groups, individualized instruction, testing of children, and preparation of materials. Paraeducators are categorized under Washington law as classified instructional employees.

Alternative Routes to Certification. State law provides for creating alternative routes to teacher certification by the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB). Current paraeducators with an associate of arts (AA) degree may enroll in a teacher certification program and complete both their baccalaureate degree and residency certification requirements in two years or less. Certification candidates must also pass the statewide basic

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skills exam and must earn at least one subject matter or geographic shortage area endorsement.

Pipeline for Paraeducators Conditional Scholarship. The Pipeline for Paraeducators Conditional Scholarship program provides scholarships for individuals with at least three years of student interaction as a classified employee to earn their AA degree with the ultimate goal of certification. The scholarship is limited to paraeducators without a college degree, with the expectation candidates will complete their AA degree in two years or less and become eligible for an endorsement in a subject matter shortage area. Recipients are awarded up to \$4000 that can be used for educational expenses for the AA degree.

As a conditional loan scholarship, one year of funding is forgiven for every two years of teaching.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): Candidates for the Pipeline for Paraeducators Conditional Scholarship must have at least one year of classroom experience, as opposed to three years. In addition, it is anticipated candidates enrolled in the program complete their AA degree in four years or less, and candidates will become eligible for an endorsement via a teacher certification program approved by the PESB.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Substitute: PRO: Paraeducators are great advocates for students, with the potential to become great teachers. Making the program accessible to more individuals will help provide better schools for all students. One year of teaching experience is enough for paraeducators to understand the classroom environment. Paraeducators are very much "homegrown" and want to teach in their communities; changing the requirements allows them to do so quicker.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Karen Keiser, Prime Sponsor; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; Shaunie Wheeler, Teamsters Joint Council.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.