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**SENATE BILL 5557**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Liias, Hasegawa, Valdez, Conway, Hunt, Keiser, Lovick, Nguyen, Nobles, Saldaña, Salomon, Stanford, Wellman, and C. Wilson

AN ACT Relating to pay equity for part-time faculty; adding a new section to chapter 28B.50 RCW; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that an overreliance on poorly paid, job insecure part-time faculty in the community and technical colleges harms students, faculty, the colleges, and our communities. The state legislature first took steps to address this issue in 1996 through passage of a bill requiring an audit of compensation for part-time faculty and establishing the best practices for part-time employment. Between 1997 and 2007 the legislature allocated funds to address this problem, but the problem remains. In some colleges, part-time faculty are paid as little as 52 percent of full-time faculty for teaching the same class and possessing the same qualifications. Repeated evaluations of compensation and the other best practices have failed to produce substantive progress for the majority of faculty in the community and technical colleges.

The legislature also finds that this salary disparity leads to the need for part-time faculty to teach more classes than is ideal, work additional jobs to make ends meet, or leave the teaching profession for a better salary. Students are harmed when a part-time teacher is unavailable for office hours or for consultation in future quarters, or when they are not aware of the student resources available to struggling students. Furthermore, inadequate salaries lead to a less diverse part-time faculty pool because economic privilege is almost a necessity in order to remain a part-time faculty member. All faculty are harmed when their part-time colleagues are unable to contribute to program development, governance, and other "life of the college" activities. Colleges are harmed when they spend time rehiring faculty quarter to quarter, year after year due to high turnover rates. Communities are harmed when workers do not earn enough to participate in the economy fully and when they must rely on the safety net for adequate food, rent, health care, and more.

It is the intent of the legislature to achieve pay equity for part-time and adjunct faculty relative to their full-time and tenured peers. Therefore, the legislature intends to establish a part-time salary minimum of 85 percent of full-time, comparably qualified faculty recognizing that approximately 85 percent of a full-time faculty member's work is student and instruction related. The remaining 15 percent relates to committee work, program development, student club advising, and other activities. State funding to increase part-time salaries to 85 percent will result in the ability of part-time faculty to be more available to students and to become more firmly rooted in their college over time. Pay equity will make teaching at the community and technical colleges a more viable career path for candidates who cannot afford to teach part-time, very often including candidates from historically marginalized communities. Greater diversity among part-time faculty will lead to greater diversity of candidates for full-time positions.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.50 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to amounts appropriated specifically for this purpose, community and technical colleges shall develop and implement plans to provide compensation to part-time and adjunct faculty that equals or exceeds 85 percent of the compensation provided to comparably qualified full-time and tenured faculty by the 2026-27 academic year.

(2) The college board shall transmit a report with an update on progress both at the system and individual college-level toward meeting the 85 percent pay equity goal to the governor and the higher education committees of the legislature by January 1, 2025, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036. By December 1, 2027, the college board shall report to the governor and the higher education committees of the legislature the implementation status of pay equity plans required by this section. At a minimum, the report must include:

(a) The percentage of full-time pay attained by part-time and adjunct faculty;

(b) Data that includes the race, ethnicity, and other demographic characteristics of faculty contracts not meeting pay equity plans;

(c) Data that includes the academic department of faculty contracts not meeting pay equity plans; and

(d) Progress at the college-level toward meeting pay equity plans set forth in this section.

(3) The standards used in this section to determine pay equity must be based on the instructional work of the faculty, including direct student support, time in class, preparation for class, grading and assessment, and office hours equivalent to those required for full-time tenure-track faculty under the relevant collective bargaining agreement.

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