
Education Committee

HB 1565

Brief Description: Supporting and strengthening the professional education workforce.

Sponsors: Representatives Ortiz-Self, Santos, Berry, Simmons, Reeves, Fey, Ryu, Alvarado, Bronoske, Goodman, Gregerson, Doglio, Paul, Peterson, Lekanoff, Ramel, Bergquist, Reed, Pollet, Timmons and Macri.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the development of an online platform for the recruitment and hiring of public school employees.
- Establishes a teacher residency program.
- Requires a report to be made to the Legislature on the establishment of a teacher exchange program.
- Modifies the Beginning Educator Support Team Program.
- Establishes educator workforce program data collection, organization, and analysis requirements.
- Requires a report to be made to the Legislature on the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of educator preparation and workforce programs.

Hearing Date: 2/6/23

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Recruitment and Hiring of Public School Employees.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In 2016 the Legislature appropriated funds to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop and implement a comprehensive, statewide initiative to increase the number of qualified individuals who apply for teaching positions in Washington. As part of the initiative, the OSPI was directed to work with the Employment Security Department to incorporate certificated educator positions into the state's existing web-based depository for job applications. The OSPI was directed to report to the Legislature by December 1, 2019, on the efficiency and effectiveness of the centralized web-based depository for job applications and with recommendations on whether the requirement be continued, modified, or terminated.

Job sites for educators are also offered through educational service districts, school districts, professional associations, and private companies.

Legislation enacted in 2019 provided funding for three educational service districts to employ a regional recruiter for two years. A report to the Legislature with a summary of the recruitment activities and recommendations on whether the program be continued, modified, or expanded, was due by December 1, 2021.

Educator Preparation Programs.

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) is a 12-member board that adopts rules and creates policies for the preparation and certification of educators. The PESB approves entities, including community colleges, universities, Educational Service Districts, and community-based organizations, to offer educator preparation programs. There are educator preparation programs for teachers, principals and other administrators, and educational staff associates.

Standards for Effective Teaching.

The PESB must adopt knowledge, skill, and performance standards for effective teaching that are evidence-based, measurable, meaningful, and documented in high quality research as being associated with improved student learning. The PESB must incorporate into these standards its standards of practice for cultural competency, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Student Teaching.

To complete a teacher preparation program, a candidate must complete a student teaching experience in a school setting. The experience must be at least 450 hours, including supervised planning, instruction, and reflection. The experience must also relate to specific program outcomes and be designed to integrate educational theory, knowledge, and skills in practice under the direction of a certificated teacher with three years of teaching experience.

Programs categorized as alternative route require candidates to complete a one-year mentored internship, known as a residency, and 540 hours of student teaching.

Each teacher preparation program is required to develop, and submit to the PESB, a plan describing how the program will partner with local school districts regarding field placement of student teachers.

Financial Assistance for Prospective Educators.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) administers the majority of the state's financial aid programs. The WSAC administers a student teaching grant program to provide additional funds to student teachers at certain public schools.

The WSAC also administers five statutory conditional scholarship (CS) programs for educators: Teacher Shortage, Alternative Route, Educator Retooling, Pipeline for Paraeducators, and Career and Technical Education. A CS is a loan that is forgiven, in whole or in part, in exchange for qualified service. The maximum CS award is \$8,000 per person per year. For each CS program, the CS is forgiven when the participant fulfills the following service obligation: serve as a certificated employee for two school years for each year of CS received or serve as a certificated employee in a shortage area for one school year for each year of CS received.

Beginning Educator Support Team Program.

The Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) Program provides professional development and mentor support for beginning educators. The BEST Program must include specified components, for example: mentorship, professional development, and adherence to research-based standards for beginning educator induction developed by the OSPI.

A "mentor" is defined as a teacher, educational staff associate, or principal who has successfully completed training in assisting, coaching, and advising beginning educators, has been selected using mentor standards developed by the OSPI, and is participating in ongoing mentor skills professional development.

Subject to available funding, and on a competitive basis, the OSPI distributes grants to individual school districts or consortia of districts. In allocating funds, the OSPI must give priority to districts identified for support and improvement under the state's accountability system, those with a large influx of beginning educators, and those that demonstrate an understanding of the OSPI's standards for beginning educator induction.

Educator Workforce Data.

The PESB is required to maintain data concerning educator preparation programs and their quality, educator certification, educator employment trends and needs, and other data deemed relevant by the PESB.

Each educational service district, in cooperation with the PESB, is required to convene representatives from school districts within that region and educator preparation programs to review district and regional educator workforce data, make biennial projections of certificate staffing needs, and identify how recruitment and enrollment plans in educator preparation programs reflect projected need.

K-12 Education Data Improvement System.

In 2009 legislation was enacted stating the Legislature's intent to establish a comprehensive K-12 Education Data Improvement System for financial, student, and educator data. The stated

objective of the system is to monitor student progress, have information on the quality of the educator workforce, monitor and analyze the costs of programs, provide for financial integrity and accountability, and have the capability to link across these various data components by student, by class, by teacher, by school, by district, and statewide.

The Legislature further specified its goal that all school districts have the capability to collect state-identified common data and export it in a standard format to support a statewide K-12 Education Data Improvement System.

The 2009-11 State Omnibus Operating Appropriations Act appropriated funding to the OSPI to implement this data system, including convening a data-governance group to define operating rules and a governance structure for these data collections.

The Professional Educator Collaborative.

Legislation enacted in 2019 established the Professional Educator Collaborative to make recommendations on how to improve and strengthen state policies, programs, and pathways that lead to highly effective educators at each level of the public school system. A report with recommendations on each of eight issues was required to be submitted to the Legislature by November 1, 2021.

Summary of Bill:

Recruitment and Hiring of Public School Employees.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must initiate and oversee the development and implementation of an online platform for the recruitment and hiring of public school employees. At a minimum, the online platform must have the following functions and features:

1. a job posting and search or filter function that allows for efficient searching or filtering of job postings by job seekers;
2. a resume storage and search or filter function that allows for efficient searching or filtering of resumes by employers;
3. a common employment application with a customizable form for employers to add additional questions;
4. integration with other relevant state databases;
5. a description of and links to the websites of Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)-approved educator preparation programs; and
6. links to websites describing state and federal financial aid available to develop and support the workforce of the public school system, including the Educator Conditional Scholarship and Loan Repayment Programs.

By December 1, 2023, the OSPI must report to the Legislature with a plan, timeline, and cost estimate for: (a) the development and implementation of the online platform; (b) securing any needed vendors for its development and implementation; (c) and making the online platform accessible to public schools, school districts, and job seekers.

Teacher Residency Program.

Definitions. A teacher residency is defined as a yearlong learning experience in a public elementary or secondary school in which the resident coteaches with a mentor, while the resident concurrently completes teacher preparation program coursework.

A mentor is defined as teacher who has at least three years teaching experience, has at least three consecutive years of performance evaluations with a performance rating of level 3 or above, has an endorsement deemed by the PESB to be equivalent to the endorsement area sought by the mentor's resident, and has been selected using the mentor screening tool developed by the OSPI.

Program Requirements and Approval Process. The OSPI and the PESB must collaborate to establish an application and approval process for a school district, or consortia of school districts, in partnership with a teacher preparation program seeking approval to operate a teacher residency program. At a minimum, a teacher residency program must meet the following requirements:

1. residents receive compensation equivalent to the school district's first year paraeducators;
2. each resident is assigned a mentor, and each mentor is assigned to one resident;
3. mentors receive a stipend of \$2,500 per year;
4. residents receive at least 900 hours of teaching experience over the course of the school year and at least half of the residency hours are in a coteaching setting with the resident's mentor;
5. residents may not be assigned the lead or primary responsibility for student learning;
6. residents are in a cohort of at least 15, where "cohort" means a group of residents enrolled in the same teacher preparation program who begin their residencies at the same time;
7. mentors use the mentor and induction standards developed by the OSPI;
8. coursework taught during the residency is codesigned by the teacher preparation program and the school district or districts, tightly integrated with residents' teaching experiences, and focused on developing culturally responsive teachers;
9. the program must prepare residents to meet or exceed teacher knowledge, skills, performance, and competency standards; and
10. any additional requirements in the partnership agreement.

Grants. Subject to available funding, the OSPI, in collaboration with the PESB, must award grants to school districts with approved teacher residency. Grants must be prioritized to communities that are anticipated to be most positively impacted by teacher residents who fill teacher vacancies upon completing the teacher residency program and who remain in the communities in which they are mentored.

For the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years, grants must be prioritized to teacher residency programs at school districts, or consortia of school districts, with the highest percentages of teachers with limited certificates, and must be awarded as follows:

1. at least five grants to support cohorts of residents seeking an endorsement in bilingual education or English language learner;

2. at least five grants to support cohorts of residents seeking an endorsement in special education or early childhood special education; and
3. at least five grants to support cohorts of residents seeking an endorsement in elementary education.

Partnership Agreements. The OSPI and the PESB must collaborate to develop and publish a model agreement for school districts and teacher preparation programs partnering to operate teacher residency programs. The model agreement must include the following provisions:

1. the teacher preparation program must provide feedback and instructional support to school district mentors and to residents in curricula, instructional design and planning, and pedagogical practice;
2. the school district must support residents in navigating the teacher residency program, as well as school district processes and structures; and
3. an affirmation by the school district of its capacity and intent to hire its residents into teaching positions, with preference for positions in the resident's endorsement area.

Conditional Scholarship. The teacher residency conditional scholarship program is created to provide financial aid to encourage persons to become teachers and to retain these teachers, especially in shortage areas of endorsement. The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) must administer the program.

To qualify for the program, an applicant must:

1. be accepted into, and maintain participation in, an approved teacher residency program;
2. intend to pursue an initial teacher certificate with an endorsement in special education, early childhood special education, bilingual education, English language learner, or elementary education; and
3. have a financial need as defined by the WSAC.

Participants are eligible to receive a teacher residency conditional scholarship of up to \$8,000 during the year of their residency. A teacher residency conditional scholarship is forgiven when the participant: holds an endorsement in either special education, early childhood special education, bilingual education, English language learner, or elementary education; and serves for one full-time school year as a teacher in a public school classroom or program that requires that endorsement.

Advisory Council. The PESB, in collaboration with the OSPI, must coordinate and regularly convene an advisory committee of education partners to study problems of practice within the teacher residency programs and to guide and steer decisions for continuous improvement of the teacher residency programs that result in positive outcomes for students, school districts, teacher preparation programs, mentors, and residents participating in the teacher residency programs. The advisory council is not required to be convened after June 30, 2033.

Evaluation of Effectiveness. The PESB must contract with a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization to evaluate the effectiveness and impacts of the teacher residency program over at

least the first four years of implementation. The nonprofit and nonpartisan organization must have at least seven years of experience conducting high quality research to improve evidence-based education policies and practices that support empowering and equitable learning for all students. By November 1, 2028, the PESB must submit a report of the evaluation to the Legislature.

Teacher Exchange Program Report.

By October 1, 2023, the OSPI must submit to the Legislature a report recommending whether and how the state should establish a teacher exchange program. At a minimum, the report must include:

1. the benefits and challenges of implementing a teacher exchange program in Washington;
2. whether, and to what extent, a teacher exchange program would create opportunities for professional growth for teachers in Washington and other countries, facilitate cross-cultural awareness and enrichment, and address Washington's teacher workforce challenges;
3. a draft memorandum of understanding to be executed with other countries that describes teacher qualifications, such as licensure and experience, any United States visa requirements, and estimated teacher expenses and salary information; and
4. an estimate of the costs to the state and to school districts to implement a teacher exchange program.

In developing its recommendations, the OSPI must consult with school districts with experience implementing teacher exchanges and school districts interested in participating in a teacher exchange program, the United States Department of State regarding the requirements of the Federal Exchange Visitor Program, and United States embassies and education agencies of other countries.

Educator Preparation Program Improvement Report.

By October 1, 2024, the PESB must submit a report to the Legislature with recommendations for the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of educator preparation and workforce programs. The report must compare the requirements of the teacher residency program established and registered teacher apprenticeship programs. The report must include proposals for better coordination between educator preparation partners and opportunities for educator preparation and workforce program improvement and expansion.

Beginning Educator Support Team Program.

The OSPI is directed to support local Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) Programs by: providing technical assistance, intentional and sustained professional learning opportunities, and induction coaching services to school leaders and mentors; and facilitating collaborative, coordinated learning between local BEST Programs.

The prioritization requirements for the BEST program grants are modified as follows: (1) state-tribal education compact schools (STECS) are made eligible; and (2) grants must be prioritized to school districts and STECS that have not recently been allocated BEST Program grants rather

than those that demonstrate an understanding of the research-based standards for BEST.

A local BEST Program must be aligned to the cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion (CCDEI) standards of practice developed by the PESB.

The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

A definition for "beginning educator" is added to mean a first-year principal, first-year teacher, first-year educational staff associate, or student teacher. A "student teacher" is defined as a person enrolled in a teacher preparation program working as a classroom teacher as specified by the OSPI.

The definition of "mentor" is revised. In addition to existing requirements, a mentor must: have had a certificate for at least three years; for principals and teachers, have at least three consecutive years of performance evaluations with a performance rating of level 3 or above; has been selected using mentor standards aligned to the CCDEI standards of practice developed by the PESB; is assigned to a beginning educator in a similar role or field as the mentor, and for teachers, to the extent possible, has an endorsement deemed by the PESB to be equivalent to the endorsement area sought by the beginning educator.

Educator Workforce Research.

The OSPI and the PESB must collect, organize, and analyze data to make determinations about the quality and effectiveness of educator workforce programs. At a minimum, collected data must include educator demographics, assessment scores, program completion rates, endorsement completion rates, program completer rates of retention in the profession, and program costs to the state and to the program participant. At a minimum, collected data must be analyzed and used to support, evaluate, and approve educator workforce programs. The data must be maintained in the K-12 Education Data Improvement System.

The K-12 Education Data Improvement System is authorized and expanded to include data on paraeducators, certificated administrative staff and all certificated instructional staff, as well as to all public schools.

Short Title.

This act may be known and cited as the Educator Workforce Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 31, 2023.

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