

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESB 5175

C 362 L 23
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning written contracts between school boards and principals.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman, Mullet, Hunt and Wilson, C..

Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education
House Committee on Education

Background: Certificated Educator Employee Contracts. Teachers, principals, superintendents, and other certificated employees of school districts and educational service districts are employed under written contracts that may be no more than one year in length. Contracts of certificated employees may be non-renewed when it is determined there is probable cause, including enrollment decline and revenue loss. Principals, directors, or other individuals employed in a supervisory or administrative position may be transferred to a subordinate administrative position, defined as any certificated position for which the annual compensation is less than that of the position currently held, in certain cases.

If the employing district determines the employment contract should not be renewed for the following year, the district must notify the employee in writing on or before May 15th preceding the beginning of the next school year. The employing school district has until June 15th to provide the required notice of contract nonrenewal if the general operating budget has not passed the Legislature by the end of the legislative session.

Educational Employee Background Check Requirements. State law requires that record checks be performed for the following persons in educational settings:

- applicants for teacher certification, including teachers with expired certificates seeking recertification;
- persons who receive criminal history record information or personally identifiable information from record checks; and
- any employee who will have regularly scheduled unsupervised access to children or access to persons with developmental disabilities, including contractors.

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.

A school district, educational service district, the Washington Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth, the State School for the Blind, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and their contractors must perform a record check prior to hiring an employee for which a record check is required.

If the applicant for employment has had a record check within the previous two years, the requirement may be waived.

Summary: The maximum term of a written contract between a school district board of directors and a principal is extended from one to three years. A contract for more than one year may be offered if the principal has:

- been employed as a principal for three or more consecutive years;
- been recommended by the superintendent as a candidate for a two or three-year contract because the principal has demonstrated the ability to stabilize instructional practices, and received a comprehensive performance rating of level 3 or above in their most recent comprehensive performance evaluation; and
- met the school district's requirements for satisfying an updated record check.

A contract between a board of directors and a principal for a term of three years may not be renewed before the final year of the contract.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	30	18	
House	84	14	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House			(House insisted)
Senate	32	17	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 23, 2023