

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5270

As of January 29, 2025

Title: An act relating to providing mentors to novice nurses in the beginning educator support team program.

Brief Description: Providing mentors to novice nurses in the beginning educator support team program.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman, Cleveland, Nobles, Valdez and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/29/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires school districts receiving funding for the Beginning Educator Support Team Program to prioritize and provide a mentor to any novice school nurse employed by the district.
- Defines novice school nurse as a registered nurse or advanced registered nurse practitioner who is in their first, second, or third year in a school-based role.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Elena Becker (786-7493)

Background: Beginning Educator Support Team Program. The Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) program provides professional development and mentoring to beginning principals, educational staff associates, teachers, and teacher candidates.

BEST programs must include:

- paid orientation or assistance for each program participant before the start of the

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.

- school year;
- a trained mentor provided to each program participant for up to three years;
- a goal to provide program participants from underrepresented populations with a mentor who has strong ties to underrepresented populations;
- ongoing professional development for program participants and mentors;
- release time for program participants and mentors;
- appropriate assignments for beginning staff, to the extent possible;
- nonevaluative observations with written feedback for program participants;
- support for the evaluation process and for using instructional and leadership frameworks to promote growth;
- adherence to the research-based standards for beginning educator induction developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); and
- a program evaluation that identifies BEST program strengths and gaps using standards for beginning educator induction, retention of beginning educators, and positive impact on student growth for program participants.

Mentor educators in the BEST program must have completed training in assisting, coaching, and advising beginning staffers, be selected using standards developed by OSPI, and participate in ongoing mentor skills professional development.

OSPI must prioritize allocating BEST funds to schools and districts identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement under federal law; school districts with a large influx of beginning principals, teachers, or educational staff associates; and school districts that demonstrate an understanding of OSPI's standards for beginning educator induction.

Summary of Bill: School districts that receive funding for the BEST program must prioritize and provide a trained and qualified mentor to any novice school nurse employed by the school district.

"Novice school nurse" is defined as a registered nurse or an advanced registered nurse practitioner in their first, second, or third year in a school-based role.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 21, 2024.

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: PRO: School nurses have one of the broadest scopes of any nursing specialty; providing care to students who are well and those with severe chronic conditions. School nurses are essential so that students with health

complexities can benefit from educational offerings.

School nurses are trained in nursing school to provide care in a hospital setting rather than a school setting and often practice in professional isolation. Mentorship is critical to retaining beginning school nurses and has proven successful in pilot programs.

OTHER: BEST supports novice educators, including school nurses. All new educators need support, but districts have varying needs and it is concerning to prioritize one group of educators over another. There isn't currently sufficient BEST funding for principals.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Lisa Wellman, Prime Sponsor; Melissa Johnson, School Nurse Organization of Washington; Katie Johnson, School Nurse Organization of Washington; Cathy Meuret, School Nurse Organization of Washington.

OTHER: Misha Cherniske, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); Roz Thompson, Association of Washington School Principals; Nasue Nishida, Washington Education Association.

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