

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3215

As Passed House:
February 9, 2006

Title: An act relating to teacher retention in rural school districts.

Brief Description: Continuing the teacher retention study.

Sponsors: By Representatives Cox, Newhouse, Ormsby and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education & Workforce Education: 2/2/06 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/9/06, 96-2.

Brief Summary of Bill

- States the Legislature's finding that recent research has shed light on teacher retention, attrition, and mobility.
- Requires the University of Washington (UW) to continue its research on teacher retention, attrition and mobility, and complete a study examining trends and patterns of teacher behavior in small and rural school districts.
- Requires that the UW submit its study findings to the Legislature by December 1, 2006.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Kenney, Chair; Sells, Vice Chair; Cox, Ranking Minority Member; Rodne, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buri, Dunn, Fromhold, Hasegawa, Jarrett, Ormsby, Priest, Roberts and Sommers.

Staff: Nina Oman (786-7152).

Background:

Researchers at the University of Washington (UW) have completed a study, "Teacher Retention and Mobility in Washington State: A Look Inside and Across Districts and Schools." The study used a sample of 20 school districts and focused on classroom teachers at two points in time: 1998 and 2002.

Key findings from the report include:

- Only 20 percent of teachers leave the educational system in Washington after five years. Half of those leaving are likely retirees, and others may leave only temporarily.
- Fewer teachers (experienced and novice) are retained in higher poverty schools.
- Novice teachers change schools at a higher rate, often to another school within the same district, especially in larger districts.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature finds that recent research by the UW sheds light on teacher retention, attrition, and mobility in Washington. Additional analysis and a more complete data set are needed to make valid findings for small and rural school districts.

The UW shall continue its research on teacher retention, attrition and mobility. The UW is directed to complete a study that examines patterns of teacher behavior in small and rural school districts. The study is due to the Legislature by December 1, 2006.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The UW completed a study involving suburban school districts and mentioned that problems with teacher retention may be more severe in small and rural school districts. This bill asks that further examination and study be completed. There is very little research available on small and rural schools. There has been no thorough research conducted examining the effect of the statewide salary schedule on small and rural schools. We support this study and believe it will be very useful and consistent with the practice of using data as a basis for decision making. The findings should also be very important to the work of the Washington Learns Task Force.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Cox, prime sponsor; Jim Kowalkowski and Neal Kirby, Rural Education Center; and Barbara Mertens, Washington Association of School Administrators.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.