

Superintendent Dorn's Teacher Shortage Budget and Policy Requests

2016 Legislative Session

The Problem

School districts in Washington are having major difficulties hiring mathematics, science, special education, and other teachers, especially in rural and high poverty schools. All school districts report a significant shortage in substitute teachers.

Additionally, the implementation of full-day kindergarten and K–3 class size reduction, along with teacher retirements, increasing attrition, and student enrollment growth, will require hiring approximately 10,000 new K–3 teachers in the next 3–4 years. In-state production of new teachers with Elementary and Early Childhood endorsements total only 1,500 teachers/year.

The state's success in the investment in full-day kindergarten, K–3 class size reduction, and other "McCleary/Basic Education" components depends on making significant changes in Washington's ability to recruit and retain quality teachers.

Budget and Policy Requests

To address this critical shortage of classroom teachers, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will request that the Legislature fund the actions and approve the policy changes listed below:

1. **Hiring Incentives:** Provide "signing bonuses" of \$10,000 for new out-of-state teachers and \$5,000 for in-state teachers hired in small and rural school districts and school districts with high percentages of low-income students;
2. **Retired Teachers:** Allow recently retired teachers to serve as teachers and/or substitutes without restrictions;
3. **Beginning Teacher Pay:** Increase the state salary allocation to school districts for beginning teachers;
4. **Conditional Loan Forgiveness:** Increase funding for the Conditional Loan Forgiveness Program for certificated teachers who stay in the profession as required by the program;
5. **Expanded Reciprocity:** Increase the number of states with which Washington has licensure reciprocity;
6. **Suspend ProCert for experienced Out-of-state Teachers:** Suspend the current professional certification requirements for experienced out-of-state teachers with a minimum of seven successful years in the teaching profession;
7. **Recruitment Campaign:** Create a recruitment campaign for out-of-state teachers and prospective new teachers in Washington, including individuals who are certificated but were not able to find teaching jobs during the recession and undergraduate students who have not chosen a major;
8. **Statewide Application Depository:** Develop a central depository that will make it easier for teachers to apply for jobs in multiple school districts and for school districts to have access to a broader pool of applicants;
9. **Hiring Technical Assistance:** Provide recruiting and hiring assistance to smaller school districts that would be provided by Educational Service districts; and
10. **Careers in Education Course:** Fund teacher training to implement the new high school "Careers in Education" course.