

September 26, 2018

Policy Brief: Addressing the Teacher “Shortage”

Five separate entities are asking for \$17.5 million in new appropriations in the 2019-2021 biennium to address the so-called “teacher shortage.” It does not appear any of them have coordinated with any others. WACTE should encourage dialogue to avoid duplication of efforts and align metrics of success.

Additionally, while the university proposals are targeted, and the Student Achievement Council proposal is a needs-based scholarship open for use in a program of the student’s choosing, the PESB proposals, with one exception, do not seem to articulate a metric of success.

(Titles in color below are links to the decision packages submitted to the governor)

[Eastern Washington University](#)\$ 1,529,000 (4.5 FTE)
Add 75 candidates / year
Establish hybrid alternative routes for rural districts (benchmarks later)
Scholarships to support hybrid alt route candidates

[Central Washington University](#)\$ 3,217,000 (10 FTE)
Adds 150 candidates / year via alt routes targeting para-educators
Adds 120 candidates / year in high demand areas @ 6 university centers
Adds 400 candidates / year with 20 “grow your own” academies
50 candidates / year conditional scholarships
200 candidates / year West-B re-take pilot
10 sites for remote student teaching monitoring

[Western Washington University](#)\$ 4,763,000 (29.3 FTE)
Adds 200 candidates / year in Bellingham, Everett and Bremerton

[The Washington Student Achievement Council](#)\$1,000,000 (shortage grants)

And the Professional Educator Standards Board is asking for an increase of \$ 7,000,000 for Alternative Route Scholarships and other initiatives to address the “shortage,” above existing funding levels.

PESB

Alternative Route Block Grant	\$3,600,000
(no metric)	
Educator Retooling Scholarship	\$600,000
+ 200 scholarships	
Paraeducator Pipeline Scholarship	\$300,000
(no metric)	
Recruiting Washington Teachers	\$250,000
(no metric)	
Bilingual Educator Initiative	\$750,000
(no metric)	
Regional Recruitment & Guidance	\$1,500,000
(no metric)	
Total	\$7,000,000

Recommended discussion:

The Governor will put forward a proposed biennial budget in mid-December. The above requests may or may not be included. Assuming some or all will be included, or that legislators may push proposals whether or not they are included, WACTE should discuss whether to support, oppose, ignore, or recommend alternatives to the proposals on the table.

Especially for scholarship programs, WACTE should discuss whether to support requirements that they be needs-based (e.g., recipients must qualify for the State Need Grant, whether or not they received one) or be openly available, likely on a first-come, first-served basis.

Further, as a policy matter, the question of who manages the scholarship programs is important. Does PESB, the regulator, also award scholarships to be used at regulated programs? Or is the Student Achievement Council, an entity that manages a host of scholarship programs across numerous fields (education, health, need grant, etc.) be in charge of them?