



LEV Position and Summary

HB 1443 – Concerning Education Reforms, Including Implementing Recommendations of the Quality Education Council

As passed the Senate on April 12, 2011

LEV supports most sections of this bill, including:

High School Credit: Allows high school credits to be based on competency not just seat time.

- Providing students with more options for demonstrating subject-matter mastery can save time for students and resources for schools, districts and the state.

Learning Assistance Program: Expands the program to serve students struggling in science.

- Improving proficiency in science is a top priority. Struggling students deserve every opportunity to succeed and benefit from access to additional supports

Definition of Highly Capable: Revises the definition of highly capable to be more inclusive.

- Individuals demonstrate gifts and talents in multiple ways across multiple domains; this definition rightly recognizes that fact.

Teacher/Principal Evaluation Pilots: Supports continued development of a more meaningful evaluation system for teachers and principals.

- Creation of a more meaningful evaluation system will help identify our most effective educators and support their continued career development and growth.

Direction to Compensation Working Group: Adds direction to the Compensation Technical Working Group to consider how a new compensation system should address educational attainment, years of service, performance, high-demand fields, National Board certification, grandfathered salaries, and school-based incentives.

- To be able to hire and retain the very best teachers possible, significant change must be made to the compensation structure. However, time is needed to review the research and deliberate on how best to make this change. The working group already in place is the best avenue for digging into these issues.

Reductions in Force: Requires districts to lay off teachers and principals with lowest evaluation ratings first when forced to make layoffs.

- Empowering districts to take both performance and seniority in account when making layoff decisions will allow schools to retain the most effective teachers and principals. 81% of Washington voters agree that: “The Legislature should require districts to base any teacher layoffs on performance rather than seniority.”

Staffing Placements: Prohibits placement of teachers in the state’s lowest-performing schools unless agreed to by the hiring principal/team.

- To build a great school culture, principals must have the authority to choose their staff and teachers must have the freedom to choose their school.

LEV strongly opposes one section of this bill:

Science Assessment as Graduation Requirement: Permits the classes of 2013 to 2016 to graduate from high school without passing the comprehensive 10th grade science assessment if students take one additional science course after 10th grade. Prohibits OSPI from implementing end-of-course assessments in science.

- This delay to the requirement that students demonstrate proficiency in science to graduate from high school is the wrong move. In reading and writing, assessments as graduation requirements have led to *increased* student achievement, not less.
- State assessments allow the state to hold districts accountable, and help assure quality control for students, parents and the state.
- Given the scheduled transition to an end-of-course science assessment next year, the better decision for students, teachers and districts is to begin the science assessment as a high school graduation requirement for the Class of 2015.