
ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1277

AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

Passed Legislature - 2024 Regular Session

State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session

By House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Donaghy, Harris, Slatter, Kloba, Reeves, Reed, Ormsby, and Pollet; by request of Professional Educator Standards Board)

READ FIRST TIME 01/30/23.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving the consistency and quality of the
2 implementation of the fundamental course of study for paraeducators;
3 amending RCW 28A.413.060; adding a new section to chapter 28A.413
4 RCW; and creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature acknowledges that it
7 created the paraeducator board to adopt standards of practice and
8 required school districts to provide to paraeducators a four-day
9 fundamental course of study on the standards to paraeducators. The
10 legislature finds that it required that at least one day of the
11 fundamental course of study be provided in person due to the benefits
12 of in-person instruction, including that instructors can confirm the
13 participant's application of learning objectives.

14 (2) The legislature recognizes that paraeducators benefit from
15 in-person training that is part of the hiring and onboarding process.
16 The legislature intends to expand this benefit by generally requiring
17 two days of the fundamental course of study be provided to
18 paraeducators in person. The legislature recognizes that an exemption
19 from this in-person requirement is necessary for some small school
20 districts that experience barriers to providing the fundamental
21 course of study in person due to long commute times for

1 paraeducators, irregular hiring dates in small school districts, and
2 other extenuating circumstances.

3 (3) However, it is the intent of the legislature to ensure that
4 all paraeducators in Washington receive high quality and consistent
5 professional development through the fundamental course of study,
6 with a significant majority of paraeducators being trained in person.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.413
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) By July 1, 2025, the board must update rules on the
10 implementation of the fundamental course of study under RCW
11 28A.413.060 to require that a significant majority of paraeducators
12 are provided with the course in person. Under the rules, the board
13 may grant an exemption from the in-person requirement of RCW
14 28A.413.060 for second-class school districts hiring paraeducators
15 after the beginning of the school year.

16 (2) By July 1, 2025, the board must publish guidance for school
17 districts on how to provide the fundamental course of study under RCW
18 28A.413.060 to improve the consistency and quality of staff
19 development.

20 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.413.060 and 2019 c 268 s 3 are each amended to
21 read as follows:

22 (1) School districts must implement this section only in school
23 years for which state funding is appropriated specifically for the
24 purposes of this section and only for the number of days that are
25 funded by the appropriation.

26 (2) (a) School districts must provide a four-day fundamental
27 course of study on the state standards of practice, as defined by the
28 board, to paraeducators who have not completed the course, either in
29 the district or in another district within the state. (~~(At least one
30 day of the fundamental course of study must be provided in person.)~~)

31 (b) School districts must use best efforts to provide the
32 fundamental course of study before the paraeducator begins to work
33 with students and their families, and at a minimum by the following
34 deadlines (~~(provided in subsection (3) of this section.~~

35 ~~(3) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, school
36 districts must provide the fundamental course of study required in
37 subsection (2) of this section by the deadlines provided in (a) of
38 this subsection)):~~

1 ~~((a))~~ (i) For paraeducators hired ~~((on or))~~ before ~~((September~~
2 ~~1st))~~ the beginning of the school year, the first two days of the
3 fundamental course of study must be provided ~~((by September 30th of~~
4 ~~that year))~~ in person before the beginning of the school year and the
5 second two days of the fundamental course of study must be provided
6 within six months of the date of hire ~~((, regardless of the size of~~
7 ~~the district))~~; and

8 (ii) For paraeducators hired after ~~((September 1st))~~ the
9 beginning of the school year:

10 (A) For paraeducators hired by first-class districts ~~((with ten~~
11 ~~thousand or more students))~~, the first two days of the fundamental
12 course of study must be provided in person within four months of the
13 date of hire and the second two days of the fundamental course of
14 study must be provided within six months of the date of hire or by
15 September 1st of the following year, whichever is sooner; and

16 (B) For paraeducators hired by second-class districts ~~((with~~
17 ~~fewer than ten thousand students))~~, the four-day fundamental course
18 of study must be provided no later than September 1st of the
19 following year, with two of the days provided in person unless the
20 district has applied for and received an exemption under section 2 of
21 this act.

22 ~~((b) (i) For paraeducators hired for the 2018-19 school year, by~~
23 ~~September 1, 2020; and~~

24 ~~(ii) For paraeducators not hired for the 2018-19 school year, but~~
25 ~~hired for the 2019-20 school year, by September 1, 2021.~~

26 ~~(4))~~ (3) School districts may collaborate with other school
27 districts or educational service districts to meet the requirements
28 of this section.

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