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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
54th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2020

Bill Number	<u>SB213</u>	Sponsor	<u>Soules</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.216674.1</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>SEC/SFC</u>
Short Title	<u>Teacher Professional Development</u>		
Analyst	<u>Canada</u>	Original Date	<u>2/3/2020</u>
		Last Updated	<u>2/19/2020</u>

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 213 (SB213) appropriates \$10 million for the Public Education Department (PED) to spend on public school teacher professional development.

FISCAL IMPACT

SB213 appropriates \$10 million from the public education reform fund to the teacher professional development fund for expenditure. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY21 shall not revert to the public education reform fund. Money in the public education reform fund is reserved for implementing evidence-based public education initiatives related to high-quality teaching and school leadership.

The Senate Finance Committee Amendment to the House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for House Bills 2 and 3 (HB2/HAFCS/aSFC) includes an increase to the state equalization guarantee (SEG) of \$11 million for mentorship and professional development and a \$4.2 million increase for mentorship stipends.

Additionally, HB2/HAFCS/aSFC includes a recurring general fund appropriation of \$3.5 million to PED for teacher recruitment, mentorship, professional development, evaluation and retention. A school district or charter school can submit an application to PED to receive funds from this appropriation. The appropriation stipulates PED can prioritize funding based on which school districts and charter schools use their SEG distributions to meet mentorship and professional development requirements in the beginning teacher mentorship statute. Demonstration of these efforts can include targeted and ongoing professional development for purposes of new teacher mentorship, case management, tutoring, data-guided instruction, coaching or other evidence-based practices that improve student outcomes.

HB2/HAFCS/aSFC also includes a number of related recurring appropriations to PED for professional development, including \$3 million for principal professional development, and \$200 thousand for computer science teacher professional development. HB2/HAFCS/aSFC includes a

nonrecurring appropriation of \$875 thousand to PED for an early literacy summer professional development program.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Funding to Support Professional Development. While the Legislature has supported increased appropriations for educator professional development, the state’s framework for professional development is implemented and funded in a disjointed manner. School districts fund professional development on their own or through the use of grants from various entities, including PED, the federal government, and nonprofit organizations. In 2003, the Legislature created the teacher professional development fund to provide funding for professional development programs and projects for school teachers. PED has received sporadic appropriations and have administered different professional development programs each year, making it unclear how the funding for teacher professional development would be prioritized. It is unclear how PED will decide to use any dollars appropriated to the teacher professional development fund; the Legislature has proposed competing professional development initiatives and other programs that require professional development, including bilingual and multicultural education programs or extended learning time programs.

The statute outlining these requirements illustrate an intention for professional development and performance evaluations to be intertwined. The new teacher evaluation system is being finalized by PED, following a nine-month stakeholder engagement and teacher evaluation task force. Until the final recommendation is publicized by PED, it is unclear how the new teacher evaluation system will impact the implementation of professional development.

While the state has established a framework for professional development, statewide access to high-quality professional development is gated by a lack of funding. Section 22-10A-19.1 NMSA 1978 requires PED to establish a framework for professional development. In administrative rule, the department adopted the National Staff Development Council “standards for staff development” as a baseline for professional development. To be eligible for PED funding, school districts or charter schools must apply and certify their professional development programs accomplish the following: group teachers in learning communities, connect teacher goals for professional development with student focused outcomes, deepen educators’ knowledge of their content area, and provide teachers the tools to better connect with their students. However, due to a lack of money in the teacher professional development fund, there is no incentive for school districts to meet the standards in law.

In addition to the statutory professional development framework, PED recently began administering the Teacher Pursuing Excellence (TPE) program. TPE provided professional development to teachers rated minimally effective or ineffective by the now-defunct NMTeach teacher evaluation system. However, not all school districts had access to TPE; in FY17, only six school districts participated in the program.

High-Quality Professional Development. Though it is unclear how teacher professional development funds will be spent, SB213 may give PED an opportunity to strategically implement a professional development system that fills in gaps in knowledge and skills and supports and sustains educator growth. A growing body of empirical research suggests that a set of features is common to effective professional development. Standalone workshops do not provide the necessary interactive and social characteristics for discourse and improvement and ongoing coaching is key. Educator quality is the most important factor in improving student outcomes.

Many education reforms rely on teacher learning and the improved instruction that leads to increased student learning; understanding what makes professional development effective is critical to its success. Top-performing countries provide their teachers with ongoing opportunities for professional development and collaboration. Oftentimes, teachers receive job-embedded professional development that directly ties to their work in the classroom. Schedules and calendars in top-performing countries are developed to strategically support ample time for professional development and teacher collaboration.

RELATED BILLS

Relates to HB102, National Board Certification Scholarship Act, which allows PED to make scholarship awards to teachers licensed at a level 2 or higher to cover the cost of their National Board Certification.

Relates to SB36, Creating the Teacher Preparation Task Force, which creates the teacher preparation task force to focus on improving the quality of and increasing accountability measures for teacher preparation programs with a focus on creating a strategic plan for teacher preparation in the state.

Related to HB62, Teacher Mentorship Program, which creates the teacher mentorship fund to implement school district and charter school mentorship programs.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files

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