

Date: February 17, 2005

To: Members of the House Subcommittee on Education Finance Structures

From: Representative Kathy Haigh, Vice Chair, House Subcommittee on Education Finance Structures

Subject: Knowledge and Skills Based Teacher Pay and Incentive (Differential) Pay Work Group Report to Subcommittee

This group met three times and tried to sort through several issues that proved to be somewhat controversial. The group included representatives from WEA, the Professional Educator Standards Board, OSPI, Principals, and a fairly steady group of five or six legislators.

The first week we discussed what we considered to be incentives and generally agreed that teacher quality and student achievement were two separate issues to be measured under a knowledge and skills based pay structure. The fundamental belief that student achievement is directly related to the quality of the teacher was a basic assumption we had to make to move forward on the incentive discussion. We also made progress on using the same terminology. It was obvious that we did not all have the same ideas nor did we agree as to our goal as a work group the first week. Home work assignments were given.

Alternative pay structures were presented to the whole sub group with very little evidence of success to this date. We were encouraged by the idea that some school districts are "ready to go" if the opportunity and funding were made available. To that end a proposal was given to the group the third week for discussions. Several people worked very hard on a proposal for pilots which included RFP process and this was discussed at some level of detail by the group.

There was a strong feeling that schools would have to come forward with strong cooperation and commitment from school administration, certified and classified staff, and community. They would have to have some level of assurance that it would be able to work with fewer constraints and be given a time frame of 6 years.

It was agreed that the process should derive information for the legislature to make further decisions as to how to support such a process in the future if successful. It should also allow the schools the ability to get out of the process if they are not able to make it support the ongoing professional development of teachers and insure quality teaching with the outcome of school improvement and student achievement.

The third week we discussed the proposal for pilot projects in more detail. We also discussed a laundry list of challenges and general options for incentives. However, we felt the need to come together with the discussion group on salary structure before more details could be worked out.