

ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 455

Introduced by Juarez, 5; Cavanaugh, J., 9; Conrad, 46; Guereca, 7; Hughes, 24; Hunt, 8; Raybould, 28; Rountree, 3.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to propose an interim study to examine recruitment, retention, and professional recognition of prekindergarten, elementary, and secondary educators.

Educators are essential to the academic success, workforce readiness, and civic development of students in the state. Meanwhile, school districts are experiencing ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified educators, including teachers, faculty, and support staff. Educators have reported feeling undervalued as professionals, citing concerns related to compensation, benefits, workplace conditions, administrative burdens, and the overall respect and recognition afforded to the profession. Increased workloads, emotional demands, student behavioral challenges, and safety concerns contribute to educator burnout and attrition. Contract negotiations and, in some cases, failed negotiations between educators and employers may further impact morale, retention, and the stability of educational environments. State and federal educational mandates, compliance requirements, and administrative expectations may contribute to increased burdens on educators and reduce the time available for instruction and student engagement. Shortages of qualified educators, including substitute teachers and paraeducators, place additional strain on existing staff and impact the quality of education delivered to students. Improving educator recognition, professional respect, and working conditions is essential to strengthening Nebraska's education system and ensuring long-term student success.

The study shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of:

(1) Factors contributing to educator shortages and challenges in recruitment;

(2) Causes of educator demoralization and attrition, including burnout, workload, and workplace conditions;

(3) Compensation structures, including salaries and benefits, and the competitiveness of such salaries and benefits regionally and nationally;

(4) The impact of student behavior, discipline policies, and classroom management challenges on educator retention;

(5) Administrative burdens, educational mandates, and compliance requirements affecting educator workload;

(6) The impact of contract negotiations, including failed negotiations, on educator morale and retention;

(7) School safety concerns and their effect on educator well-being;

(8) Availability of resources, funding structures, and out-of-pocket expenses incurred by educators;

(9) Strategies to improve professional recognition, respect, and public perception of educators;

(10) Evidence-based practices and policies from other states that successfully improve educator recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction; and

(11) Strategies the state and school districts may implement to mitigate educator burnout, improve workplace conditions, and incentivize long-term retention in the profession.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the Education Committee of the Legislature shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature.