



# Northwest Educational Service District 189

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Dr. Gerald W. Jenkins, *Superintendent*

February 18, 2015

The Honorable Rosemary McAuliffe  
Washington State Senate  
P.O. Box 40401  
Olympia, WA 98504-0401

## RE: Regional Support for SB 5148

Dear Senator McAuliffe:

We are writing on behalf of the ***thirty-five school district superintendents in Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom, Island, and San Juan counties to urge your support for SB 5148***, which would authorize members of the teachers' retirement system who retire early under alternate early retirement provisions to work as substitute teachers while receiving retirement benefits.

School districts throughout the region and state have experienced increasing difficulty securing qualified substitute teachers. This has negatively impacted students and their learning through various compensating strategies:

- Reassignment of specialists to cover classrooms— resulting in the loss of specialist support services (e.g., library, reading/mathematic intervention, physical education/health).
- Use of substitutes qualified under an “emergency” certification with no educational training.
- Combining of classrooms under the supervision of a teacher—thereby doubling class size and reducing instructional quality/support for twice the number of students.

SB 5148 would permit access to a pool of fully-trained and experienced substitute teachers, permitting continued provision of quality instruction to students in classrooms/programs when a teacher cannot be present for health or other reasons.

Please feel free to contact either of us if we can provide any additional information. Again, thank you for your leadership and work on behalf of students in Washington State.

Sincerely and on behalf of the Northwest region public school district superintendents,

Dr. Jo Moccia, Chair  
NWESD Superintendents' Advisory Committee

Dr. Jerry Jenkins, Superintendent  
Northwest Educational Service District

C: Senator Steve Litzow, Chair, Senate Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee  
NWESD School District Superintendents  
NWESD Board of Directors