



Education Doctorate Degree (Ed.D.) Western Washington University House Bill 1755

NEED:

Western Washington University started offering a Superintendent's Certification Program in 2005 with the goal of preparing students to become effective school district leaders. Since the beginning of this program, students and faculty have emphasized the need for a Western Ed.D. program. This proposed program is designed to expand on the existing superintendent's certification program. It will provide the focused learning necessary for school leaders to dig deeper into the methodology, research, collaborative investigation and evidence necessary to help drive educational change and school improvement. It will support the important work of providing high quality, data driven instruction and learning opportunities for all students in diverse classrooms.

ACCESSIBILITY:

While both the University of Washington and Washington State University offer a public school option for completing an Ed.D. for superintendents, the need is not being adequately met because of inaccessibility. Those in the North Puget Sound region of Washington State who aspire to earning an Ed.D. find the prospect of connecting effectively to doctoral programs in Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, and other distant locales particularly daunting. With this in mind, it is not surprising that students have repeatedly voiced a strong desire for Western to add an Ed.D. taught by experienced and practicing school administrators, based on face-to-face instruction and authentic learning experiences.

DEMAND:

Over 600 Western graduates are currently working as principals, central office administrators, or school superintendents and routinely ask when we might be able to offer an Ed.D., voicing their preference for completing a degree through Western. In a survey involving Western superintendent credential students, 94% indicated that they would apply for an Ed.D. program if Western offered one.

Superintendents as well as principals have provided feedback to our program indicating that achieving an Ed.D. is desirable in order to take the next step in district leadership. A review of State data reveals that districts are more likely to hire administrators with an Ed.D.

As Western begins the initial planning for a possible Ed.D., communication from eager, potential candidates indicates that our problem will not be filling student seats; it will be deciding who will get the opportunity to enter a program that prides itself on small class sizes and practical, field-based experience and learning.

COST:

The Western Ed.D. Program will be self-supporting and is not requesting any state funds. With a highly competitive rate of \$323 per graduate credit, students will reap the benefits of a comprehensive face-to-face program offered in North Puget Sound.