

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6041

As of January 18, 2012

Title: An act relating to lighthouse schools.

Brief Description: Regarding lighthouse school programs.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Litzow, Rolfes and Hobbs.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/18/12.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: In 2010 the Legislature directed the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to designate up to three schools at the middle and high school levels with a focus on project-based science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) instruction to serve as lighthouse programs. The designated lighthouse schools are to provide technical assistance to other schools and communities that want to create schools with a STEM focus. The Legislature provided \$150,000 in the 2010 Supplemental Operating Budget to fund the technical assistance.

Summary of Bill: OSPI must designate up to three elementary schools as STEM lighthouse programs in addition to the schools designated at the middle and high school levels. A STEM lighthouse account is created to support the lighthouse schools to serve as resources to other schools and communities that want to create STEM schools. Revenues to the account may include gifts from the private sector, federal funds, and appropriations by the state Legislature. OSPI may authorize expenditures from the account.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: We believe that the STEM lighthouse program should be expanded to include elementary schools and have been told to consider expanding into Pre-Kindergarten to create this pathway for our students. There was not enough money for our all our designated schools to benefit once we created this program—however, they did get banners and recognition for the good work that they are doing. Highlighting these schools grows best practices and provides models for others to learn from. Additionally, lighthouse schools advance STEM and career and technology education (CTE) programs throughout the state through project-based approaches. These are critical in keeping some students in school and addressing the achievement gap. We encourage you to expand the program also by removing the limitation on the number of schools that could be designated so that more schools could be named and the budget still provide a limit by the amount of money provided.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; Shawn Lewis, OSPI.