

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5279

AS OF FEBRUARY 13, 1991

Brief Description: Enhancing student performance.

SPONSORS: Senators Bailey, Skratek, Rinehart, Murray, A. Smith and Bauer; by request of Governor Gardner.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Staff: Larry Davis (786-7422)

Hearing Dates: February 14, 1991

BACKGROUND:

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION - The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) was enacted in 1985. ECEAP provides services to four-year-old children who, without special assistance, would be at-risk of failure upon commencing formal education. Eligibility is based on family income at or below 100 percent of the poverty guidelines. ECEAP is a comprehensive program with four components: education, health services, social services, and parental involvement.

The number of children served under ECEAP has grown from 1,000 children in 1986 to approximately 5,098 in the 1990-91 program year. The federal early intervention program, Head Start, serves 6,497 four-year-old children. An additional 580 four-year-old children are expected to be served under Head Start with a recent federal expansion of the program. This leaves 2,713 eligible four-year-old children still unserved by either Head Start or ECEAP.

THE BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM - Since, and including, enactment of the Basic Education Act in 1977, the state has established a number of programs and requirements, both temporary and ongoing, with the intent of enhancing the quality of education in the state's common schools. With passage of the Schools for the 21st Century program in 1987, there has been a focus on the number of state-imposed education requirements, both by the Legislature and by state agency rules, which may be inhibiting educational restructuring initiatives. It is suggested that eliminating or waiving many state-imposed requirements would enable schools and school districts to shift their attention from compliance with the requirements and instead devote their attention on the educational outcomes of students.

SUMMARY:

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION - The Legislature declares its intent to appropriate sufficient funds to allow all low-income four-year-old children to participate in either the Head Start or ECEAP programs beginning with the 1992-93 school year.

THE BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM - The Legislature declares its belief that all kids can learn, that the purpose of education is to develop flexible, self-directed, and interactive learners, and its intent to set high goals and expectations for what students should know and be able to do and to hold schools accountable for the results.

The goal of the Basic Education Act is changed to ensure that all students will demonstrate mastery of the following basic skills and essential core competencies:

<u>Basic Skills</u>	<u>Essential Core Competencies</u>
Reading	English
Writing	Math
Speaking	Science/Technology
Computing	History
Thinking Critically	Geography
	Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students demonstrate mastery of the basic skills by the completion of elementary school and demonstrate mastery of the essential core competencies by the completion of secondary school.

The Legislature declares its intent that students be provided additional learning opportunities in: the fine, visual, or performing arts; an additional language; health and physical education; and that secondary students be provided additional learning opportunities designed to prepare them to enter the work force, and that integrate work force skills with the related essential core competencies.

Students are encouraged to learn as much as they can and as fast as they can throughout their school careers. Class sizes and configurations shall be constructed to meet the individual needs of students as learners.

School boards and professional certificated staff shall be held accountable for ensuring that students master the basic skills and essential core competencies. The boards shall delegate to the professional certificated staff at each school sufficient program and budget authority and accountability to allow each school to effectively accomplish the goal of the Basic Education Act (ensure students' mastery of the basic skills and essential core competencies.)

Private schools shall also ensure students have mastered the basic skills and essential core competencies.

The current requirement for each district to publish annually a descriptive guide is repealed. Instead, each district shall set policies requiring each school in the district to publish annually a descriptive guide of the school's budget, programs, and its students' and schools' performance.

Current BEA total program hour offerings requirements are repealed (i.e., 450 hours in kindergarten; 2,700 hours in grades 1-3; 2,970 hours in grades 4-6; 1,980 in grades 7-8; and 4,320 hours in grades 9-12.). In place of program hour offerings, districts must:

- a) Provide a district-wide annual average of at least 900 instructional hours per school year in elementary and secondary schools, and a district-wide annual average of at least 450 hours in kindergarten; and
- b) Provide evidence demonstrating that students have achieved mastery of the basic skills or the essential core competencies.

COMMISSION FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING - The Commission for the Assessment of Student Learning is established in the Washington State Institute for Public Policy at The Evergreen State College. The 12-member commission is comprised of: seven members appointed by the Governor; and as ex officio members: the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the President of the State Board of Education, the chair of the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the chair of the State Board for Community College Education, and the chair of the State Board for Vocational Education or its successor agency.

The commission employs a director and other staff as necessary and is authorized to enter into contracts and supplemental contracts with master teachers, higher education faculty, and state or national educational research institutes or organizations to assist in the development of the assessment system.

The commission shall establish specific student performance standards of achievement for what a student should know and be able to do in the basic skills by the end of elementary school, and specific student performance standards of achievement for what a student should know and be able to do in the essential core competencies for graduation from secondary school.

The performance standards for the basic skills shall be adopted and in effect in the 1992-93 school year. The performance standards for the essential core competencies shall be adopted and in effect in the 1993-94 school year.

Districts may petition the State Board of Education to modify or waive the student achievement standards for students in handicapped programs or in state institutions and state residential school programs.

The commission shall establish a state examination system to assess student mastery of the performance standards and adopt a statewide performance-based assessment system using a variety of methodologies such as projects, portfolios, and examinations to measure student achievement in the basic skills and essential core competencies. The assessment system shall include a secondary school competency examination, which shall include a year-long interdisciplinary project, that leads to the awarding of a certificate of initial mastery.

A statewide assessment system shall be in effect in the 1993-94 school year for the basic skills and in effect in the 1994-95 school year for the essential core competencies.

Financing for the assessment system shall be recommended by the commission to the Governor, the SPI, and the Legislature for inclusion in the 1993-95 biennial budget.

The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to implement and ensure accountability for the achievement of the standards of achievement of the basic skills and essential core competencies established by the commission.

WAIVERS - Upon the effective date of the bill, school districts ready to begin restructuring their schools may request from the SPI or the State Board waivers of laws or rules relating to: length of the school year, teacher contact hour requirements, program hour offerings requirements, student to teacher ratios, salary lid compliance requirements, the commingling of funds appropriated for such programs as highly capable students, transitional bilingual instruction, and learning assistance, and other administrative rules as determined by the SPI or the State Board (same waivers as may be requested under the Schools for the 21st Century Program).

LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM STUDY - The Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with the Legislative Budget Committee and the Office of Financial Management, shall evaluate the formulas for allocating Learning Assistance Program (LAP) funds to school districts, and submits to the Legislature by December 15, 1991, a report with recommendations on the formulas.

REPEALERS - Repealers which become effective 90 days after the bill is signed into law:

- o 28A.230.240 State eleventh grade test.
- o Current BEA goals.
- o Current BEA program hours offerings requirements.
- o Current authority for districts to schedule the last five days of the 180 day school year for noninstructional purposes for graduating seniors.
- o Annual school district descriptive guide.
- o Current teacher direct classroom contact hours requirement of an average of 25 hours per week.
- o The state eleventh grade test.

Repealers which become effective June 30, 1993:

- o 28A.230.010 Course content requirements to meet or exceed basic education act skills, state minimum high school graduation requirements, and courses required to meet the minimum college entrance requirements.
- o 28A.230.020 Requirement that all schools give instruction in identified subjects and that teachers stress fundamentals in conduct.
- o 28A.230.030 Requirement that all students in the public schools be taught in English.
- o 28A.230.040 Physical education requirements in grades 1-8.
- o 28A.230.050 Physical education requirements in grades 9-12.
- o 28A.230.060 One-year course of study in the history and government of the U.S. and equivalent of one semester course of study in the history and government of Washington State.
- o 28A.230.090 State minimum high school graduation requirements, except for sign language as satisfying any foreign language requirement.
- o 28A.230.100 Mandate that the State Board adopt rules to implement the state minimum high school graduation requirements.
- o 28A.230.110 Add one elective credit for high school graduation in the fine, visual or performing arts or any of the other subject areas requiring credits for high school graduation (effective for students who began ninth grade after July 1, 1987).
- o 28A.230.130 Requirement that all public high schools provide students with courses necessary to meet minimum college entrance requirements.
- o 28A.230.190 Optional school district test in grade two.

State fourth grade test.
- o 28A.230.200 Language encouraging districts to test students periodically as they move from grade eight through grade eleven.

- o 28A.230.210 Optional Washington Life Skills Test.
- o 28A.230.220 Intent language for the state testing program for grades eight and eleven.
- o 28A.230.230 State eighth grade test.
- o 28A.230.250 Requirement that OSPI coordinate the procedures and content of the state tests for grades eight and eleven.
- o 28A.230.260 Annual OSPI report to the Legislature on the results of the grade eight and eleven state tests.
- o 28A.165.070 The formula for distributing funds for the Learning Assistance Program (LAP).

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

Effective Date: June 30, 1993 for certain provisions.