

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5822**

**AS OF FEBRUARY 25, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Adopting the local control of education act.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Bailey, Rasmussen and Skratek; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Board of Education.

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Staff:** Larry Davis (786-7422)

**Hearing Dates:**

**BACKGROUND:**

Over the years, the state has enacted a number of requirements in statute and through state agency rules in an effort to enhance the quality of the common school system. Recent debate about educational reform and restructuring has focused on providing school districts greater authority to determine policies and practices to meet the varied needs of the students in their communities. 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:**

The public policy purpose of the bill is to provide school boards greater authority to determine the fundamental policies and practices related to education, including authority to structure the local education program to meet the needs of the students as defined by the patrons in the community.

The Basic Education Act (BEA) of 1977 is renamed the Local Control of Education Act (LCEA).

SCHOOL BOARDS

School boards are given broad discretionary power to adopt policies that provide for the development and implementation of programs and practices that benefit the education, health or safety of citizens, and promote the effective, efficient, or safe maintenance and operation of school district programs, activities, services, or practices. School boards must give prior notice before adopting policies, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, and provide reasonable opportunity for public written or oral comment.

School boards must establish programs for students who plan to apply for admission to college and establish programs that prepare students for employment or further technical training after high school.

School boards must establish policies and procedures that provide for the results of the Washington State High School and Beyond assessment program to be used to assist each student to plan and prepare for high school and post high school career steps.

School boards must ensure compliance with the provisions of the statutory, mandatory, school building self-study process. Persons employed by districts in positions requiring certification must possess the appropriate, current, and valid certificate.

#### LOCAL CONTROL OF EDUCATION ACT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The basic program of education is defined to consist of:

- o The basic education allowance to school districts;
- o The appropriation for handicapped programs;
- o Part-time student enrollment;
- o Student transportation allocations;
- o The Learning Assistance Program (LAP);
- o The Transitional Bilingual Instructional program;
- o In districts with high schools, a program to permit enrolled students to meet high school graduation requirements.

The requirements regarding total program offerings and course mix and percentage requirements, teacher contact hours, and the 180-day school year are repealed. In place of these requirements, districts must provide:

- A) A total instructional hour offering of 450 hours to kindergarten students in: reading, arithmetic, and language skills; and
- B) A district-wide annual average total instructional hour offering of 1000 hours for students enrolled in grades 1-12. In one or more of these grades, instruction must be provided in: reading/language arts, foreign languages, mathematics, social studies, science, music, art, health, physical education and work force skills.

Definitions are provided for "instructional hours" and "instruction in work force skills". The state board is authorized to define alternatives to classroom instructional time for students in grades 9-12 enrolled in alternative learning experiences, and shall establish rules to determine annual average instructional hours for districts with fewer than twelve grades. The instructional hour requirements may be met through interdisciplinary offerings.

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

State minimum high school graduation requirements are deleted from statute but the state board is still required to adopt high school graduation requirements by rule.

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Private schools are required to provide the annual minimum instructional hour offerings required of public schools.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is required to provide districts, upon request, technical assistance in such areas as curriculum development, assessment of student performance, and program evaluation.

REPEALERS (effective 90 days after the bill is signed into law)

- o RCW 28A.150.210 Goal of the Basic Education Act.
- o RCW 28A.150.220 That portion only setting forth BEA program hours offerings, and course mix and percentage requirements.  
That portion only specifying the length of the school year as 180 days.
- o RCW 28A.150.230 That portion only specifying what information must be included in the districts' annual descriptive guide.
- o RCW 28A.150.260 That portion only relating to teacher contact hour requirements.
- o RCW 28A.230.090 That portion only setting state minimum high school graduation requirements.
- o RCW 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 the ninth grade after July 1, 1987).
- o RCW 28A.305.140 Authority for districts to request from the state board a waiver from the BEA program hours offerings requirements.
- o RCW 28A.320.210 Student learning objectives.

- o RCW 28A.320.220 Language encouraging but not requiring districts to set district goals annually.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested February 22, 1991