

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6178

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS, FEBRUARY 5, 1992

Brief Description: Improving the common school system.

SPONSORS: Senators Bailey, Erwin, Oke, Barr and Nelson

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6178 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Erwin, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Craswell, Metcalf, Oke, and Talmadge.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Murray, Pelz, Rinehart, and A. Smith.

Staff: Larry Davis (786-7422)

Hearing Dates: January 21, 1992; January 30, 1992

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 6178 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McDonald, Chairman; Craswell, Vice Chairman; Amondson, Bailey, Bluechel, Cantu, Hayner, Metcalf, Newhouse, Saling, L. Smith, and West.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Bauer, Gaspard, Murray, Niemi, Owen, Rinehart, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Bill Freund (786-7441)

Hearing Dates: February 3, 1992; February 5, 1992

BACKGROUND:

Throughout the state there are a number of local initiatives underway to improve the education of and educational experience for students. However, systemic educational restructuring will still take time. It is suggested that to increase student performance and the accountability of the state's education system, comprehensive educational reform should include: enhancing the teaching profession by revising certification, testing and probationary requirements for teachers; enhancing parents' rights to include providing parents and the public with annual reports on the performance of schools and students; expanding the broad powers and authority of school boards; strengthening student assessment

and learning opportunities; and establishing a state level panel to monitor education reform progress.

SUMMARY:

PART I - ENHANCING THE TEACHING PROFESSION

The masters degree requirement for continuing teacher certification is repealed. The initial certificate is valid for seven years and may be reinstated pursuant to State Board of Education rules.

The entrance-to-practice exam for initial teacher certification, effective August 31, 1993, is amended to also test a candidate's knowledge of subject matter. The exam shall include rather than consist primarily of essay questions. The State Board shall adopt rules for handling cases in which a candidate passes only one part of the entrance-to-practice exam.

The period of nonrenewal of employment contract for teachers and other nonsupervisory certificated personnel is extended from one to three years during the person's first three years of employment with the district. This does not apply to persons who have completed at least three years of certificated employment in another district in Washington, in which case the period of nonrenewal of employment contract in the new district is limited to one year.

PART II - PARENTS' RIGHTS

By May 30 annually, each school board must establish the schedule of student attendance days for the following school year. A public hearing must be held prior to the board's adoption of the student school calendar. Student attendance days are designated employee work days and are removed from collective bargaining. Employee work days beyond student attendance days may be subject to collective bargaining.

Each school board shall publish annually a school district accountability report. A copy must be available for public inspection at each school in the district, at the district office, and in public libraries. Information in the report includes: mission of the district, student enrollment and demographic data, annual expenditures per pupil and the average compensation for teachers, student scores on mandated tests and college entrance exams, student dropout-absenteeism-graduation rates, and budget information.

Districts are prohibited from charging nonresident students tuition if the student is attending school in the nonresident district because of the school's proximity to child care.

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 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 and provide reasonable opportunity for public written or oral comment.

PART III - STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

If scores on the state 4th, 8th, or 11th grade tests indicate that a student needs more help in identified areas, the district shall provide the student with appropriate learning opportunities in those areas.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is directed to prepare and administer an annual assessment of all students in grade twelve. The purpose of the assessment is to determine student competence in reading, writing, math, language, science and technology, economics, history, geography, and reasoning and thinking skills.

After October 1, 1998, no student may graduate from high school who has not successfully passed the statewide grade twelve assessment.

The statutory state minimum high school graduation requirements are repealed and the State Board of Education is again directed to establish state high school graduation requirements in rule.

PART IV - EDUCATIONAL REFORM PROGRESS MONITORING

The Washington Educational Progress Oversight Panel is created. The panel will report annually to the Legislature and the Governor on the progress of educational restructuring efforts throughout the state. The members of the panel are the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the president of the State Board of Education, and the executive directors of the following: Washington State School Directors' Association, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Work Force Training and Education Coordinating Board.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

PART I - ENHANCING THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Statutory language protecting principals from being transferred to a subordinate certificated position after three consecutive school years in one district is repealed. Such persons would be subject to continuing contract provisions for teachers.

One-half the revenues collected from certification fees are dedicated to support investigations and discipline of certificated staff under the agency's Office of Professional Practices.

PART II - PARENTS' RIGHTS

Language is deleted prohibiting districts from charging a transfer fee of nonresident students if the students' attendance is due to the location of child care.

The annual school district accountability report shall include an invitation to citizens to participate in school activities.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE:

The section dedicating one-half of the revenues collected from certification fees to support investigations and discipline of certificated staff is deleted.

The requirement that school districts provide appropriate learning opportunities for each student based on the results of the 4th, 8th and 11th grade test is changed to one requiring school districts to change their curriculum when test results indicate students need more help in identified areas.

Preparation and implementation of a 12th grade test and the requirement of successful completion of the test for high school graduation after October 1, 1998, are made contingent on provision of specific funding for that purpose.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested January 13, 1992

TESTIMONY FOR (Master's Repeal):

Public higher education institutions bear the burden of having to offer masters programs to meet student demand, but have little state funding to support necessary additional staff. Program quality is being affected. A better incentive to encourage teachers to get a masters degree is to reward them on the salary schedule.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: (Pro) Dr. Gerald Stacy, Central Washington University; Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals; Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

TESTIMONY (Entrance-to-Practice Exam):

Consideration should be given to delaying the effective date for the full exam or the subject matter portion of the exam. There will be additional costs to expanding the entrance-to-practice exam to include subject matter.

TESTIFIED: Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals; Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

TESTIMONY FOR (Extending Teacher Probation Period):

It is important that more time be given to evaluate the performance and growth of new teachers. Extending the period of probation is good for both new teachers and administrators with the responsibility for evaluating them. Extending the probation period for evaluative purposes could be especially important if there is a supply-demand problem and the recruiting pool becomes more shallow.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Lengthening the period of probation for new teachers will not assure that more evaluation will occur.

TESTIFIED: PRO: Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals. CON: Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

TESTIMONY FOR (Student School Calendar):

Removing the student school calendar from collective bargaining would increase the likelihood of more uniform calendars between districts. In some cases, removal of the calendar from collective bargaining would add some stability to districts.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Bargaining over the student school calendar has not been a problem in school districts.

TESTIFIED: John Kvamme, Tacoma School District. PRO: Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals. CON: Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

TESTIMONY FOR (Annual District Accountability Report):

A good idea. The information is important to get to parents and the community. There are very few requests now to see the school district descriptive guide.

TESTIFIED: PRO: John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals

TESTIMONY FOR (Choice" Transfer Fee Due To Child Care): None

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Substantiating the student is receiving child care could be a problem for districts. It is not appropriate to single out one issue as an exception prohibiting the application of the transfer fee. There are cost impacts to accepting nonresident students and some district's have passed levies. Districts should have the ability to charge a transfer fee accordingly.

TESTIFIED: Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals. **CON:** John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association

TESTIMONY FOR (Broaden School Board Powers):

It is appropriate to give greater flexibility to school boards.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association (pro)

TESTIMONY (Student Learning Opportunities):

Use of the word "appropriate" needs to be more clearly defined. Lack of clarity could lead to litigation. It is not clear if the requirement is meant to apply to all students.

TESTIFIED: John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals

TESTIMONY FOR (High School Graduation Test): None

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

A new statewide test will have cost implications, including maintaining test security and providing retake opportunities. An exit test will not serve the interests of all students. Wait for the report of the Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding.

TESTIFIED: John Kvamme, Tacoma School District. **CON:** Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals; Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

TESTIMONY FOR (Graduation Requirements to SBE):

Returning the establishment of graduation requirements to the rule-making process of the State Board would make it easier to change the requirements. The public would still know there are minimum graduation requirements.

TESTIFIED: PRO: Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

TESTIMONY FOR (Educational Progress Panel):

A good idea. The annual progress report would also serve as a means to foster greater communication and cooperation between the agencies represented on the panel.

TESTIFIED: PRO: Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

TESTIFIED BEFORE WAYS & MEANS: Judy Hartmann, WEA (pro master's repeal) (con entrance-to-practice exam); Lorraine Wilson, Washington School Directors Association (pro master's repeal, school board powers expansion, extending teacher probation) (con requiring provision of individual student learning opportunities)