

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2850

As Amended by Senate

Title: An act relating to education.

Brief Description: Changing education provisions.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Dorn, Brough, Cothorn and Karahalios).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, February 4, 1994, DPS;
Passed House, February 15, 1994, 97-0;
Amended by Senate.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Dorn, Chair; Cothorn, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; B. Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; G. Cole; Eide; G. Fisher; Hansen; Holm; Jones; Karahalios; J. Kohl; Patterson; Pruitt; Roland; Stevens and L. Thomas.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1209 (1993) included a number of programs and activities intended to improve student learning in the state's K-12 education system.

The bill included, among other things, Student Learning Improvement grants, the development of a statewide technology plan, the establishment of a Joint Select Committee on Education Restructuring and a new Center for the Improvement of Student Learning.

Student Learning Improvement grants

According to ESHB 1209, funding for the Student Learning Improvement grants is to be based on the number of certificated staff, classified instructional aides and classified secretaries in schools that apply for grants. However, budget language provided funding based only on the number of certificated staff in each school.

Also, budget language has been interpreted to read that these funds may only be used for certificated staff. This contradicts language in ESHB 1209 that states that the funding formula is for allocation purposes only and that local school representatives are to determine how the funds will be spent.

Statewide Technology Plan

ESHB 1209 required that the Superintendent of Public Instruction develop a statewide technology plan and recommendations on a technology grant program by December 15, 1993. While progress has been made in both areas, participants have requested that more time be provided before final products are due.

Select Committee on Education Restructuring

One of the tasks given to the Select Committee on Education Restructuring is to review all laws pertaining to K-12 education, except laws involving the "health, safety and civil rights" of students and staff. In the process of the committee's review, some members found that excluding laws involving health, safety and civil rights prevented the committee from reviewing the entire K-12 education system, and, if needed, from improving health, safety and civil rights laws.

Center for the Improvement of Student Learning

The Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, which was created in ESHB 1209, replaced the State Clearinghouse for Education Information. However, several references in statute to the clearinghouse were not removed.

School Report Cards/Descriptive guide

ESHB 1209 requires schools to complete annual "report cards" for parents and the community. Since 1977, schools have been required to complete a descriptive guide that serves a similar function.

Education Fiscal Committee

An Education Fiscal Committee was created in ESHB 1209 to review the education funding system. The due date for the committee's final recommendations is January 16, 1995.

Summary of Bill: Student Learning Improvement grants:

Changes are made in the Student Learning Improvement grant program to clarify that funds may be used for planning and staff development for certificated and classified staff and for other activities consistent with the purpose of the grant program, and may be used in July and August prior to the school year. Also, funding allocations are to be based only on the number of certificated staff in each building.

Statewide Technology Plan: The due dates for the statewide Technology plan and grant program recommendations are delayed until September 1, 1994.

Select Committee on Education Restructuring: The Select Committee on Education Restructuring is allowed to review K-12 education statutes pertaining to the health, safety and civil rights of students.

Center for the Improvement of Student Learning: References to the State Clearinghouse for Education Information are deleted in statute.

School Report Cards/Descriptive guide
The requirement that school districts complete a descriptive guide is repealed.

Education Fiscal Committee
The Education Fiscal Committee's due date for its final recommendations is delayed until December 15, 1995.

Student Learning Goals
A list of basic values and character traits is added to the preface of the four goals of the Basic Education Act. These values and traits include such things as honesty, self-discipline, respect for authority, and healthy behavior.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

Student Learning Improvement Grants. In 1994-95, the grants may be provided, subject to appropriation, for up to four days instead of three to five days. In 1995-96 and 1996-97, subject to appropriation, grants may be provided for up to four days instead of five days. The language is clarified to avoid repetition and delete obsolete language.

Joint Select Committee on Education Restructuring. The committee is given an additional year to submit its recommendations on data about schools and school districts.

Basic Values and Character Traits. The list of basic values and character traits is added as a new section to the code rather than amending the student learning goals. Local communities determine how the values are learned through consensus at the local level. The terminology describing one of the values and traits is changed from "constructive behavior" to "positive behavior."

Technical Changes. A double amendment is corrected and a contingent expiration date is clarified.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 27, 1994.

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

Testimony For: This will help in the implementation of the Education Reform bill, especially with regard to the Student Learning Improvement grants.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Susan Patrick, Superintendent of Public Instruction (pro).

VOTE ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Yeas 97; Excused 1

Excused: Representatives Riley