

FINAL BILL REPORT

EHB 1175

Synopsis as Enacted

C 371 L 93

Brief Description: Regarding the study of American Indian languages and cultures in the common schools.

By Representatives Jacobsen, Dellwo, Dorn, J. Kohl, Brumsickle, Linville, Dunshee, Pruitt, Johanson, Wood, Leonard and Basich.

House Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Education

Background: American Indians have expressed concern that their children are no longer learning the Indian languages. Part of the reason is that Indian languages are rarely taught in schools.

In addition, it is thought that the term "foreign language" is often used inappropriately. As the original inhabitants of North America, American Indians think English is the foreign language.

A concern also exists that history classes in the state's schools do not provide enough information regarding the culture, governance and history of American Indian peoples.

The dropout rate of American Indian students in the state's public schools is more than twice the overall state dropout average. Some suggest the lack of accurate instruction and perspective about American Indians contributes to poor self image and low retention of American Indian students.

Summary: References to "foreign" languages in the education code are changed to "languages other than English." When references to "languages other than English" are made relative to course offerings and high school graduation requirements, it is clarified that American Indian languages qualify as languages other than English.

Schools are encouraged to include information on the culture, history, and government of American Indian peoples in Washington State history and government classes.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 98 0

Senate 40 2 (Senate amended)
House (House refused to concur)

Conference Committee

Senate 37 2
House 98 0

Effective: July 25, 1993
September 1, 2000 (Section 2)