

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5418

C 388 L 99

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Changing school accountability and assistance provisions.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Rasmussen, Patterson and Kohl-Welles; by request of Governor Locke, Superintendent of Public Instruction and Commission on Student Learning).

Senate Committee on Education

House Committee on Education

House Committee on Appropriations

Background: *The Commission on Student Learning (CSL):* CSL consists of three members of the State Board of Education (SBE) and eight Governor appointees. The primary duties of CSL are to identify what all public school students should know and be able to do (the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs)), develop student assessments to test EALRs, and develop a statewide school accountability system. CSL must make recommendations regarding a statewide accountability system by June 30, 1999. CSL expires on June 30, 1999. CSL must transfer the EALRs, the completed assessments and the assessments in development to SPI before it expires.

Goals: In 1998, the Legislature required each school district and school to establish a goal to increase the percentage of students who meet or exceed the reading standard on the fourth grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) and establish annual increments to meet the goal.

Reporting: The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) must report by school and school district the fourth grade WASL results to schools, school districts and the Legislature, including posting the results on the SPI Internet site.

Each school district must annually report, in writing, the district's progress toward meeting the reading goals to the parents, community and local media.

The Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL): The 1993 Education Reform Act created CISL within the office of SPI to serve as a clearinghouse for successful education restructuring programs and best practices to improve student learning as well as provide training and consultation services. SPI must annually report to CSL on the activities of the CISL.

Student Learning Improvement Grants (SLIGs): The 1993 Education Reform Act created SLIGs for the 1994-95 school year through the 1996-97 school year to provide staff development and planning to improve student learning. The Legislature has funded some form of SLIGs since 1993.

Accountability Task Force: The CSL convened an Accountability Task Force to develop recommendations for a statewide school accountability system. CSL adopted the task force recommendations on October 19, 1998. The proposed legislation contains some of the recommendations.

Summary: Provisions for a statewide K-12 accountability system are enacted.

The Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission (A+ Commission): The A+ Commission is created to provide oversight of the accountability system. The commission consists of the SPI and eight members appointed by the Governor. Each major caucus of the Senate and the House of Representatives must submit a list of three names to the Governor. The Governor must select a commission member from each list. The duties of the commission are to: (1) establish and revise statewide academic goals in reading, writing, science and mathematics, subject to legislative review and comment; (2) in consultation with the SPI, identify the scores students must achieve in order to meet the standard on the WASL; (3) identify schools and school districts for assistance, recognition, and intervention. However, no state intervention must occur prior to June 30, 2001, or prior to the Legislature authorizing a set of intervention strategies; (4) identify performance incentive systems; (5) annually review the reporting system and recommend changes as necessary; and (6) annually report to the Legislature, the Governor, the SPI and the SBE.

By September 5, 2000, the commission must recommend accountability policies to the Governor, the SPI and the Legislature, including additional assistance and rewards, state intervention strategies using multiple sources of information, and any statutory changes necessary to give the SPI authority to implement the intervention strategies.

Commission on Student Learning (CSL): The powers, duties, functions, and materials of the CSL are transferred to SPI or the A+ Commission as appropriate, beginning July 1, 1999.

Goals: By December 15, 2001, each school district and school must establish a goal to increase the percentage of students who meet or exceed the math standard on the fourth and seventh grade components of the WASL and establish annual increments to meet the goal. The A+ Commission may establish and revise statewide goals in additional content areas and grade levels.

Reporting: SPI must report to the public, schools, school districts, and the Legislature the results of the WASL and the state-mandated norm-reference standardized tests. Report information is specified. SPI must post the reports on the Internet and ensure that the data is complete and accurate prior to reporting. The percentage and the number of special education and limited English students exempt from taking the assessments is monitored by SPI to ensure compliance with the exemption guidelines.

Each school district must annually report to parents and the community on the district and school improvement goals, student performance relative to the goals, and plans to achieve the goals. Schools and school districts with fewer than ten students in a grade level are not required to report the progress toward meeting the goals, but must report plans to improve student performance.

Each school must include in the annual school performance report specified information relating to the school improvement goals. SPI must make the school performance report information available on or through the SPI's Internet web site.

The Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL): The information to be provided by CISL is expanded to include information on systems to analyze student assessment data and technology systems. CISL must also develop and maintain an Internet web site to provide access to information. CISL's training services are expanded to include regional summer institutes. The annual report by SPI to CSL on the activities of CISL is eliminated.

Student Learning Improvement Grants (SLIGs): The SLIGs statute is repealed.

Accountability Implementation Funds (AIFs): To the extent funds are appropriated, SPI must allocate funds to school districts to provide time for school staff to develop and implement student learning improvement plans. The plans must be available to the public. Activities for expenditure of the AIFs are listed and must minimize the use of substitute teachers. The School for the Blind and the School for the Deaf are eligible to receive AIFs.

Helping Corps: A regional helping corps— of school improvement coordinators and specialists is created to provide schools and school districts with technical assistance to improve student learning. Types of assistance to be provided are listed. The specialists are not permanent employees, but serve on a rotating basis for one to three years.

Study of Fourth Grade Math Assessment: SPI must complete an objective analysis of the fourth grade math assessment and report to the Legislature by August 15, 2000.

Consolidated Planning: SPI must consolidate and streamline the requirements for major state and federal categorical and grant programs and increase the use of electronic applications and reporting.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	31	18	
House	93	0	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House			(House receded)
House	95	0	(House amended)
Senate	42	6	(Senate concurred)

Effective: May 18, 1999 (Sections 502 and 604)
July 1, 1999 (Section 101)
July 25, 1999