

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2337

As Passed House:

February 13, 2002

Title: An act relating to authorizing the academic achievement and accountability commission to set performance improvement goals for certain disaggregated groups of students and dropout goals.

Brief Description: Authorizing the academic achievement and accountability commission to set performance improvement goals for certain disaggregated groups of students and dropout goals.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Santos, Talcott, Kessler, Schmidt, Berkey, Jackley, Upthegrove, Schual-Berke, Wood, Kagi and Ogden; by request of Governor Locke, State Board of Education, Washington State School Directors Association, A+ Commission and Superintendent of Public Instruction).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/30/02, 2/5/02 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/13/02, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Permits the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission to adopt performance improvement goals for all students, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, and students from disproportionately underachieving racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Permits the commission to adopt goals for secondary school graduation rates and dropout rate reduction goals.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Haigh, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Cox, McDermott, Rockefeller, Santos, Schindler, Schmidt and Upthegrove.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

In 1999 the Legislature gave the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission (A+ Commission) the authority to adopt, in rule, student performance improvement goals in reading, mathematics, writing and science.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The A+ Commission may determine and revise academic improvement goals for all students, students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, economically disadvantaged students, and students from racial and ethnic backgrounds that are disproportionately underachieving academically. The A+ Commission may also establish goals for high school graduation rates and dropout rate reduction goals.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 4, 2002.

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

Testimony For: Washington's education reform system has as its foundation the belief that all children can learn. That belief also forms the foundation of the country's new federal education law. Assessment results demonstrate that certain groups of children are not meeting the state's academic standards and that there is a large and growing achievement gap between students from different demographic backgrounds. Children in poverty do far worse on state and national exams than do children from more affluent homes. As a group, children from Native American, Hispanic, and African American families do not achieve the standards at the same rate as children from Caucasian and Asian-American families. About 36 percent of children with disabilities dropout of school before graduation. In order to bring all children to the state's standards, these achievement gaps must be addressed head on. Closing the gap cannot be allowed to result in higher dropout rates. This legislation addresses the need to reduce and eliminate achievement gaps among different student groups. It also parallels the state's responsibilities under the new federal education law. The underlying law contains safeguards since all goals must be provided to the Legislature before their implementation. In addition, there is no penalty for schools and districts that do not achieve the goals.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Santos, prime sponsor; Representative Talcott-; Jose Gaitan, Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission; Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Kristin Bunce, Governor’s Office; Terry Byington, American Electronics Association; Wes Pruitt, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Rainer Houser, Association of Washington State Principals; Barbara Mertens, Washington Association of School Administrators; and Steve Mullin, Washington Roundtable.

(With concerns) Karen Davis, Washington Education Association.