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HOUSE BILL 1312

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State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Representatives Armstrong, O'Brien, Schoesler, Voloria, Cox, Quall, Bush, Talcott, Morell, Benson and Simpson

Read first time 01/23/2001. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to high school graduation requirements; amending  
2 RCW 28A.230.090; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

5 (1) The state's education reform efforts are built on a foundation  
6 that couples high learning standards for students with increased  
7 autonomy and flexibility for schools and school districts;

8 (2) The state board of education had the challenging assignment of  
9 aligning state high school graduation requirements with the state's  
10 learning standards and the essential academic learning requirements;

11 (3) The state board of education should be commended for the  
12 thoughtful and collaborative way it approached its assignment to  
13 restructure state high school graduation requirements;

14 (4) Although the board used a commendable process to determine  
15 state high school graduation requirements, the new requirement that  
16 students must complete a plan and culminating project before graduation  
17 provides school districts with less autonomy and flexibility than they  
18 had before the new requirements were adopted. In addition, the

1 requirement may constrain a student's opportunity to participate in  
2 programs such as running start and tech-prep; and

3 (5) While the state board should define the types of knowledge and  
4 skill students should have in order to graduate, the decision on how to  
5 organize learning opportunities for students to gain that knowledge and  
6 skill should remain with local school boards.

7 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.090 and 1997 c 222 s 2 are each amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 (1) The state board of education shall establish minimum high  
10 school graduation requirements or equivalencies for students. Any  
11 course in Washington state history and government used to fulfill high  
12 school graduation requirements is encouraged to include information on  
13 the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples who  
14 were the first inhabitants of the state. When adopting minimum high  
15 school graduation requirements, the state board shall limit those  
16 requirements to the subject matter competencies that students must  
17 demonstrate and the subject matter Carnegie units they may complete.  
18 Local school directors have the sole authority to determine the  
19 organization of a student's learning opportunities and the means by  
20 which a student will demonstrate subject matter competence and  
21 acquisition of the knowledge and skill needed to meet the goals of the  
22 state's basic education act in RCW 28A.150.210.

23 (2) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state board of  
24 education to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation  
25 requirements, the state board shall periodically reevaluate the  
26 graduation requirements and shall report such findings to the  
27 legislature in a timely manner as determined by the state board.

28 (3) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages other  
29 than English established by the state board of education or a local  
30 school district, or both, for purposes of high school graduation,  
31 students who receive instruction in American sign language or one or  
32 more American Indian languages shall be considered to have satisfied  
33 the state or local school district graduation requirement for  
34 instruction in one or more languages other than English.

35 (4) If requested by the student and his or her family, a student  
36 who has completed high school courses before attending high school  
37 shall be given high school credit which shall be applied to fulfilling  
38 high school graduation requirements if:

1 (a) The course was taken with high school students, if the academic  
2 level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth  
3 grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by completing  
4 the same course requirements and examinations as the high school  
5 students enrolled in the class; or

6 (b) The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for  
7 seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for high  
8 school credit, because the course is similar or equivalent to a course  
9 offered at a high school in the district as determined by the school  
10 district board of directors.

11 (5) Students who have taken and successfully completed high school  
12 courses under the circumstances in subsection (4) of this section shall  
13 not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform  
14 any other additional assignment to receive credit. Subsection (4) of  
15 this section shall also apply to students enrolled in high school on  
16 April 11, 1990, who took the courses before attending high school.

17 (6) At the college or university level, five quarter or three  
18 semester hours equals one high school credit.

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