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HOUSE BILL 2577

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State of Washington

57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By Representatives Talcott, Haigh, Cox, Schindler, Pearson, Anderson, Carrell, Schmidt, Nixon, Morell, Casada, Esser, Benson, Holmquist, Miloscia, Mitchell, Mulliken, Quall, Woods, Campbell, Ogden and Upthegrove

Read first time 01/22/2002. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to character education; amending RCW 28A.150.211;  
2 creating a new section; and making an appropriation.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that academic success  
5 rests on a foundation of character. The legislature further finds that  
6 parents are the first and primary moral educators of children, and that  
7 schools have a role in reinforcing the character traits and values  
8 deemed important by parents and the local community. The legislature  
9 further finds that when character education is integrated into a  
10 school's curriculum there is a decline of incidences involving  
11 violence, bullying, and harassment. The legislature intends to  
12 encourage school districts to integrate character education into each  
13 school's curriculum. The legislature further intends that local  
14 communities, in partnership with schools or school districts, should  
15 have the responsibility for determining which character traits and  
16 values are included in each district's or school's character education  
17 program.

1       **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.150.211 and 1994 c 245 s 10 are each amended to  
2 read as follows:

3       (1) The legislature also recognizes that certain basic values and  
4 character traits are essential to individual liberty, fulfillment, and  
5 happiness. However, these values and traits are not intended to be  
6 assessed or be standards for graduation. The legislature intends that  
7 local communities have the responsibility for determining how these  
8 values and character traits are learned as determined by consensus at  
9 the local level. These values and traits include the importance of:

- 10       ~~((1))~~ (a) Honesty, integrity, and trust;
- 11       ~~((2))~~ (b) Respect for self and others;
- 12       ~~((3))~~ (c) Responsibility for personal actions and commitments;
- 13       ~~((4))~~ (d) Self-discipline and moderation;
- 14       ~~((5))~~ (e) Diligence and a positive work ethic;
- 15       ~~((6))~~ (f) Respect for law and authority;
- 16       ~~((7))~~ (g) Healthy and positive behavior; and
- 17       ~~((8))~~ (h) Family as the basis of society.

18       (2) Each school district is strongly encouraged to develop and  
19 implement a character education program that incorporates into its  
20 curriculum the character traits and values included in subsection (1)  
21 of this section. Each school district is also strongly encouraged to  
22 develop its character education program in partnership with parents and  
23 all interested stakeholders in its local community. When developing  
24 character education programs, school districts shall comply with the  
25 open public meetings act, chapter 42.30 RCW.

26       (3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
27 collect and make available on its web site programs and instructional  
28 materials that will help school districts, in consultation with parents  
29 and local community members, to teach students how to demonstrate in a  
30 school setting the character traits in subsection (1) of this section.

31       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of thirty-five thousand dollars, or  
32 as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal  
33 year ending June 30, 2003, from the general fund to the office of the  
34 superintendent of public instruction for the purposes of section 2(3)  
35 of this act.

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