

1786

Sponsor(s): Representatives Haigh, Talcott, Rockefeller, Schual-Berke, Keiser, Conway, Edmonds, Edwards, Kenney and O'Brien; by request of Governor Locke and Superintendent of Public Instruction

Brief Description: Providing grants to districts to foster education reform and improve student achievement.

HB 1786 - DIGEST

Declares that all of Title 28A RCW except for chapter 28A.655 RCW, academic achievement and accountability, is repealed effective September 1, 2004. Before the repeal of Title 28A RCW becomes effective, a new school code will be enacted that will take effect on the first day of the 2004-05 school year. The new structure must be carefully designed by parents, educators, and elected leaders working together to achieve better schools.

Declares that, in order to examine Title 28A RCW, school districts and schools must be given the ability to determine which rules help them provide individual learning environments for all children, so that all children can achieve high standards. Education laws must create a system that focuses on outcomes and achievement rather than program and activity requirements.

Declares that education laws also must give school districts and schools the ability to redesign or modify the teacher compensation system. In its current form, the teacher compensation system often fails to attract and keep top talent in two critical ways. First, often it does not offer teachers sustained opportunities for professional growth and career advancement. Second, it does not provide competitive compensation.

Proposes that local school districts that seek to implement new strategies and structures be allowed to innovate in the operation and management of schools. Two demonstration programs will be developed in partnership with education leaders.

Provides that the flexibility grant program will grant waivers to school districts and schools for most state school rules governing public education, thereby granting more flexibility in the use of state funds to participating school districts. In exchange for this flexibility, school districts and schools will be responsible for increased accountability for student achievement.

Provides that the alternative compensation system grant program will provide state funding to school districts that voluntarily join with their teachers to design and potentially implement a new compensation system based on teacher career paths. A teacher compensation system should be based on professional knowledge, skills, and performance, and provide teachers with real opportunities for professional recognition and growth. The goal is to support quality teaching in all of Washington's classrooms and use the talents and skills of expert educators in mentor or leadership roles.