

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2101

As Reported by House Committee On:

Education

Title: An act relating to developing a P-16 governance structure for preschool through postsecondary education for the benefit of all learners.

Brief Description: Regarding a P-16 governance structure for education.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Berkey, Jarrett, Tom, Pettigrew and Hudgins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/3/03, 3/5/03 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Declares an intent to develop a P-16 governance structure.
- Makes certain legislative findings regarding the benefits of a comprehensive P-16 governance system for collaboration and coordination across educational levels.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; McDermott, Vice Chair; Tom, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cox, Haigh, Hunter and Rockefeller.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson and McMahan.

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

A P-16 system refers to an educational governance structure in which governance of all educational sectors is vested in a single governing authority or statutory coordinating board working with regional and local P-16 councils. The objective is a coherent and flexible continuum of public education policy linking pre-K through university learning

opportunities.

Common goals of a P-16 plan include:

- Expanding early learning access and improving kindergarten readiness;
- Creating smooth transitions from one sector of education to the next;
- Closing the achievement gaps (minority, socioeconomic, geographic);
- Improving teacher education and professional development;
- Strengthening partnership between families and schools;
- Creating a broader range of learning experiences and opportunities in grades 11 and 12;
- Improving college readiness and success.

Implementation of a P-16 system can be done as a broad package of reform or as a continuum of incremental changes. According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS) an increase in state spending of about 12 percent would be required to realize many of the P-16 goals (universal preschool access, higher student achievement, and stronger links between K-12 and higher education). The ESC reports that over half the states currently report working on some aspect of a P-16 system. Florida, Georgia, and Kentucky all passed legislation in 2001 to implement a permanent P-16 structure or some variation thereof.

In the summer of 2002, California approved its Master Plan for Education, which is described as a 20-year road map for education policymakers aimed at improving and transforming student learning. A joint committee convened by the California Legislature created the plan over a three-year period by forming seven working groups of participants with education, business, and civic backgrounds. These groups formulated policy recommendations for the joint committee's consideration, and the joint committee then created the master plan. After development of the plan, the California Legislature also reauthorized the joint committee for an additional two years to help develop legislation to implement the foundational parts of the plan. Implementation is expected to take effect over 10 years if approved.

Summary of Bill:

Makes certain legislative findings regarding the benefits of a comprehensive P-16 governance system for collaboration and coordination across educational levels and declares an intent to develop a P-16 system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill

is passed.

Testimony For: This bill is short and to the point. It was meant to be a work in progress with additional input from stakeholders to develop a process for cooperation, coordination, and collaboration between all educational levels. Education is necessary for the economic development and stability of our state. It is time we look at making learning opportunities preschool through university of superior quality by maximizing our resources and funding. There are benefits for all learners by creating a continuum valued by all. A strategic plan is needed to do it. The bill has the potential to achieve mutual coordination and cooperation between preschool, K-12, and higher education, including opportunities to strengthen teacher and staff development. We support changes in existing governance that result in improved services and coordination and provide for adequate funding. The strategic plan is the way to take this to the next step.

Testimony Against: Education is the fundamental building block of any society, but to put all education under one governing bureaucracy sounds more like what happened to the Hitler youth and the Soviet youth. Where do the parents fit in? Will there be an agenda? Our hope is in the private schools and the home schools. I would like to see the public schools do a better job. The current mass demonstrations indicate a certain amount of brainwashing in our schools. We want our students to think and not be mere followers.

Testified: Representative Kenney, prime sponsor; Larry Davis, State Board of Education; Robbin Dunn, Washington Association of Education for Young Children, Washington State Association of Headstart; Rainer Houser, Association of Washington School Principals; Roger Erskine, League of Education Voters; and Carol Taylor Cann, Washington State Parent Teacher Association.

(Opposed) Myrtle Cooper and Merton Cooper, citizen.