

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## 2SSB 5717

---

---

As Passed Senate, February 13, 2006

**Title:** An act relating to K-12 skill centers.

**Brief Description:** Requiring a study on the availability and use of skill centers.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Rockefeller, Benton, Fairley, Oke, Keiser, Zarelli, Shin, Rasmussen and Kohl-Welles).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: 2/17/05, 2/28/05, 1/25/06 [DP2S].

Passed Senate: 3/14/05, 48-0; 2/13/06, 44-0.

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING, K-12 & HIGHER EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5717 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Higher Education; Weinstein, Vice Chair, Early Learning & K-12; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Carrell, Delvin, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Rasmussen, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Shin.

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** About 7,000 students from 85 school districts attend one of the 10 skill centers operating in the state. Many of the students attend part-time. Skill centers operate under cooperative agreements among participating school districts and primarily provide students with instruction in career and technical education. The superintendents of the participating cooperative school districts serve on an administrative council that governs the skill center. Skill centers receive state funding based on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students at an enhanced funding rate.

**Summary of Bill:** The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Board), in collaboration with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, is directed to study and recommend to the 2007 Legislature how to increase opportunities for students living in areas of the state that are not adequately served by a skills center. If plausible, the Board must provide preliminary recommendations to Washington Learns by June 2006.

The study must focus on these primary issues:

- 1) A report on the current skill center geographic coverage and identify gaps in the service area;
- 2) Recommendations how best to increase program access to students in rural and remote areas and address the difficulties in providing adequate services in high density areas;

- 3) Recommendations on how best to integrate core academic content into skill center programs and how to determine and report skill center course equivalencies for the purpose of meeting high school graduation requirements; and
- 4) Recommendations on the role that skills centers can play as a dropout prevention/retrieval program.

In making the recommendations, the Board must explore the feasibility of creating satellite sites, creating joint programs between high schools and community colleges, using the K-20 network, and offering additional evening and summer programs. The report must also provide an analysis of any additional funding needs or different funding methods necessary to implement the recommendations.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested for the Second Substitute Bill on January 18, 2006.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Testimony For:** This bill is resurrected with a different purpose this session. We have never thought about offering skill centers systematically throughout the state. A limited number of school districts have the ability to offer their students access to a skill center. Now is a good time to look at the expansion of these opportunities. We enthusiastically support anything that will increase and improve the coordination between the academic classes and career and technical classes. We would like to request that the Workforce Board work in collaboration with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction on the study. If you pass SB 6437, then you will not need to do the third item of the study.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testimony Other:** The Workforce Board would be glad to collaborate with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction on the study.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Senator Phil Rockefeller, prime sponsor; Gena Wikstrom, Federation of Private Career Colleges; Rod Duckworth, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; John Aultman, New Market Skills Center; Christy Perkins, Washington State Special Education Coalition; Kathleen Lopp, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education.

OTHER: Madeline Thompson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.