

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5728

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As of March 3, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to studying the community and technical college funding system.

**Brief Description:** Studying the community and technical college funding system.

**Sponsors:** Senators Shin, Berkey, Eide, Rasmussen, Schmidt and Mulliken.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: 2/17/05.

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

**Staff:** Heather Lewis-Lechner (786-7448)

**Background:** The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) is a research organization created by the Legislature to provide nonpartisan research at legislative direction on issues of importance to Washington.

In order to carry out its constitutional responsibility to make ample provision for the education of children in Washington, the Legislature passed the Basic Education Act of 1977. That 1977 Act defined "basic education" by establishing goals, minimum program hours, teacher contact hours, and a mix of course offerings for a school district to provide. Basic education currently refers to kindergarten through grade twelve.

Six programs fall within the definition of basic education:

- general apportionment;
- the special education program for students with disabilities;
- some pupil transportation;
- the Learning Assistance Program for remediation assistance;
- the Transitional Bilingual Education program; and
- educational programs in juvenile detention centers and state institutions.

While the funding formulas for these programs include a variety of components, they generally are based on the number of students, staff ratios, staff salaries and benefits, and amounts for other costs related to delivering education services.

**Summary of Bill:** The WSIPP is directed to study the feasibility of potential funding methods and a finance system for expanding the definition of basic education to include education received at community and technical colleges. The study must be completed by December 1, 2006 and the WSIPP must submit a report with recommendations to the Governor, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Legislature.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Received.

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

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

**Testimony For:** One worries about the educational system and the future of our students in this state. It is not because our educational system is not a good system but because we see the systems in other parts of the world catching up fast and sometimes surpassing us. This concerns me. Time has past since Article IX of our state's Constitution was implemented and the world has changed. In those days, society's expectation was that you needed at least a high school diploma in order to find gainful employment. Things have changed in the last 30 years and that is no longer true. A high school diploma is not enough. We live in a high tech society and more is needed. The definition of basic education needs to reflect that. Many of the jobs available today require at least a two year degree and we need to provide that education to help our young people succeed.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Senator Shin, prime sponsor; Mary Alice Grobins, SBCTC.