
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2245

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2005 Regular Session

By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Quall, Tom, Ormsby, Hunt, Ericks, Haigh and McDermott)

READ FIRST TIME 03/07/05.

1 AN ACT Relating to middle schools and high schools; creating a new
2 section; and declaring an emergency.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that, over the
5 past decade, student learning has improved faster at elementary schools
6 than at middle schools and high schools. The legislature also finds
7 that the achievement gap between white students and students of color
8 and low-income students grows in middle school and high school. For
9 example, forty-nine and three-tenths of one percent of African-American
10 fourth graders meet the Washington assessment of student learning
11 standard for reading, but only thirty-two and two-tenths of one percent
12 meet the standard in tenth grade. These numbers understate the
13 decline, because they do not factor in the disproportionate number of
14 African-American students who drop out of school. The legislature
15 further finds that there is broad recognition that the design of middle
16 schools and high schools is an important component of this problem, and
17 that there is a growing body of research and experience that may help
18 schools accelerate student learning improvement by changing the way

1 schools are organized by increasing rigor, relevance, and
2 relationships.

3 (2) A task force is established to examine the basic design of
4 middle schools and high schools. The task force shall be composed of
5 four members of the house of representatives, two from each major
6 caucus, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; four
7 members of the senate, two from each major caucus, appointed by the
8 president of the senate; two school district superintendents chosen by
9 the Washington association of school administrators; two principals
10 chosen by the Washington association of school principals; two school
11 board members chosen by the Washington state school directors
12 association; the superintendent of public instruction; a representative
13 of the governor; and a representative of skill centers, the Washington
14 association for career and technical education, and the Gates
15 foundation.

16 (3) The task force shall:

17 (a) Examine the rate of student academic improvement in Washington
18 middle schools and high schools and state, national, and international
19 research on redesign efforts;

20 (b) Identify successful models and practices for middle school and
21 high school organization, within Washington, nationally and
22 internationally, that have been shown to:

23 (i) Reduce the dropout rate;

24 (ii) Close the achievement gap;

25 (iii) Accelerate academic improvement;

26 (iv) Improve the teaching and learning of math; and

27 (v) Provide more challenging opportunities for students who meet
28 standards early and more flexible options after the sophomore year; and

29 (c) Identify steps to improve alignment between middle schools and
30 high school, and between high schools and postsecondary education, job
31 training, and the world of work.

32 (4) By December 15, 2005, the task force shall report to the
33 governor, the superintendent of public instruction, and the fiscal and
34 education policy committees of the legislature. The report shall
35 include recommendations for change and improvement consistent with
36 Washington's academic standards and goals. The report shall identify
37 the roles and responsibilities of state policymakers, local school

1 districts, communities, businesses, principals, teachers, parents, and
2 students in school redesign and improvement.

3 (5) Staff services to the task force shall be provided by senate
4 committee services and the house of representatives office of program
5 research.

6 (6) Legislative members of the task force shall receive per diem
7 and travel as provided in RCW 44.04.120. The agency or organization
8 that appoints the other task force members shall be responsible for any
9 per diem and travel provided to its task force members.

10 (7) The task force expires June 30, 2006.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** This act is necessary for the immediate
12 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
13 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
14 immediately.

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