

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2500

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to providing funds to establish and sustain public school arts programs.

Brief Description: Providing for arts education funding.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Appleton, Sells, Hasegawa, Roberts, Conway, Hudgins, Santos, Kessler, Kagi and Simpson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/18/08, 1/29/08 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Amended Bill

- Redirects lottery proceeds currently dedicated to paying baseball stadium bonds to a School Arts Program when the bonds have been retired.
- Directs the Washington State Arts Commission to establish a School Arts Program Committee and a competitive grant process to support arts-infused curriculum, programs, and projects in public schools.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Liias, Roach, Santos and Sullivan.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

When the Washington State Lottery was established in 1982, lottery proceeds net of expenses and prizes were deposited into the State General Fund. In 1995 and 1997 the Legislature dedicated a portion of net lottery proceeds to pay off bonds issued to construct sports stadiums in Seattle. Since Fiscal Year 2005, all net lottery revenues not otherwise dedicated have been

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deposited into the Education Construction Fund (ECF), which is used for school or higher education institution construction. In Fiscal Year 2007 the ECF received \$102 million from lottery revenues.

The portion of lottery revenue dedicated to debt service on the bonds for the Safeco Field baseball stadium was \$4.5 million for Fiscal Year 2007 and grows at 4 percent per year until 2016 or the bonds are retired, whichever occurs first. Based on current forecasts, unanticipated revenue from other sources will allow the bonds to be paid off early, perhaps by the 2011 Fiscal Year. After the Safeco Field bonds are retired, that portion of the net lottery revenue will be deposited in the ECF.

The Washington State Arts Commission (Commission) is a state agency whose mission is to advance and support arts and culture in the state through leadership, knowledge, funding, and resources that build participation in and access to the arts. The Commission consists of 19 members appointed by the Governor plus four legislative members. The Governor appoints the Director. The Commission operates several grants programs for arts education in the public schools and participates in initiatives to support arts education.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The Executive Director of the Commission designates a School Arts Program Committee (Committee) of five members. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) appoints two members, the Executive Director appoints two members, and the fifth member is selected by the other members.

Beginning in 2012-13, the Committee establishes an annual grants process to institute and sustain arts-infused curriculum, programs, and projects in public schools. Programs funded through the grants must assist students in making connections to other disciplines, learn about other cultures, and strengthen communities through the use of the arts.

Cities, counties, federally recognized tribes, nonprofit arts agencies, artists, public schools, school districts, and Educational Service Districts (ESDs) can apply for the grants. Applications must include at least one arts organization or artist and at least one school. To the maximum extent possible, grants are distributed based on enrollment in the nine ESDs. A minimum of 10 percent and a maximum of 25 percent of annual funds are for proposals with a statewide focus delivered regionally. No more than 3.5 percent may be expended for administration.

The State Lottery must be acknowledged as the source of funds for grant projects in publications and advertising, as well as by grant recipients through enduring signage or other credit.

When lottery revenues cease to be distributed for debt service on the baseball stadium bonds, that portion of revenues is deposited in the School Arts Programs Account, which is created in the State Treasury. Expenditures must be authorized jointly by two Committee members, one

appointed by the SPI and one appointed by the Commission Director. An appropriation is not needed for expenditure of funds.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Federally recognized tribes are added to list of entities that can apply for arts program grants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) We all remember and treasure particular pieces of artwork or a dynamic band or choir performance from our youth or by our children and grandchildren. The arts can teach us much about culture and history; they bring academic subjects to life and enhance student engagement. This is particularly important for at-risk youth who need opportunities to showcase their skills and talents. It would be a huge benefit to Native American students to allow tribal governments to be grant recipients. Creativity should be happening in all classrooms, all day, and in all subjects. There is a strong body of evidence linking math and music skills. Arts classes teach skills demanded by science, math, and technical professions that are not taught in those classes. Teachers across the state are highly supportive of additional arts opportunities. Dedicated funding would allow these programs, and these students, to blossom. Teaching artists and arts organizations want to join with school districts to integrate the arts into curriculum. The Commission has programs in some schools, but there are limited funds. Funding would allow these opportunities to be offered equitably across the state.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Kenney, prime sponsor; Suzi Wright, Tulalip Tribes; Lynn Eisenhauer, Tacoma Public Schools and Arts Education Washington; Mary Langholz, Washington State Arts Alliance; Lucas Smiraldo, Broadway Center for the Performing Arts; Mark Gerth, Washington State Arts Commission; and Robert Butts, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.