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**Education Committee**

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**HB 1641**

**Brief Description:** Implementing Washington learns recommendations.

**Sponsors:** Representatives McDermott, Kagi, Roberts, Ormsby, Haigh, Moeller and Simpson; by request of Governor Gregoire.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes an Early Learning Advisory Council; directs the Department of Early Learning (DEL) to implement a five-star voluntary rating system for child care centers and early education programs; and outlines the private-public responsibilities between the DEL and Thrive by Five.
- Phases in voluntary full-day kindergarten; creates demonstration projects for K-12 student learning opportunities; requires review of mathematics and science standards and curricula; creates demonstration projects, regional professional development programs, and alternative routes to teacher certification to support improvement in mathematics and science education; creates an academy for school leadership; establishes a bonus program for National Board-certified teachers; and directs development of a performance pay structure for K-12 staff.
- Establishes a Washington Learns Scholarship and a Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) Ready for Math and Science Scholarship; requires implementation of the regional opportunity grant program; expands eligibility for the State Need Grant; creates and state tuition policy; and changes the appointment of the director of the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

**Hearing Date:** 1/31/07

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

**Background:**

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The 2005 Legislature created a comprehensive education study to include examination of early learning, K-12 education, and higher education. The study effort, chaired by Governor Gregoire, became known as Washington Learns. Washington Learns issued an interim report in November 2005 and final recommendations in November 2006 for consideration by the Legislature.

The Washington Learns recommendations identify a number of strategies intended to create a "world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for Washington." The strategies are organized around five major initiatives:

1. Early Learning: A Smart Investment
2. Math & Science: A Competitive Edge
3. Personalized Learning: Helping Every Student Succeed
4. College & Workforce Training: Increasing Opportunities
5. Quality & Accountability: Keeping the Promise

The final report also recommends additional work on accountability and education finance, along with development of a ten-year implementation strategy.

The Governor recommends implementation of many of the recommendations of Washington Learns through her proposed budget for the 2007-09 biennium and proposed omnibus legislation.

## **Summary of Bill:**

### Early Learning

**Early Learning Advisory Council.** A twenty-five member Early Learning Advisory Council is established to advise the Department of Early Learning (DEL) on statewide early learning community needs and progress. The council also is directed to work with the DEL to develop a statewide early learning plan. Council representation criteria and term limits are outlined.

**Five-Star Voluntary Rating System.** The DEL, in collaboration with community statewide partners, is directed to implement a five-star voluntary rating system for licensed or certified child care centers and early education programs to: 1) provide information to parents; and 2) increase the quality of early learning programs.

**Information.** Upon developing an early learning information system, the DEL will make available to parents timely inspection and complaint information through the internet and other means.

**Private-Public Partnerships.** The private-public partnership responsibilities between the DEL and Thrive By Five Washington are outlined. The partnership's duties include: 1) enhancing parent education and support; 2) working with and complementing existing early learning programs; 3) accepting and spending funds for quality initiatives; 4) encouraging local partnership efforts; 5) assisting the statewide movement to high quality early learning; and 6) supporting parents as a child's first and best teacher.

**Rules Review.** The DEL shall review and revise child care provider rules to: 1) encourage mutual respect among parents, providers, and state staff who enforce rules; 2) clearly focus on children's safety; and 3) improve early learning outcomes for children.

### K-12

***Student Learning Opportunities.*** The goals of the Basic Education Act are expanded to include developing "a public school system that focuses more on the educational performance of students and includes high expectations for all students." Beginning in the 2007-08 school year each district "shall consider" using increases in Student Achievement funds for reducing primary grade class sizes.

Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, funding for voluntary all-day kindergarten is phased in by providing support for schools with the highest poverty levels. The funding is provided for students that qualify for participation in the free or reduced price lunch program. Program conditions are outlined which include connection with community early learning programs.

Several demonstration projects are authorized: 1) ten projects will implement comprehensive grade kindergarten through three foundation learning programs that are connected to community early learning programs, have small class sizes, and use an instructional coach to implement program and instructional strategies; 2) projects for English as a Second Language use two strategies to support recommendations for improved instructional practices: One where Spanish is predominant as the other language, and one where large schools have multiple languages among their students. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) evaluates the demonstration projects.

Four competitive grants are provided to start health-related pathways within high schools that lead to students acquiring certification to enter the workforce in a health related field or to continue their education in a technical or four-year college.

***Mathematics and Science Education.*** By December 2007, the State Board of Education (SBE) completes an independent review of mathematics and science standards and makes recommendations regarding changes to address incorporation of international performance standards. The SBE also examines high school graduation requirements in mathematics and incorporates use of state-identified mathematics and science curricula into their accountability plan. By July 2008, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) identifies no more than three mathematics and science curricula for elementary, middle, and high school that align with the new standards.

A demonstration project to create mathematics and science instructional coaches is created, including design of an instructional coach development institute and coaching seminars, coaching activities in schools, and project evaluation by the WSIPP. Characteristics and roles of instructional coaches are described.

Two new alternative routes to teacher certification are created for mathematics and science teachers, including conditional scholarship programs. One is a pipeline program for paraeducators to become mathematics teachers. The other is a program for current teachers or unemployed elementary teachers to obtain a mathematics or science endorsement.

The SPI is authorized to provide grants to community-based, nonprofit organizations to support students in developing their mathematics skills, with priority for middle school students.

***Educator Preparation, Professional Development, and Compensation.*** The Professional Educator Standards Board is directed to: Revise the mathematics knowledge and skill requirements for new teachers, including secondary math teachers; develop a uniform, external

professional-level certification assessment; and review and revise teacher preparation requirements related to cultural knowledge and respect.

A public/private partnership is authorized to create a Washington State Leadership Academy for school and school district leaders. The academy will be supported by a national research institution with demonstrated expertise in educational leadership. Initial development of courses and activities is supported by private funds.

The SPI and Educational Service Districts (ESDs) create a partnership to develop a regional delivery system for professional development services. Goals for state professional development programs are described. Districts receiving professional development funds in the 2007-09 biennium focus on improving mathematics and science instruction in specified ways.

A bonus program for teachers with a certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is created in statute. The bonus is 10 percent of a teacher's base salary; an additional \$5,000 bonus is provided for teaching in a high poverty school; and an additional \$5,000 is provided if the teacher is board-certified in math or science and teaches in a high poverty school.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) leads a committee to develop a new comprehensive expertise and incentive pay structure for K-12 staff. Recommendations are due by December 2008. The OFM and the SPI develop a methodology for comparing teacher salaries among the Global Challenge States.

#### Higher Education

***Washington Learns Scholarship:*** The scholarship program is established to encourage high school graduation and college completion among students who are low-income and/or come from families where neither parent earned a baccalaureate degree. The maximum scholarship for students attending public institutions is the cost of tuition, books and fees minus state and institutional aid students receive to cover those costs. The maximum award for students attending private four-year institutions will be based on the average award at public research universities. At private career schools, the maximum award will be based on the average award at public community and technical colleges.

To be eligible, students must sign a pledge during seventh or eighth grade showing a commitment to graduate from high school with at least a "C" average and no felony convictions. Students must be eligible for free or reduced lunch, or come from a family where neither parent earned a baccalaureate degree. The student must then apply and meet criteria for the scholarship while in high school.

***GET Ready for Math and Science Scholarship:*** The program will be administered by a public-private partnership, with scholarships provided in the form of purchased GET units. Students who achieve level four on the math or science Washington State Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in the 10th grade and enroll in qualified math and science-related programs at post-secondary institutions in Washington are eligible to apply. Students must also declare the intent to work in Washington for at least three years after college graduation in an occupation related to the field of study, and have a family income at or below 125 percent of the state median family income.

The maximum scholarship amount will equal tuition and mandatory fees at a public research university, and may not exceed 180 quarter credits or the semester equivalent. Repayment may be required for students who do not meet the work requirement after graduation.

***Regional Opportunity Grants:*** The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) will develop and implement the Regional Opportunity Grant Program, providing funding for community and technology students for tuition, fees, books and supplies for up to 45 quarter credits. Students must be eligible for in-state tuition and be at or below the state median family income. Students must enroll in a program designated as a "regional opportunity grant-eligible field of study" by the SBCTC in partnership with business, labor, and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

***Expanding Eligibility for the State Need Grant Program:*** This changes the minimum enrollment requirement for eligibility for the State Need Grant from half-time to three credits. All other eligibility criteria remain the same. It also reduces the enrollment requirement from six to three credits for students to qualify for loans or locally administered financial aid programs from institutional financial aid funds.

***Statewide Tuition Policy:*** Tuition increases for resident students are capped at 7 percent per year between the 2007-08 academic year and ending with the 2016-17 academic year. A state goal is adopted that total per student funding levels (from state appropriations plus tuition and fees) are at least the 60th percentile of total per student funding at similar institutions in the global challenge states. Without reducing enrollment levels below FY 2007 budgeted levels, the OFM will establish a funding trajectory to reach this goal for each four year institution and the community and technical college system.

***Higher Education Coordinating Board:*** Effective July 1, 2007, an Executive Director shall be appointed by the Governor from a list of three names submitted by the board to the Governor. The Executive Director will serve at the pleasure of the Governor rather than the board.

### Education System

An education data center is established in the OFM. The center works with state agencies and institutions of higher education to collect and analyze education data from early learning through higher education and to establish educational benchmarks for Washington compared to the Global Challenge States. The top performing states on the New Economy Index are the Global Challenge States.

The SPI and the OFM develop a system that includes six measures of school district financial health and a financial health outlook rating system, to be implemented for beginning in the 2008-09 school year. The financial health rating category for each district will be published annually. The ESDs and the SPI provide progressive levels of technical assistance to school districts depending on their rating category.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except section 501 regarding review of mathematics and science curricula and section 1302

regarding appointment of the Higher Education Coordinating Board director. These sections contain an emergency clause and take effect immediately.