

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## EHB 3317

---

**As Passed House:**  
February 19, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to revising the timelines and process for approving the mathematics and science standards and curriculum.

**Brief Description:** Regarding mathematics standards.

**Sponsors:** By Representatives Hunter, Anderson, McIntire and Santos.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 2/5/08 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/19/08, 95-0.

### Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Declares legislative intent that revised mathematics learning standards from the Superintendent of Public Instruction should provide greater clarity, rigor, relevance, and measurability, and make clear all aspects of mathematics, including content, conceptual understanding, and application.

---

## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. 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:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) has the responsibility to develop and revise the Essential Academic Learning Requirements or learning standards that identify the knowledge and skills expected from public school students in various academic content areas. If the SPI proposes any modification to the learning standards, then the SPI must, upon request, provide

---

*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.*

opportunities for the education committees of the Legislature to review the proposed modifications before they are adopted. In 2007 the Legislature directed the State Board of Education (SBE) and the SPI to undertake a revision of the learning standards in mathematics and science using a specified process. First, the SBE recommends revisions to the learning standards based on a set of review criteria. The SBE engages national consultants and creates citizen advisory panels to assist with this work. The report from the SBE and its consultant was completed September 30, 2007, and recommended a series of improvements that should be made to the mathematics learning standards.

Then, the SPI must revise the learning standards based on the recommendations and present them to the Legislature. The mathematics learning standards were presented January 31, 2008. The SPI adopts the revised learning standards and grade level expectations unless otherwise directed by the Legislature during the 2008 legislative session.

---

**Summary of Engrossed Bill:**

The Legislature intends that the revised mathematics standards by the SPI will fortify content and increase rigor; provide greater clarity, specificity, and measurability of what is expected of students; supply more explicit guidance for educators; enhance the relevance of mathematics to students, and ultimately result in more Washington students having the opportunity to be successful in mathematics. Additionally, the revised standards should make clear the importance of all aspects of mathematics, including content, conceptual understanding, and application.

---

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The legislation directing revision of the math and science standards may have had an unrealistic timeline. It would be better to react thoughtfully to changes in the standards and take additional time to do an adequate job of reviewing the proposals than to force acceptance of a draft that isn't quite finished. Because the Legislature has its own deadlines, this bill is a vehicle for allowing whatever changes to the timeline and process of the math and science standards seem to be appropriate. The OSPI has made a good effort with limited time. The latest draft is better than the first one, but it would be worth the time to step back and allow teachers to review these standards. Further refinement may be necessary. Meanwhile, school districts are in a holding pattern waiting to buy curriculum.

(Opposed) The objections to the revised standards, while motivated by genuine concerns, are not well thought out. Someone ran for a local school board based solely on the platform that calculators not be used through 8th grade. This would effectively remove from instruction the Pythagorean theorem and the theory of compound interest. Doing these calculations by hand would be a waste of valuable instruction time. People who object to the standards typically want to go back to a way of instruction from the 1950s and 60s, which is to explain a math concept and do problems until the theory is well grounded. Today's instructors are trying to think about math problems in a real world context. The revised standards are not perfect. But people who have looked at them see improvements in emphasis on computational fluency. There is no reason for further delay.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Hunter, prime sponsor; and Rich Semler, Richland School District.

(Opposed) Bill Marsh.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.