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HOUSE BILL 3082

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State of Washington

60th Legislature

2008 Regular Session

By Representatives Haigh, Priest, Quall, Seaquist, Dunshee, Sullivan,  
and Ormsby

Read first time 01/22/08. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to culminating projects in the area of  
2 environmental education; adding a new section to chapter 28A.310 RCW;  
3 adding a new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new  
4 section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** As a graduation requirement, the culminating  
7 project is intended to provide students with a unique opportunity to  
8 evidence the totality of their educational experience through an  
9 individualized learning experience of their choosing. While the  
10 culminating project is intended to show that the student met the  
11 essential academic learning standards, it also provides a venue for the  
12 student to explore areas of personal interest, develop leadership  
13 skills, and understand how the learning standards connect with future  
14 career opportunities.

15 The legislature supports the integration of natural science,  
16 wildlife, and environmental education programs into the common school  
17 curriculum as a way to better engage students and to set the stage for  
18 life-long learning. It is the intent of the legislature to strengthen  
19 that integration by creating a program that allows students to satisfy

1 the culminating project through participation in high-quality, hands-on  
2 environmental or ecological projects that link state academic standards  
3 with real-world learning experiences. These projects will begin  
4 preparing students to be the next generation of leaders with the  
5 skills, knowledge, and dispositions to effectively and creatively  
6 address the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.310  
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) The sustainable environment culminating project grant program  
10 is created to establish an organized regional approach to providing  
11 environmentally related culminating projects for students that connect  
12 school academics with natural resource career possibilities. Grant  
13 funds provided for the purpose of supporting environmentally related  
14 culminating projects shall be disbursed through a competitive grant  
15 process administered through the educational service districts that  
16 receive an appropriation in the budget.

17 (2) Educational service districts receiving funding shall award the  
18 grant funds to a nonprofit organization that has proven experience with  
19 delivering applied learning opportunities to students in the area of  
20 environmental education, including but not limited to areas of interest  
21 such as ocean policy, biodiversity, Puget Sound clean-up, environmental  
22 restoration, and climate change. Educational service districts may  
23 pool grant funds and award a single grant to a single nonprofit  
24 organization that will work with individual school districts.

25 (3) The nonprofit grant recipients shall be required to provide  
26 assistance to school districts through instructional resources and  
27 support, professional development and equipment sharing, and by  
28 providing sample curricula and project ideas. The nonprofit  
29 organizations shall assist school districts in developing culminating  
30 projects for students that:

31 (a) Allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in  
32 relationship to the essential academic learning standards and to do so  
33 through integration of reading, writing, communication, mathematics,  
34 science, social studies, the arts, and health/fitness and in a real-  
35 world, hands-on context;

36 (b) Provide a forum, both virtual and in-person, that allows  
37 students to be involved with and interact with scientists,

1 policymakers, and local community leaders during the development and  
2 completion of the culminating project. A community mentoring component  
3 shall be included in the program to provide support to students;

4 (c) Promote leadership skills;

5 (d) Are designed to improve student learning and promote a sense of  
6 personal responsibility through hands-on, technology-assisted science  
7 and community research in the field. The project shall require the  
8 student to use scientific protocols to share data and compare findings  
9 with others and learn firsthand the impacts that people have on the  
10 environment; and

11 (e) Help students learn about responsible stewardship and careers  
12 in sustainable design.

13 (4) By December 2009, the nonprofit organizations receiving grants  
14 under this section shall report to the educational service districts  
15 and the legislature the number of students served by the program, the  
16 types and number of culminating projects completed, and the feedback on  
17 the program from students, school administrators, and teachers.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
19 RCW to read as follows:

20 Subject to the availability of funds, the office of the  
21 superintendent of public instruction shall work with the nonprofit  
22 grant recipients as provided in section 2 of this act to implement a  
23 statewide online project database in which students can find project  
24 opportunities through connections with community-based and agency  
25 resources and where students can post their own projects and continue  
26 or build on the work of other student projects. This database shall be  
27 housed and managed by the office of the superintendent of public  
28 instruction.

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