

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 2621

C 238 L 10
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Designating resource programs for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics instruction in K-12 schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Maxwell, Darneille, Morrell and Haigh.

House Committee on Education
House Committee on Education Appropriations
Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

It is regularly reported in the media and in state and national studies that K-12 students in the United States are not adequately prepared in the academic disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). In Washington the Legislature has directed a number of activities in recent years intended to enhance STEM teaching and learning, such as revising the state mathematics and science standards, identifying recommended curricula, providing professional development to support the revised standards, increasing the high school graduation requirement in mathematics, and providing support for STEM learning activities such as FIRST Robotics and LASER.

There are also examples of locally initiated programs to provide enhanced learning opportunities for students in STEM, including at least three high schools geared to a STEM theme:

- Aviation High School (Highline School District);
- Delta High School (partnership of Kennewick, Pasco, Richland School Districts, Columbia Basin College, Washington State University Tri-Cities, and Battelle); and
- Science and Math Institute at Point Defiance (Tacoma School District).

While each of these high schools is different, they share some common attributes, such as:

- offering a small, personalized learning community for students;
- focusing on interdisciplinary instruction in STEM subjects;
- relying on a project-based curriculum with hands-on and applied learning opportunities; and

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- creating partnerships with local communities and STEM businesses to connect learning beyond the classroom.

Summary:

If funds are appropriated for this purpose, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) designates up to three high schools and up to three middle schools to serve as resources and examples of how to combine the following best practices:

- a small, highly personalized learning community;
- an interdisciplinary curriculum with strong focus on STEM subjects, delivered through a project-based instructional approach; and
- active partnerships with businesses and the local community.

The designated schools serve as "lighthouses" to provide technical assistance and advice to other schools and communities who are in the initial stages of creating a STEM learning environment. They must have proven experience and be recognized as model programs. The SPI works with the designated schools to publicize their models of STEM instruction and encourage other schools and communities to replicate similar models.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	94	0	
Senate	47	0	(Senate amended)
House	95	0	(House concurred)

Effective: June 10, 2010