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## Education Committee

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### ESSB 6604

**Brief Description:** Providing flexibility in the education system.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Hobbs, King, McAuliffe, Oemig, Tom, Brandland, Holmquist, McDermott and Kline).

#### Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Repeals, modifies, or suspends for two years certain laws pertaining to responsibilities of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and required actions by school districts.
- Modifies certain notice and reporting requirements by permitting online access to information to be sufficient, unless written information is specifically requested by a parent.
- Imposes certain requirements only to the extent funds are available.
- Prohibits mandatory training on certain topics or allows training to be provided online.
- Makes membership in the Washington State School Directors' Association optional for school board members.

**Hearing Date:** 2/17/10

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

#### **Background:**

Title 28A of the Revised Code of Washington contains most of the laws pertaining to Washington's public school system. School districts are political subdivisions of the state whose structure, duties, and responsibilities are established by state law, with functions to be carried out under the direction of elected boards of directors. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) is assigned by the state Constitution to have supervision over all matters pertaining to the

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common schools, but most of the duties of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) are established in law.

There are a number of laws requiring the OSPI to provide information to school districts or requiring school districts to provide information to parents and students. Other laws direct school districts to provide certain curriculum, offer training to employees, prepare student plans, or design school facilities to meet certain standards. All members of school district boards of directors must be members of the Washington State School Directors' Association.

### **Summary of Bill:**

A number of laws in Title 28A RCW are repealed, suspended until July 1, 2013, or amended.

The following laws are each repealed:

1. The SPI must provide information throughout the state about the immunization program and immunization requirements.
2. The SPI must include information on the proper use of the left-hand lane, motorcycle awareness, and driving safety among bicyclists and pedestrians in instructional materials for traffic safety courses.
3. Public schools must annually observe Temperance and Good Citizenship Day, and the OSPI must produce a program for teachers for the day.
4. The SPI, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Washington State Bar Association must develop a volunteer-based conflict resolution and mediation program for use in community groups.
5. If schools operate gardens or farms for educational purposes, students must be given the opportunity to be involved and must learn about both organic and conventional growing methods.
6. Student Learning Plans are required for students in grades 5, and 8 through 12 who were not successful on the state assessments or who may not be on track to graduate.

The following programs or requirements are suspended:

1. The establishment of the Washington Civil Liberties Public Education Program is suspended until July 1, 2013. The requirement that the SPI provides grants under the program to schools or other interested parties to educate the public or develop presentations is suspended until July 1, 2013, except to the extent private funds are available.
2. The establishment of the Financial Education Public-Private Partnership is suspended until July 1, 2013, except to the extent private funds are available.
3. The requirement that the SPI review current policies, assess the adequacy of programs for children with incarcerated parents, adopt additional policies, gather information and data, and participate in an advisory committee is suspended until July 1, 2013.
4. The requirement that the SPI provide high schools contact information for programs offering college credit, and the requirement that high schools must publish information about entrance requirements and availability of local programs that lead to college credits are both suspended until the 2011-12 school year.

The following requirements are modified to require action only to the extent funds are available:

1. School districts must comply with high-performance public building requirements, and all major school district facility projects receiving funding in a state capital budget must be designed and constructed to at least the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design silver standard or the Washington Sustainable School design protocol.
2. School districts must provide free instruction in lip reading to hearing-impaired children and make arrangements for free instruction in lip reading for adults whenever it appears to be in the best interest of the school district and the adults concerned.

The following laws pertaining to training requirements are modified:

1. The OSPI must not require annual training for child abuse and neglect, but can consider offering training every four years, except that new employees must receive training within their first year. School districts are encouraged to work with private or nonprofit entities to provide the training.
2. The OSPI must not require annual training in conflict resolution and other violence prevention topics, but training may be offered every four years.
3. School districts' sexual harassment policies can be provided to employees online. The OSPI must not require annual training to address sexual harassment policies. Beginning in 2013 training may be offered every four years, except new employees must receive training within their first year.

The following laws are amended to allow online information to meet notice requirements, unless otherwise requested:

1. Public and private schools can provide online access to information about the meningococcal and human papillomavirus diseases and their vaccinations, unless a parent specifically requests the information in writing.
2. The SPI can provide online access to information on child abuse and neglect prevention curriculum, unless a parent specifically requests the information in writing.
3. School districts can provide online access to parents of a student alleged to be a victim of sexual misconduct regarding their rights under the Public Records Act to request school employee discipline records. Parents can specifically request the information in writing.

The following requirements are modified:

1. School districts must submit reports on traffic safety programs only in even-numbered years. Districts with a private high school within their boundary must offer at least one traffic safety class outside of regular school hours only to the extent funds are available. By January 1, 2011 the SPI must survey districts regarding the impact of traffic safety program rules and minimum hours of training and make revisions in order to reduce the burden on school districts.
2. The members of the boards of directors of school districts are no longer required to be become members of the Washington State School Directors' Association.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.