

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5889

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Providing flexibility in the education system.

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

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

Background: Title 28A of the Revised Code of Washington encompasses the laws related to the common schools and establishes the organizational structure of the common school system. ("Common schools" are public schools operating a program for kindergarten through twelfth grade or any part thereof.) Separate chapters define the roles and responsibilities of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), the State Board of Education (SBE), educational service districts (ESDs), and school districts. Other chapters of Title 28A define requirements for health screening, traffic safety, compulsory school attendance and admission, compulsory course work and activities, awards, and academic achievement and accountability.

Over the years, school districts have asked the Legislature to ease the burden that state mandates have placed on public schools. Deregulation may provide school districts with the flexibility to reallocate resources, personnel, materials, and training time.

Summary: The following laws in Title 28A RCW relating to information, notice and reporting requirements, and curriculum and assessment mandates are repealed, suspended, or amended.

The following programs or requirements established by law are each repealed:

- Any course in Washington State history and government must include content areas such as commerce, the Constitution, state geography, and state history and culture.
- SPI must require districts to annually inform high school students that employers may request transcripts.
- Each school district is encouraged to adopt curriculum for a family preservation education program.

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.

- On or before January 1, 2002, SPI must report to the Legislature on the types of grants awarded under the Washington Civil Liberties Public Education Program.
- SPI must encourage school districts to use community service as an alternative to suspension and distribute information on programs.
- The Washington Award for Excellence in Education Program Act.
- The Washington Award for Excellence in Teacher Preparation Act.
- SPI must submit an application to the U.S. Department of Education for flexibility in the state's assessment and conduct a pilot project with certain districts.
- School-to-work transition projects must meet certain requirements.

The following programs or requirements established by law are suspended until July 1, 2011:

- SPI must provide an annual aggregate report to the Legislature on the educational experiences and progress of students in foster care.
- School districts must provide all high school students with the option to take the math college readiness test.
- SPI must develop technology essential academic learning requirements (EALRs). By the 2010-11 school year, SPI must develop and make available assessments for the technology EALRs.

The following laws are amended:

- If a school district has received approval for its plan for using learning assistance funds (LAP), it is not required to resubmit a plan unless the district has made a significant change to the plan or a portion of the plan. The Office of SPI must establish guidelines defining a "significant change."
- SPI must only provide the appropriate personnel notice of the State Board of Health rules regarding contagious diseases when there are significant changes. Online access to the rules is sufficient.
- SPI must provide access, rather than printing and distributing, rules, records, and forms for visual and auditory screening.
- Each school must inform students and parents about compulsory attendance. Online access to the information is sufficient, unless a parent specifically requests the information in writing.
- SPI must prepare and annually provide access to information regarding enrollment options. Online access to the information is sufficient, unless a parent specifically requests the information in writing.
- Providing online access to information about intradistrict and interdistrict enrollment options is sufficient, unless a parent specifically requests the information in writing.
- The classroom-based assessments (CBAs) for civics for students in the fourth or fifth grade are suspended until 2010-11. SPI cannot require districts to use classroom-based assessments in social studies, arts, and health and fitness and must communicate clearly districts' option to use other strategies chosen by the district.
- SPI is required to make the Common School Manual available online and is authorized to charge any agency for hard copies.
- Schools must provide notice of pesticide use upon the request of a parent.
- Schools offering educational pathways must ensure students will have access to the courses and inform the parents about what opportunities are available to the student through the pathway. Providing online access to this information is sufficient, unless a parent specifically requests the information in writing.

- Restricts the state Education Technology Plan's requirements on school districts to only what is required by federal requirements.
- Allows visual screening in schools to be performed by ophthalmologists, optometrists, or opticians who donate their professional services and requires these professionals to notify the school, not the student's parents, of any vision defects. While a school official must inform parents in writing that a visual exam was recommended, it may not communicate the name of the professional conducting the screening.
- Beginning September 1, 2009, allows a collection of work samples to be submitted as an alternative assessment to the high school WASL only in content areas required for graduation.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	46	1	
House	97	1	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House	94	1	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 26, 2009