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**Ways & Means Committee**

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**HB 1251**

**Brief Description:** Revising education provisions to implement budget reductions.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hunter and Darneille; by request of Office of Financial Management.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Makes changes to statute to enable budget reductions in the Governor's proposed K-12 budget. Affected programs include: the Achievement Gap Accountability and Oversight Committee (AGOAC); statewide coordination of student career and technical education organizations; science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) program coordination; special services pilot program; end-of-course testing requirements for graduation; and levy equalization funding.

**Hearing Date:** 1/18/11

**Staff:** Ben Rarick (786-7349) and Wendy Polzin (786-7137).

**Background:**

Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (AGOAC)

The AGOAC was created during the 2009 legislature for the purpose of analyzing and addressing achievement gap issues in Washington. The AGOAC works collaboratively with the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning in conducting research on achievement gap issues and doing outreach to underserved populations in the system. The AGOAC's work initially concentrated on synthesizing the findings of five separate achievement gap studies analyzing the unique educational needs of the African-American, Native-American, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, and Latino student populations. Additional appropriations were provided to the group in the 2011 legislative session to do follow up work. The AGOAC has a number of duties in statute, including designating a representative to the Quality Education Council, the Building Bridges Workgroup, and the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Working

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Group, as well as contributing to the development of feedback tools for the new educator evaluation systems required in Chapter 235, Laws of 2010.

### Statewide Coordination of Student Career and Technical Education Organizations

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), by statute, is required to "maintain support for statewide coordination for career and technical student organizations." The OSPI has received annual appropriations for this purpose since 2001. These career technical student organizations (CTSO's) include organizations such as DECA (International Association of Marketing Students), FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America), FCCLA (Family, Career and Community Leaders of America), and FFA (Agricultural Science Education).

### The STEM Office at the OSPI

The OSPI, by statute, is required to provide "support for statewide coordination" for STEM curriculum and programs in the state. The agency has received an appropriation since fiscal year 2010 for this purpose. The OSPI coordinates and promotes efforts to expand STEM programs, and disseminates grants to middle and high school teachers to receive professional development in STEM pedagogy and curriculum. The OSPI estimates that 237 middle school STEM programs are now operating in Washington.

### Special Service Pilot Project

The special services pilot project enables participating districts to utilize funding realized from reduced special education enrollment to bolster early intervention programs. Participating districts receive a separate allocation based on the reduction in the percentage of students enrolled in special education as compared to the year prior to entering the program, and fund early intervention strategies in core academic areas. There are seven participating districts currently, of which three have qualified for funding. The participating districts include Vancouver, Walla Walla, East Valley (Spokane), Kiona Benton, Odessa, Richland, and Hoquiam. By statute, the program is set to expire June 30, 2011.

### End-of-course Testing

In contrast to comprehensive assessments, end-of-course exams test a student's knowledge of specific course of study immediately following completion of that course. There are over 20 states that are in varying stages of implementing end-of-course exams as part of their assessment system. In 2008 the Legislature directed that Washington move to end-of-course exams for high school mathematics, beginning in the 2010-11 school year.

The graduating class of 2013 is the first class required to pass mathematics end-of-course tests, or an approved alternative, to graduate. Students, beginning with the class of 2013, must pass both tests in either math sequence: either (1) end-of-course tests for algebra and geometry or (2) integrated math I, and integrated math II. Students in the class of 2013 will begin taking the math end-of-course exams in the spring of 2011.

### Levy Equalization

School districts are authorized by statute to raise funds through maintenance and operation levies. The Local Effort Assistance program (LEA), or levy equalization, was created in 1987 to mitigate the effect that above-average property tax rates might have on the ability of a school district to raise local revenues through voter-approved levies. The LEA is expressly not part of Basic Education.

The LEA equalization rate is currently set at 14 percent, half of the 28 percent levy lid that is applied to the majority of districts.

### **Summary of Bill:**

#### Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (AGOAC)

The OSPI's support for the AGOAC is made conditional "to the extent funds are available". It further specifies that the AGOAC shall report annually to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, legislative committees, the State Board of Education, and others on achievement gap progress "to the extent funds are available."

#### Statewide Coordination of Student Career and Technical Education Organizations

The OSPI's staff support for the CTSO's is made subject "to the extent funds are available".

#### The STEM Office at the OSPI

The OSPI's support of statewide STEM program coordination is made subject "to the extent funds are available".

#### Special Service Pilot Project

The expiration date of the special services pilot project is changed from June 30, 2011 to March 1, 2011.

#### End-of-course Testing

Graduation requirements for the class of 2013 are changed such that students may pass *either* end-of-course test in their math course sequence (algebra/geometry, or integrated I/II) to achieve a Certificate of Academic Achievement. Currently, students must pass both tests in their sequence.

For the class of 2014, passing both tests within a sequence will be required to achieve a Certificate of Academic Achievement for graduation.

#### Levy Equalization

The LEA payments are pro-rated to 89.28 percent for the remainder of fiscal year 2011 (a savings of approximately \$18 million). In the 2011-13 biennium, the LEA payments are pro-rated to 93.71 percent. The biennial savings for this policy is approximately \$39.5 million.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Preliminary fiscal note available.

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