
Education Committee

HB 1443

Brief Description: Continuing education reforms.

Sponsors: Representatives Maxwell, Dammeier, Sullivan, Pedersen, Springer, Kagi, Anderson, Pettigrew, Finn, Morris, Ladenburg, Frockt, Jinkins, Upthegrove, Clibborn, Orwall, Haigh, Jacks, Lias, Billig, Kelley and Probst.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to implement a common set of learning standards that have been developed by a multi-state consortium after ensuring that a fairness and bias review has been conducted.
- Requires school districts to adopt a policy defining a high school credit and authorizes the State Board of Education to repeal a seat-time based definition.
- Authorizes the SPI to require use of a kindergarten readiness assessment in low-performing schools receiving federal school improvement grants.
- Allows Learning Assistance Program (LAP) funds to be used to support students in science and requires a study of the impact of remediation strategies funded by the LAP on student achievement.
- Requires student performance data from the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program to be reported online through the Washington State Report Card.
- Adopts a definition of a highly capable student and directs the SPI to adopt consistent procedures for school districts to identify, assess, and select their most highly capable students, for purposes of the Highly Capable Program.
- Directs a Compensation Working Group to conduct a comprehensive analysis of educator professional development and mentoring needs.

Hearing Date: 2/4/11

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

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.

Background:

Legislation adopted in 2009 established the Quality Education Council (QEC) and tasked it with informing and making strategic recommendations on the ongoing implementation of the program of Basic Education and the funding to support it. The QEC is composed of representatives from the Legislature, the State Board of Education (SBE), the Department of Early Learning, the Professional Educator Standards Board, the Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (Achievement Gap Committee), and the Governor's Office. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) is the current QEC Chair.

During 2010, the QEC convened two technical working groups to examine the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) and the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP). The QEC also received recommendations from the State Board of Education on proposed revisions to state high school graduation requirements and a Highly Capable Program technical working group established by a proviso in the 2010 supplemental operating budget. Other groups making recommendations to the QEC included the Building Bridges Dropout Prevention and Intervention Work Group, the Achievement Gap Committee, and a technical working group tasked with examining types and levels of classified staff needed in schools.

In its 2011 report to the Legislature, the QEC made a number of recommendations intended to make progress toward increased funding for Basic Education; provide students the opportunity to graduate prepared for postsecondary success; close the opportunity gap for disadvantaged students and students of color; support education professionals; support improvements in math and science; and invest in early learning.

Summary of Bill:

Instruction and Support.

Common Core Standards. After the 2011 legislative session, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) is authorized to implement a common set of learning standards in mathematics, reading, writing, and communication that have been developed by a multi-state consortium. The SPI must first ensure that a fairness and bias review has been conducted, including an opportunity for input from the Achievement Gap Committee and an additional diverse group of community representatives.

Definition of a High School Credit. By August 1, 2012, each school district that grants high school diplomas must adopt a policy defining a high school credit and specifying how the district will assure that students have gained the knowledge and skills to earn a credit. The State Board of Education (SBE) is authorized to repeal the seat-time based definition of a credit as of August 1, 2012, and require that districts certify their policies annually.

Dropout-Focused Technical Assistance. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must provide technical assistance within available funds for school and district improvement that is specifically targeted to reduce school dropouts and improve graduation rates.

Family Engagement. The title of one of the staffing categories within the prototypical school funding formula is changed from "Parent Involvement Coordinator" to "Family Engagement Coordinator."

Kindergarten Readiness. Elementary schools that are subject to state accountability requirements because they are among the persistently lowest-performing schools in the state must include use of the state kindergarten readiness assessment in their Required Action plans. The OSPI may also require other elementary schools receiving federal school improvement grants to use the assessment.

Opportunity Gap.

Remediation. The skill areas to be addressed by the LAP program are expanded to include science. Extended learning opportunities for struggling students are expanded to include 9th through 12th grade students rather than only 11th and 12th grade.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy is directed to work with the OSPI to design and implement a research study to measure the impact on student achievement of remediation strategies funded by the LAP Program. The study design must be submitted to the QEC and the Education Committees of the Legislature by September 1, 2011, with results of the study submitted by September 1, 2012.

Bilingual Program. Aggregated results of student performance on the English language proficiency assessments used in the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP) must be posted on the Washington State Report Card website by school and district. Information about the average length of time students are in the TBIP and the academic performance of former TBIP students must also be posted.

Highly Capable. For the purposes of the Highly Capable Program (HCP), a highly capable student is defined as a student who performs or shows potential for performing at significantly advanced levels when compared to others of his or her age, experience or environment. Rules adopted by the OSPI for school districts to nominate, assess, and select their most highly capable students for the HCP must address consistent procedures for universal screening, public notification, use of multiple criteria, involvement of qualified professionals, family involvement, and safeguards to reduce bias.

Education Professionals.

Evaluation. The Legislature intends to continue development and implementation of revised teacher and principal evaluation systems authorized in the 2010 legislation, including support of pilot school districts.

Professional Development. A Compensation Working Group scheduled to be convened beginning July 1, 2011, must include among its other work a comprehensive analysis of educator professional development needs. Topics to be addressed include cultural competency; competency in language acquisition; science, technology, engineering and mathematics instruction; and mentoring needs for all types of school staff.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Section 104 which changes a staffing category in the prototypical school funding formula and section 202 which allows LAP programs to address science skills take effect September 1, 2011. The remainder of the bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.