

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5184

As Reported by House Committee On: Education

Title: An act relating to second-class school districts and compliance reports.

Brief Description: Regarding compliance reports for second-class school districts.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Schoesler, King, Carrell, Delvin and Holmquist Newbry).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/17/11, 3/24/11 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Permits second-class districts to submit condensed compliance reports to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).
- Requires the OSPI to develop a condensed compliance report form for second-class districts.
- Adds a provision to numerous chapters of the common school code allowing second-class districts to satisfy any compliance reporting requirements in those chapters by submitting a condensed compliance report.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 20 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Lytton, Vice Chair; Dammeier, Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Angel, Billig, Dahlquist, Fagan, Finn, Haigh, Hargrove, Hunt, Klippert, Kretz, Ladenburg, Liias, Maxwell, McCoy, Probst and Wilcox.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

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.

School districts are required to report a variety of information to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). These requirements appear in numerous chapters of the common school code. For instance:

- Chapter 28A.160 RCW: Each October districts must submit information regarding student transportation, including the number of students transported, the number of miles, and other operational data as required.
- Chapter 28A.150 RCW: Each district offering an alternative learning online program must annually report the types of programs and course offerings and the number of students participating.
- Chapter 28A.170 RCW: Districts receiving grants for drug and alcohol prevention activities must report on the results of required biennial evaluations of these programs.

A second-class school district is defined as a district with fewer than 2,000 students. Almost two-thirds of Washington's school districts meet this definition.

Summary of Bill:

Compliance Reports.

Beginning September 1, 2011, second-class districts may annually submit a condensed compliance report to the OSPI. Districts that choose to submit a condensed compliance report must:

- dedicate a public meeting for reviewing the report and receiving public testimony;
- adopt the report at a public meeting; and
- require the report to be signed by the district superintendent and the chair of the school board before a notary public.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) must develop a condensed compliance report form by August 1, 2011. This report must allow districts the option of indicating one of the following for each funded program:

- the district has complied or received a State Board of Education approved waiver;
- the district has not complied, accompanied by an explanation or the steps taken to comply; or
- the district has received a grant for less than half of a full-time instructional staff.

The OSPI may conduct random audits of second-class districts that submit a condensed compliance report to determine whether documentation exists to support a school district's condensed compliance report.

A new section is added to 48 different chapters in the common school code, providing that any compliance reporting requirements imposed on second-class districts, as a result of laws in those chapters, may be satisfied in accordance with the condensed compliance reporting provisions set forth above.

Compliance Requests.

Compliance requests from the SPI not tied to funding are voluntary for second-class districts submitting a condensed compliance report. "Compliance requests" do *not* include data requests required to be submitted:

- in accordance with federal or state law;
- for purposes of program evaluation or accountability; or
- for a comprehensive K-12 education data improvement system.

Severability Clause.

A severability clause is included. If there is a conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part is inoperative to the extent of the conflict. Any rules adopted must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill stems from comments made by a school superintendent that he had to fill out the very same compliance forms when he had been superintendent of a very tiny district as he had when he was superintendent of a fairly large district. In many of the smaller districts, superintendents fill many roles in addition to being superintendent. This bill allows for smaller school districts to take advantage of condensed compliance reporting. It may be that, in the future, larger school districts are allowed to do the same but this bill starts with the small. The SPI supports this. It is unclear exactly how many reporting requirements will be included and the fiscal note reflects this. This is a good exercise, however, to see what reporting requirements are included. There are a large number of small school districts in the state. This will save them time and money. It makes good policy sense. This is a good first step to eliminating administrative burdens. Perhaps it can be extended to others later on.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Schoesler, prime sponsor; Bob Butts, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; Mitch Denning, Alliance of Education Association; and Dan Steele, Association of School Administrators.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.