HOUSE BILL REPORT
SSB 5392

As Passed House - Amended:
April 5, 2011

Title: An act relating to including technology as an educational core concept and principle.

Brief Description: Including technology as a stated educational core concept and principle.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Litzow, Fain, Nelson, Hill, Harper, Eide, Shin, Kohl-Welles, Tom and Roach).

Brief History:
Committee Activity:
Education: 3/17/11, 3/24/11 [DPA].
Floor Activity:
Passed House - Amended: 4/5/11, 82-14.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by House)

- Adds integration of technology literacy and fluency as an aspect of the student learning goals that school districts are required to provide students the opportunity to learn.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Lytton, Vice Chair; Billig, Dahlquist, Fagan, Finn, Haigh, Hargrove, Hunt, Klippert, Ladenburg, Liias, Maxwell, McCoy and Probst.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Dammeier, Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Angel, Kretz and Wilcox.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

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.

Student Learning Goals and Standards. As part of Basic Education, the state has established goals for each school district to provide an opportunity for students to develop the following knowledge and skills:

1. read with comprehension, write effectively, and communicate successfully in a variety of ways and settings and with a variety of audiences;
2. know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history, including different cultures and participation in representative government; geography; arts; and health and fitness;
3. think analytically, logically, and creatively, and to integrate different experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems; and
4. understand the importance of work and finance and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) is required to develop state learning standards called Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) based on these four student learning goals. Under current law, Goals One and Two which articulate subject matter content are considered primary. The concepts articulated under Goals Three and Four are to be integrated into the EALRs and assessments for Goals One and Two. School districts are required to provide instruction in the EALRs as part of the Instructional Program of Basic Education.

The SPI is also required to develop and maintain a student assessment system for the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The purpose of the assessment system is to determine if students have mastered the knowledge and skills of the EALRs. The content areas of social studies, the arts, and health and fitness are assessed at the local level through classroom-based assessments or other strategies chosen by the district.

Educational Technology Literacy and Technology Fluency. In 2007 the Legislature directed the SPI to develop EALRs for educational technology literacy and technology fluency, if funds were provided. Funding was provided for this work, and the technology EALRs were finalized in December of 2008. In addition, the SPI was required to obtain or develop classroom-based or project-based educational technology assessments. School districts are not required to use the assessments, but if they do, they must notify the SPI of their use. The SPI has developed a series of classroom-based assessments that measure students' knowledge and skills of the educational technology EALRs. The assessments are scheduled to be available by July 2011.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Under Goal Three of the student learning goals, school districts must provide students with the opportunity to integrate technology literacy and fluency along with other experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect September 1, 2011.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It is incredibly important to recognize the role of technology in society. Teacher librarians are prepared to take on the role to help both students and teachers understand the importance of technology in learning across all subjects. Use of technology is not limited to science and engineering. Students are active users of technology regardless of whether the school incorporates it in the classroom. Technology is not just another subject or class, but is integrated into everything students do inside and outside of school. This does not need to cost more in hardware, software, or time. Teachers can be trained to be technology leaders in schools.

Technology should be added to the goals of Basic Education. The assumption is that the current EALRs for technology literacy and fluency will meet the objectives of this legislation. There may be additional costs for school districts, especially as the state contemplates cuts to Educational Service Districts, math and science coordinators, and the SPI. The objective is for students to learn about communication, digital citizenship, and information literacy, not simply how to use the computers and other tools. The point is to have students learn the content of other subject areas, such as social studies, by using technology to conduct research and analysis. Almost 200 school districts already have technology learning standards in place. The standards have been developed so that even if there is only one computer in the classroom, the standards can be taught and learned.

(With concerns) Yes, there is support for technology as a learning goal. But there is also support for full-day kindergarten and smaller K-4 class size. The issue and challenge that is being faced is having the capacity to do all of the good things that are supported. The elephant in the room is how to pay for the things that are supported.

(Opposed) There is no question of whether students need or use technology. The concern is around funding and equitable access to technology around the state. There is virtually no state funding for technology, including hardware, software, technical services, or professional development. Some but not all schools have computers. Not all schools have adequate wiring. It would take a significant increase in funding to realistically expect to hold teachers and students accountable for demonstrating knowledge and skills in this area to the same degree that is expected from the other EALRs.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Carolyn Logue, Washington Library Media Association; Jamie Daniels, Thompson Elementary School; Mark Ray, Skyview High School; Lew McMurran, Washington Technology Industry Association; and Bob Butts and Dennis Small, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

(With concerns) Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals.

(Opposed) Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.