

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5184

As Passed Senate, March 1, 2011

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: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/24/11, 2/02/11 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/01/11, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5184 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Harper, Vice Chair; Litzow, Ranking Minority Member; Eide, Fain, Hill, Hobbs, King, Nelson, Rockefeller and Tom.

Staff: Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

Background: School districts are required to report a myriad of information to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). The requirements appear in several chapters of Title 28A of the RCW, which encompasses the laws related to the common schools. Common schools are public schools operating a program for kindergarten through 12th grade or any part thereof.

A second-class school district has less than 2,000 students. Currently, 188 of Washington's 295 school districts are second-class.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Beginning September 1, 2011, second-class school districts may annually submit a condensed compliance report to the SPI. The districts that choose to submit these reports 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 school district superintendent and the school board chair and be notarized.

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 may voluntarily submit compliance information to the SPI concerning programs not funded. Compliance requests do not include data required to be submitted by federal or state law or for the purposes of program evaluation or accountability, including data for a comprehensive K-12 education data improvement system.

The SPI must develop a condensed compliance report form for second-class school districts by August 1, 2011. The form will allow the districts to choose one of the following for each funded program: (1) it has complied or received a State Board of Education waiver; (2) it has not complied and includes an explanation or steps taken to comply; or (3) it has received a grant for less than half a full-time equivalent instructional staff. In order to determine whether districts have documentation to support the condensed compliance report, SPI may conduct random audits.

The majority of chapters in Title 28A RCW include a provision that allows second-class school districts to meet their compliance requirements with a condensed compliance report.

The act includes a federal severability clause.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: The idea for the bill came from a retired superintendent who noticed that the same reports are required for different sized districts. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) previously allowed this alternative. The condensed compliance report will reduce paperwork for second-class school districts and OSPI can create the form. OSPI would like a technical amendment requiring data to be submitted for purposes of program evaluation and accountability. This bill passed out of the Senate last session. This is a small thing we could do for schools. It is the right approach and the right policy. It would be nice for all 295 school districts to have this option.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Schoesler, prime sponsor; Marie Sullivan, Washington State School Directors; Dan Steele, Washington Association of School Administrators; Bob Butts, OSPI.