

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5687

As of February 14, 2011

Title: An act relating to creating an Indian education division in the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

Brief Description: Creating a division of Indian education in the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

Sponsors: Senators Harper, McAuliffe, Fain, Hobbs, Morton, Litzow, Shin, Conway, Kline and Chase.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/14/11.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Juliana Roe (786-7438)

Background: Although not required by statute, there has been an Indian Education Office at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for over 50 years. The mission of this office is to provide leadership, technical assistance, and advocacy to promote academic success for all students; and encourage, promote, and develop strategies to infuse the teaching of Native history, culture, language, and government in Washington's schools.

The Indian Education Office is staffed by two employees: a program supervisor and an instructional program specialist.

Summary of Bill: An Indian Education Division (Division) is created within OSPI. The Superintendent must appoint an assistant superintendent for the Division. The duties and responsibilities of the division are to (1) provide assistance to school districts in meeting the educational needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students; (2) facilitate the development and implementation of curricula and instructional materials in native languages, culture and history, and the concept of tribal sovereignty; (3) provide assistance to districts in the acquisition of funding to develop curricula and instructional materials in conjunction with Native language practitioners and tribal elders; (4) coordinate technical assistance for public schools that serve American Indian and Alaska Native students; (5) seek funds to develop and implement various support services for the purposes of increasing the number of American Indian and Alaska Native teachers and principals, and providing continued professional

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development; (6) facilitate the inclusion of Native language programs in school districts' curricula; and (7) work with all relevant agencies and committees to highlight the need for accurate, useful data that is appropriately disaggregated.

The Division must report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs on an annual basis, beginning in December 2012.

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: PRO: This bill is an important first step in Indian education. We need to protect this position and can do so by codifying it in statute. It is important to provide all the assistance possible to help these students.

This bill gives us a voice and guarantees that we are officially recognized in Washington State. This bill will allow us to be heard as it would reach all Washington State students. It is important to be part of the system that takes part in teacher preparation. Native students across the state and the nation have the highest dropout rates. There is always work that needs to be done to address the needs of native students. This bill marks a commitment to those children.

OTHER: We do not support the original bill, but do support language in the proposed substitute bill. The substitute bill will change the funding source so that this position can still receive federal funds. This change reduces the fiscal note to less than \$10,000. Continuing this work would enhance education opportunities for native and other students in Washington. All students will benefit from this division.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Harper, prime sponsor; Darlene Peters, Sklallam Tribe; Miguel Perez-Gibson, Colville Tribes.

OTHER: Shawn Lewis, OSPI.