

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5726

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 17, 2011

Title: An act relating to innovation schools.

Brief Description: Regarding innovation schools.

Sponsors: Senators Harper, McAuliffe, Litzow, Tom and Hobbs.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/16/11, 2/17/11 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5726 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: A school district board of directors has broad statutory authority to develop and implement programs, activities, services, or practices that promote the education of kindergarten through twelfth grade students in the public schools. Additionally, school boards have explicit authority to establish grades, departments, schools, and training, which in the judgment of the board, best promotes the interests of education in the district, so long as it does not conflict with other law.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): Twenty-five examples of innovative schools and programs are listed. It is the Legislature's intent to recognize and encourage additional innovation schools and programs.

The designation of Washington Innovation School or Program is created. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must develop criteria and a review process to identify innovation public schools and programs. A public school may be nominated by a community, organization, school district, institution of higher education, or itself. OSPI must award a school or program that meets the criteria a designation as a Washington Innovation School or Program.

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.

OSPI must create a website that links to research literature, national best practices, summary information, and the websites of Washington Innovation Schools. OSPI is encouraged to offer an educational administrator intern the opportunity to create the webpage for credit for his or her administrator certificate.

OSPI must publicize the Washington Innovation School designation and encourage school districts, schools, institutions of higher education, and communities to access the website. OSPI is encouraged to annually identify ten innovation schools or programs that exemplify the values of innovation schools and programs.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Innovation schools and programs may have higher education partners. Higher education institutions may also nominate schools and programs to be designated as a Washington Innovation School or Program. When OSPI publicizes the Washington Innovation School designation and website they should also publicize to institutions of higher education.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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: We need to identify, recognize, and promote the innovative schools and programs in our state that are doing great things to reach students with different learning styles and preparing our students to be competitive in the world. Many of these schools and programs have started as a partnership and benefit from the expertise of business. Public schools have a history in Washington of providing innovative programs to address the unique needs of students and communities under the leadership of the school board and within the current laws and bargaining agreements. The website is important to provide a central location that will facilitate best practices and provide access to examples of innovative schools, which will build public awareness, the potential for additional partnerships with business, and provide a way to spur more innovation in our state by providing a way for other schools to explore ideas of how they can also become innovative schools. We do not think there should be a limit on the number of schools that are recognized so we ask you to remove the limit of ten.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Harper, prime sponsor; Ron Thiele, Strong Public Schools; Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; Isabelle Munoz-Colon, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.