

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6246

As of January 25, 2012

Title: An act relating to strengthening categorical school programs based on the recommendations of the quality education council.

Brief Description: Strengthening categorical school programs based on the recommendations of the quality education council.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Eide, Nelson and Rolfes.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/23/12.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Quality Education Council (QEC). In 2009 the Legislature established QEC to make recommendations on the ongoing implementation of the program of Basic Education and the funding to support it. QEC is composed of eight Legislators; the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI); and representatives from the State Board of Education, the Department of Early Learning, the Professional Educator Standards Board, the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, and the Office of the Governor.

The legislation containing the 2011 QEC recommendations did not make it through the entire legislative process in the 2011 legislative session. The 2011 and 2012 recommendations of QEC address legislative changes for remediation programs, the Transitional Instructional Bilingual Program (TBIP), and the Highly Capable student programs.

Remediation Programs. The Learning Assistance Program (LAP) is a state-funded program that provides additional academic support in reading, writing, and mathematics to students in grades K-12 who score below standard on statewide or district assessments or who are at-risk of not meeting state or local graduation requirements. QEC recommends that LAP be expanded to include science.

The Extended Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP) was created to provide additional instructional services for students in grades 11 and 12 who are not on track to graduate. ELOP can include reading improvement specialists at the Educational Service Districts to

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provide professional development to educators in grades 8, 11, and 12 and direct services to eligible students. ELOP has not specifically been funded in the state operating budget. QEC recommends extending ELOP to include students in grades 9-12.

Highly Capable Students. Legislation passed in 2010 directed SPI to convene a technical working group to define a basic education program for highly capable students and address other specific topics. The working group reported to QEC and Legislature. QEC recommended the legislature adopt the definition of a highly capable student provided by the technical working group and that SPI create a consistent process for identification of students for the highly capable program.

Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program. TBIP provides instruction for English language learners (ELLs) to develop English language skills and meet the exit criteria on the Washington Language Proficiency Test in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In 2010 QEC convened a TBIP technical working group to make recommendations to QEC regarding TBIP program. The recommendations of the workgroup included developing and implementing a statewide accountability system that includes sanctions for districts that do not improve academic achievement among ELLs; and for teachers in schools serving ELLs to have additional training on English language development strategies. QEC recommends that SPI report TBIP student performance data using the online school report card and that the Legislature take additional actions to increase accountability for TBIP and the training for teachers in TBIP.

Summary of Bill: QEC recommendations are enacted and technical and grammatical changes are made.

Remediation Programs. LAP is expanded to include science, in addition to reading, writing, and mathematics. ELOP for struggling students is expanded to include students in grades 9-12 rather than only grades 11 and 12.

Highly Capable Students. A highly capable student is defined as a student who performs or shows potential to perform at significantly advanced levels when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment. The education of highly capable students may include supports and services that are in addition to those ordinarily provided as part of general education. SPI must adopt consistent procedures for the nomination, assessment, and selection of the most highly capable students for the highly capable program.

Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program. Information regarding TBIP must be aggregated and posted for each school and school district on SPI's Washington State Report Card website including student performance on the annual English proficiency assessment; the average length of time students are enrolled in TBIP; student progress in attaining proficiency; the number and percentage of students meeting annual targets in reading and mathematics for state and federal accountability; and the academic performance of former TBIP students. SPI must adopt rules to hold school districts receiving TBIP funds accountable for making progress on measurable outcomes; and beginning in 2017-18 require newly hired teachers or transferred certificated instructional staff assigned to TBIP to hold an endorsement in ELL or Bilingual Education. Clarification is provided that the prototypical

school formula for TBIP is for students who have not reached proficiency to exit the program.

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: PRO: We support this bill. We particularly support the bilingual and ELL endorsement requirements for teachers in TBIP. It is important that the higher education institutions know that these certification requirements are coming and will be required of teachers in 2017. Additionally, the bill requires OSPI to adopt rules to hold school districts accountable for making progress on measurable outcomes. It is critical that funding goes along with this requirement to enable districts to meet the requirement. Not all school districts offer gifted classes in all grades K-12. This does not meet the needs of our students and excludes gifted students from receiving appropriate instruction and would recommend that a continuum program across all grades be required. The Highly Capable Program is part of basic education and by providing a standardized way to identify the students across the programs will be fairer.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Randy Dorn, State SPI; David Brenna, Professional Educator Standards Board; Janis Traven, Garfield High School Parent Teacher Student Assn.; and Lucinda Young, WA Education Assn.