

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6247

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As of January 27, 2012

**Title:** An act relating to the quality education council and the state board of education.

**Brief Description:** Changing the duties of the quality education council and the state board of education.

**Sponsors:** Senators McAuliffe and King.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/26/12.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** State Board of Education (SBE). In 1877 the Washington Territorial Legislature established SBE. The purpose of SBE is to provide strategic oversight of the public K-12 system; to provide leadership in the creation of a system that personalizes education for each student and respects diverse cultures, abilities, and learning styles; and to promote achievement of the student goals adopted by the Legislature. The SBE is composed of 16 members, including both Governor-appointed and school-board elected members, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), and two student representatives. SBE meets bimonthly for multiple days and is required to make annual reports to the Legislature.

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;
- recommend a phase-in implementation schedule for the education reforms and new funding formulas adopted by the Legislature in 2009;
- identify measurable goals and priorities for the educational system in Washington State.

QEC is composed of eight legislators; SPI; and representatives from: SBE, Department of Early Learning, Professional Educator Standards Board, Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, and Office of the Governor. QEC is limited to meeting no more than four days a year, and must make annual reports to the Legislature.

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The compensation working group created in 2009 to recommend an enhanced salary allocation model that aligns with educator development and certification. The working group is overseen by QEC and must report to the Legislature by June 30, 2012. The Funding Formula working group was created to provide the details of the prototypical school funding formula was overseen by QEC and may be periodically reconvened to provide technical assistance to the Legislature and SPI. The Building Bridges working group created to make recommendations regarding dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval programs must report to QEC, the Governor, and the Legislature.

**Summary of Bill:** Certain duties of QEC are transferred to SBE and technical changes are made. QEC maintains the duty to make recommendations on the ongoing implementation of the program of Basic Education and the financing to report it. The duties to recommend a phase-in schedule and to identify system goals and priorities are transferred to the SBE. Working groups that must report to or was overseen by QEC must also report to SBE. SBE must submit an annual report to QEC, the Governor, and the Legislature by January 1 of each year, including recommendations. The first report in 2013 must include the implementation schedule and the initial goals for the educational system.

**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: The QEC was assigned a duty of the utmost importance to recommend the ongoing implementation of basic education and the financing to support it. The time has come for the Legislature to do this. The compensation workgroup completes their report this summer. This is the final report from ESHB 2261, from the 2009 legislative session, and it will give us the complete package of the education reforms and now we need a complete implementation schedule. The QEC is limited by time and resources and the SBE has the capacity to complete this important work. They meet in the communities around the state, which is important because we need the public to hear about what it will take to implement these reforms and get input. Without the public's support we will never have the funds to fund education. The SBE thinks that the delegation of this duty is consistent with the SBE mission and purpose and the SBE is willing to do the work. We would like some clarity regarding the system goals. When the QEC was established it was done with significant import and signaled to the education community that this is important work and we want to continue to emphasis the importance and urgency of this work.

CON: We think this bill is not necessary and are not sure that the SBE is where the duty should be delegated. The QEC has made progress and offers a higher level of accountability to the public with elected legislators as members. There is already an implementation plan from ESHB 2261 and SHB 2776, from the 2010 legislative session, and the QEC recommendations. We are concerned that the SBE may be inclined to implement prior to ample funding being provided. We have lost faith with the SBE because the SBE has gone forward with some changes to the high school graduation requirements when we had

commitments that this would not happen. If changes were made to the bill to require a fiscal analysis to avoid unfunded mandates and also to add practitioners to the SBE then we might have more faith in the SBE. It is important to have an oversight group and we urge you to stay the course with the QEC. Separating the duties between the SBE and the QEC will weaken the effort.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; Ben Rarick, SBE.

CON: Wendy Rader-Konofalski, WA Education Assn.; Marie Sullivan, WA State School Directors Assn.; Alan Burke, Office of SPI; Dan Steele, WA Assn. of School Administrators.