
HOUSE BILL 2538

State of Washington 62nd Legislature 2012 Regular Session

By Representatives Santos and Maxwell; by request of Governor Gregoire
Read first time 01/17/12. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to reducing certain requirements affecting school
2 districts; and amending RCW 28A.230.090, 28A.165.025, and 43.09.260.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.230.090 and 2011 c 203 s 2 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) The state board of education shall establish high school
7 graduation requirements or equivalencies for students, except as
8 provided in RCW 28A.230.122 and except those equivalencies established
9 by local high schools or school districts under RCW 28A.230.097. The
10 purpose of a high school diploma is to declare that a student is ready
11 for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and
12 citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner.

13 (a) Any course in Washington state history and government used to
14 fulfill high school graduation requirements shall consider including
15 information on the culture, history, and government of the American
16 Indian peoples who were the first inhabitants of the state.

17 (b) The certificate of academic achievement requirements under RCW
18 28A.655.061 or the certificate of individual achievement requirements

1 under RCW 28A.155.045 are required for graduation from a public high
2 school but are not the only requirements for graduation.

3 (c) Any decision on whether a student has met the state board's
4 high school graduation requirements for a high school and beyond plan
5 shall remain at the local level.

6 (d) A student is not required to complete the state board's high
7 school graduation requirement for a culminating project if the student
8 has completed at least one of the following:

9 (i) A running start program and is leaving high school with an
10 associate degree;

11 (ii) A high school navigation 101, advancement via individual
12 determination, or similar program focused on career planning and skill
13 development in preparation for a targeted career;

14 (iii) A career and technical education program resulting in a skill
15 certificate;

16 (iv) A year of college-level coursework;

17 (v) An international baccalaureate certificate program; or

18 (vi) At least four courses in any of the following programs or at
19 least four courses among the following programs: AP, engineering or
20 biological sciences, international baccalaureate, or Cambridge with
21 college credit equivalency exams.

22 (2)(a) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state board
23 of education to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation
24 requirements, the state board shall periodically reevaluate the
25 graduation requirements and shall report such findings to the
26 legislature in a timely manner as determined by the state board.

27 (b) The state board shall reevaluate the graduation requirements
28 for students enrolled in vocationally intensive and rigorous career and
29 technical education programs, particularly those programs that lead to
30 a certificate or credential that is state or nationally recognized.
31 The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that students enrolled in
32 these programs have sufficient opportunity to earn a certificate of
33 academic achievement, complete the program and earn the program's
34 certificate or credential, and complete other state and local
35 graduation requirements.

36 (c) The state board shall forward any proposed changes to the high
37 school graduation requirements to the education committees of the
38 legislature for review and to the quality education council established

1 under RCW 28A.290.010. The legislature shall have the opportunity to
2 act during a regular legislative session before the changes are adopted
3 through administrative rule by the state board. Changes that have a
4 fiscal impact on school districts, as identified by a fiscal analysis
5 prepared by the office of the superintendent of public instruction,
6 shall take effect only if formally authorized and funded by the
7 legislature through the omnibus appropriations act or other enacted
8 legislation.

9 (3) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages other
10 than English established by the state board of education or a local
11 school district, or both, for purposes of high school graduation,
12 students who receive instruction in American sign language or one or
13 more American Indian languages shall be considered to have satisfied
14 the state or local school district graduation requirement for
15 instruction in one or more languages other than English.

16 (4) If requested by the student and his or her family, a student
17 who has completed high school courses before attending high school
18 shall be given high school credit which shall be applied to fulfilling
19 high school graduation requirements if:

20 (a) The course was taken with high school students, if the academic
21 level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth
22 grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by completing
23 the same course requirements and examinations as the high school
24 students enrolled in the class; or

25 (b) The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for
26 seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for high
27 school credit, because the course is similar or equivalent to a course
28 offered at a high school in the district as determined by the school
29 district board of directors.

30 (5) Students who have taken and successfully completed high school
31 courses under the circumstances in subsection (4) of this section shall
32 not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform
33 any other additional assignment to receive credit.

34 (6) At the college or university level, five quarter or three
35 semester hours equals one high school credit.

36 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.165.025 and 2009 c 556 s 1 are each amended to
37 read as follows:

1 (1) A participating school district shall submit the district's
2 plan for using learning assistance funds to the office of the
3 superintendent of public instruction for approval, to the extent
4 required under subsection (2) of this section. The program plan must
5 identify the program strategies and activities to be implemented from
6 RCW 28A.165.035 and (~~implement all of the elements in (a) through (h)~~
7 ~~of this subsection~~) other practices used to accelerate student
8 learning. The school district plan shall include the following:

9 (a) District and school-level data on reading, writing, and
10 mathematics achievement as reported pursuant to chapter 28A.655 RCW and
11 relevant federal law;

12 (b) Processes used for identifying the underachieving students to
13 be served by the program, including the identification of school or
14 program sites providing program activities; and

15 (~~(c) (How accelerated learning plans are developed and implemented~~
16 ~~for participating students. Accelerated learning plans may be~~
17 ~~developed as part of existing student achievement plan process such as~~
18 ~~student plans for achieving state high school graduation standards,~~
19 ~~individual student academic plans, or the achievement plans for groups~~
20 ~~of students. Accelerated learning plans shall include:~~

21 ~~(i) Achievement goals for the students;~~

22 ~~(ii) Roles of the student, parents, or guardians and teachers in~~
23 ~~the plan;~~

24 ~~(iii) Communication procedures regarding student accomplishment;~~

25 ~~and~~

26 ~~(iv) Plan reviews and adjustments processes;~~

27 ~~(d) How state level and classroom assessments are used to inform~~
28 ~~instruction;~~

29 ~~(e) How focused and intentional instructional strategies have been~~
30 ~~identified and implemented;~~

31 ~~(f) How highly qualified instructional staff are developed and~~
32 ~~supported in the program and in participating schools;~~

33 ~~(g) How other federal, state, district, and school resources are~~
34 ~~coordinated with school improvement plans and the district's strategic~~
35 ~~plan to support underachieving students; and~~

36 ~~(h) How a program evaluation will be conducted to determine~~
37 ~~direction for the following school year)) Processes used for: Setting
38 student achievement goals, communication with and involvement of~~

1 parents and guardians, district plan review, evaluation and
2 adjustments, identifying and using assessments, supporting and
3 developing skills of program instructional staff, coordination of other
4 federal, state, district, and school resources, and coordination with
5 the program with school improvement plans and the district's strategic
6 plan.

7 (2) If a school district has received approval of its plan once, it
8 is not required to submit a plan for approval under RCW 28A.165.045 or
9 this section unless the district has made a significant change to the
10 plan. If a district has made a significant change to only a portion of
11 the plan the district need only submit a description of the changes
12 made and not the entire plan. Plans or descriptions of changes to the
13 plan must be submitted by July 1st as required under this section. The
14 office of the superintendent of public instruction shall establish
15 guidelines for what a "significant change" is.

16 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.09.260 and 2009 c 564 s 927 are each amended to
17 read as follows:

18 (1) The examination of the financial affairs of all local
19 governments shall be made at such reasonable, periodic intervals as the
20 state auditor shall determine. However, an examination of the
21 financial affairs of all local governments shall be made at least once
22 in every three years, and an examination of individual local government
23 health and welfare benefit plans and local government self-insurance
24 programs shall be made at least once every two years. Additionally,
25 beginning with the 2012-13 school year, the state auditor shall conduct
26 fiscal and performance audits no more often than once every three years
27 for school districts when no findings of impropriety were found for the
28 school districts for the three-year period immediately preceding the
29 audit period. This subsection does not prohibit the state auditor from
30 conducting audits: (a) To address suspected fraud or irregular
31 conduct; (b) at the request of the local school board of directors; or
32 (c) as required by federal laws or regulations.

33 (2) During the 2009-2011 fiscal biennium, the state auditor shall
34 conduct audits no more often than once every two years of local
35 governments with annual general fund revenues of ten million dollars or
36 less and no findings of impropriety for the three-year period
37 immediately preceding the audit period. This subsection does not

1 prohibit the state auditor from conducting audits: (a) To address
2 suspected fraud or irregular conduct; (b) at the request of the local
3 government governing body; or (c) as required by federal laws or
4 regulations.

5 (3) The term local governments for purposes of this chapter
6 includes but is not limited to all counties, cities, and other
7 political subdivisions, municipal corporations, and quasi-municipal
8 corporations, however denominated.

9 (4) The state auditor shall establish a schedule to govern the
10 auditing of local governments which shall include: A designation of
11 the various classifications of local governments; a designation of the
12 frequency for auditing each type of local government; and a description
13 of events which cause a more frequent audit to be conducted.

14 (5) On every such examination, inquiry shall be made as to the
15 financial condition and resources of the local government; whether the
16 Constitution and laws of the state, the ordinances and orders of the
17 local government, and the requirements of the state auditor have been
18 properly complied with; and into the methods and accuracy of the
19 accounts and reports.

20 (6) A report of such examination shall be made and filed in the
21 office of state auditor, and one copy shall be transmitted to the local
22 government. A copy of any report containing findings of noncompliance
23 with state law shall be transmitted to the attorney general. If any
24 such report discloses malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance in
25 office on the part of any public officer or employee, within thirty
26 days from the receipt of his or her copy of the report, the attorney
27 general shall institute, in the proper county, such legal action as is
28 proper in the premises by civil process and prosecute the same to final
29 determination to carry into effect the findings of the examination.

30 (7) It shall be unlawful for any local government or the
31 responsible head thereof, to make a settlement or compromise of any
32 claim arising out of such malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance, or
33 any action commenced therefor, or for any court to enter upon any
34 compromise or settlement of such action, without the written approval
35 and consent of the attorney general and the state auditor.

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