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HOUSE BILL 2543

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State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2012 Regular Session

By Representatives Klippert, Armstrong, Reykdal, Sells, Appleton, Ryu, Ormsby, Lytton, Ross, McCune, and Tharinger

Read first time 01/17/12. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to unfunded mandates from the state board of  
2 education; amending RCW 28A.230.090; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature, responding to the  
5 Washington state supreme court decision confirming the state's  
6 responsibility to fully fund basic education, intends to refrain from  
7 adding any new requirements or move forward with new reforms until it  
8 has lived up to its funding obligations. The legislature is aware that  
9 essential programs, in particular those that help at-risk and  
10 struggling students, have been cut over the past four years. After-  
11 school programs, summer school, and other supports for students in need  
12 of extra help are no longer available.

13 Adding more requirements, including credits for graduation, with  
14 less support will lead to higher dropout rates, decreased quality of  
15 education, and increased inequity for those students who do and those  
16 who do not have resources to replace those resources lost at their  
17 local public schools.

18 It is the intent of the legislature to right-size its requirements  
19 with the support, time, and funding available, and to support and

1 maintain already impressive achievements in the areas of national  
2 assessment of educational progress, SAT scores, and currently  
3 flourishing innovative schools and teacher and principal evaluation  
4 pilots. To that end, the legislature intends to remove new mandated  
5 policies by the state board of education that are not accompanied with  
6 state funding until such time as support programs, reasonable class  
7 sizes, and ample funding of basic education is achieved.

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

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

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

21 (b) The certificate of academic achievement requirements under RCW  
22 28A.655.061 or the certificate of individual achievement requirements  
23 under RCW 28A.155.045 are required for graduation from a public high  
24 school but are not the only requirements for graduation.

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

28 (2)(a) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state board  
29 of education to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation  
30 requirements, the state board shall periodically reevaluate the  
31 graduation requirements and shall report such findings to the  
32 legislature in a timely manner as determined by the state board.

33 (b) The state board shall reevaluate the graduation requirements  
34 for students enrolled in vocationally intensive and rigorous career and  
35 technical education programs, particularly those programs that lead to  
36 a certificate or credential that is state or nationally recognized.  
37 The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that students enrolled in

1 these programs have sufficient opportunity to earn a certificate of  
2 academic achievement, complete the program and earn the program's  
3 certificate or credential, and complete other state and local  
4 graduation requirements.

5 (c) The state board shall forward any proposed changes to the high  
6 school graduation requirements to the education committees of the  
7 legislature for review and a public hearing and to the quality  
8 education council established under RCW 28A.290.010. The legislature  
9 shall have the opportunity to act during a regular legislative session  
10 before the changes are adopted through administrative rule by the state  
11 board. Changes that have a fiscal impact on school districts, as  
12 identified by a fiscal analysis prepared by the office of the  
13 superintendent of public instruction, shall take effect only if  
14 formally authorized and fully funded by the legislature through the  
15 omnibus appropriations act or other enacted legislation.

16 (d) Unless the legislature enacts and fully funds the rule, a rule  
17 adopted by the state board that affects credit requirements for  
18 students beginning with the graduating class of 2016 and thereafter is  
19 voluntary if:

20 (i) There is a fiscal impact to the local school district; and

21 (ii) The district files a notice of fiscal impact with the state  
22 board of education.

23 (3) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages other  
24 than English established by the state board of education or a local  
25 school district, or both, for purposes of high school graduation,  
26 students who receive instruction in American sign language or one or  
27 more American Indian languages shall be considered to have satisfied  
28 the state or local school district graduation requirement for  
29 instruction in one or more languages other than English.

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

34 (a) The course was taken with high school students, if the academic  
35 level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth  
36 grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by completing  
37 the same course requirements and examinations as the high school  
38 students enrolled in the class; or

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

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

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

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