
Education Committee

HB 1476

Brief Description: Establishing a performance-based grading system for schools and school districts.

Sponsors: Representatives Dahlquist, Magendanz, Zeiger, Smith, Hargrove, Fagan, Buys and Scott.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires the Accountability Index developed by the State Board of Education (SBE) to identify five categories of schools and districts, which must be labeled using an A through F grading system.
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Hearing Date: 2/5/13

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

As part of a state system of education accountability, the State Board of Education (SBE) has been directed to develop an Accountability Index (Index) to identify schools for recognition, continuous improvement, and state support. The Index is required to measure school performance using multiple outcomes and indicators, and must be developed to be easily understood by school employees, parents, and communities.

In 2009 the SBE developed an Index using five outcomes (reading, writing, math, and science assessment scores and extended graduation rates for high schools) and four indicators (achievement of non-low income students, achievement of low-income students, achievement compared to peer schools, and improvement from the previous year). The results are averaged into a single Index score. Schools are divided based on their Index score into the following five categories:

1. exemplary;
2. very good;

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3. good;
4. fair; and
5. struggling.

To date the Index has been used only to recognize high-performing schools. However, in July 2012 Washington received a one-year provisional waiver of certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. One of the conditions of the waiver is that the SBE must redesign the Index, and if the redesigned Index is approved by the US Department of Education (DOE), then it can be used for both state and federal accountability. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the SBE are also required to design a comprehensive, performance-based system of support, assistance, and intervention for both state and federal accountability.

Work to revise the Index is underway, and it will be submitted to the DOE in June 2013 for approval.

Summary of Bill:

The Index must be used to identify school districts as well as schools for recognition, continuous improvement, and state support. It must identify five categories of schools and districts, which must then be labeled using a letter A through F grading system. The state performance-based system of support, assistance, and intervention must also be designed to reflect the A through F grading system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.