

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6104

As Passed Senate, February 12, 2014

Title: An act relating to the interactive gaming in schools public-private partnership.

Brief Description: Establishing the interactive gaming in schools public-private partnership.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Litzow, Hargrove, Hill, Billig, Fraser and Brown).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/22/14, 1/24/14 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 2/12/14, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6104 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Rolfes, Assistant Ranking Member; Billig, Brown, Cleveland, Fain, Hill, Mullet and Rivers.

Staff: Eric Wolf (786-7405)

Background: Advances in interactive gaming technology have spurred a recent scholarly focus on how interactive games may be used to engage students and improve academic achievement. For instance, the Center for Game Science at the University of Washington has published several studies on the application of interactive games in education, specifically how interactive games can promote creativity among students; enhance student knowledge of science, technology, engineering, and technology (STEM) fields; and improve critical thinking skills through cognitive skill training games.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Interactive Gaming in Schools Public-Private Partnership (PPP). PPP is established, composed of the following members to be appointed by August 1, 2014:

- four legislators, one member from each caucus of the House and Senate, appointed by the presiding officers of each chamber;
- four experts in the integration of interactive technology or gaming into education, one expert to be appointed by each caucus of the House and Senate, and appointed by the presiding officers of each chamber;

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- a representative of the Department of Early Learning (DEL), appointed by the director; and
- a representative of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The chair of PPP must be selected from among the legislative members. To the extent funds are appropriated, PPP may hire a staff person who must reside at OSPI for administrative purposes. Additional technical and logistical support is to be provided by OSPI, DEL, and the organizations participating in PPP. Legislative members of the partnership must receive per diem and travel expenses, and nonlegislative members may be reimbursed for travel expenses.

Purpose of PPP. PPP is tasked with examining how interactive games may be integrated into primary and secondary education to increase student involvement and achievement. PPP must consider how interactive games and advances in technology may be integrated into curricula from early learning through grade 12, and develop a proposal for a pilot program to integrate interactive gaming in schools to be submitted to the Legislature by December 1, 2015. The statute authorizing PPP expires on January 1, 2016.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: Yes.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: Games are already being integrated into curricula in order to engage students. Students love the games and are excited to even use the games at home each night. Ninety-five percent of children play video games, and the average time of play is over two hours each day. A scientific study from Stanford showed that educational, interactive video games engaged regions of the brain associated with motivation, learning, and memory. In 2012 the Clark County, Nevada school district tested a program in which interactive video games were integrated into low-performing schools. The schools using the games more than doubled their improvement on assessments compared to schools that did not use the assessment. In San Jose, there is a school that integrated interactive media and video games and has particularly notable success with English language learners. Most of the interactive game systems are set up in computer labs in schools, so students do not always require a computer or iPad of their own to participate.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; Matthew Hooper, attorney.