
HOUSE BILL 1276

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Representatives Reykdal, Hunt, Tharinger, Wylie, Pollet, Jinkins, Ryu, Roberts, Morrell, and Bergquist

Read first time 01/22/13. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to dropout prevention through engaging youth in
2 farming; adding a new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; creating a new
3 section; and providing an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that low-income youth
6 are not only at higher risk of dropping out of school, they are also
7 less likely to have dependable access to sufficient and nutritious
8 food. Innovative partnerships between community-based organizations,
9 schools, food banks, and farms or gardens offer promise to address both
10 dropout prevention and food security for such youth, as well as
11 enhancing health and nutrition in the surrounding community. These
12 types of partnerships should be supported as pilot projects and
13 carefully evaluated to assure that desired outcomes are met and to
14 identify opportunities for expansion and replication in other parts of
15 the state.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630
17 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) The dropout prevention through farm engagement pilot project is
2 established for a three-year period beginning in the 2013-14 school
3 year.

4 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
5 select two pilot projects from school districts that agree to partner
6 with community-based organizations, food banks, and farms or gardens to
7 establish an alternative high school program targeted primarily to at-
8 risk youth as provided in subsection (3) of this section. One of the
9 selected projects must be a currently operating program with a record
10 of success in engaging low-income and disengaged youth. The second
11 selected project must create a new program in a different community.

12 (3) Dropout prevention through farm engagement pilot projects must
13 have the following characteristics:

14 (a) Primarily target low-income and disengaged youth who have
15 dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of high school;

16 (b) Provide participating youth with opportunities for community
17 service such as building food gardens for low-income families and work-
18 based learning and employment during the school year and during the
19 summer through a farm or garden program;

20 (c) Provide participating youth with opportunities to earn core
21 credits and elective credits toward high school graduation, including
22 but not limited to science, health, and career and technical education
23 credits;

24 (d) Offer youth development support and services to participating
25 youth including social emotional learning, counseling, leadership
26 training, and career and college guidance; and

27 (e) Improve food security for participating youth and the community
28 through the farm or garden program.

29 (4) For each annual average full-time equivalent student enrolled
30 in the pilot project, including enrollment during the summer months,
31 the participating school district shall receive a basic education
32 allocation as calculated under RCW 28A.150.260 and the omnibus
33 appropriations act for a skill center student. The allocation under
34 this subsection does not apply to a student's enrollment in courses of
35 study that are not part of the pilot project. The allocations provided
36 for the pilot project may be used to supplement other district and
37 community funds to operate the project and to provide summer employment
38 stipends for participating youth.

1 (5) The purpose of the dropout prevention through farm engagement
2 pilot project is to measure the effectiveness and cost-benefit of a
3 particular alternative high school program on improving outcomes for
4 at-risk youth. The office of the superintendent of public instruction
5 shall conduct a rigorous evaluation after the pilot projects have been
6 operating for two years, including analysis of a statistical comparison
7 group of students who did not participate in the project. The office
8 shall submit the evaluation results to the education committees of the
9 legislature by December 1, 2015, including recommendations for whether
10 the pilot projects should be continued or replicated in other parts of
11 the state.

12 (6) Outcomes to be measured under the pilot project include:

13 (a) Student GPA overall and in science;

14 (b) Number of earned credits in core courses and elective courses;

15 (c) Incidence of discipline issues;

16 (d) School attendance rates;

17 (e) High school graduation and GED attainment;

18 (f) Student health and nutrition;

19 (g) Acreage used for fresh produce;

20 (h) Volume of produce produced and made available to students,
21 families, school district food programs, and community food banks; and

22 (i) Hours of community service activity by students.

23 (7) This section expires August 31, 2016.

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