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HOUSE BILL 2395

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State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

By Representatives Moscoso, Walsh, Ryu, Stonier, Reykdal, Gregerson,  
and Freeman

Read first time 01/16/14. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a state seal of biliteracy for high  
2 school students; amending RCW 28A.230.125; adding a new section to  
3 chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

6 (a) The study of world languages in elementary and secondary  
7 schools should be encouraged because it contributes to students'  
8 cognitive development and to the national economy and security;

9 (b) Proficiency in multiple languages enables Washington to  
10 participate more effectively in the current global political, social,  
11 and economic context;

12 (c) The benefits to employers of having employees who are fluent in  
13 more than one language are clear: Increased access to expanding  
14 markets, better service of customers' needs, and expanded trading  
15 opportunities with other countries; and

16 (d) Protecting the state's rich heritage of multiple cultures and  
17 languages, as well as building trust and understanding across the  
18 multiple cultures and languages of diverse communities, requires  
19 multilingual communication skills.

1 (2) Therefore, the legislature's intent is to promote and recognize  
2 linguistic proficiency and cultural literacy in one or more world  
3 languages in addition to English through the establishment of a  
4 Washington state seal of biliteracy.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The Washington state seal of biliteracy is established to  
8 recognize public high school graduates who have attained a high level  
9 of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more world  
10 languages in addition to English. School districts are encouraged to  
11 award the seal of biliteracy to graduating high school students who  
12 meet the criteria established by the office of the superintendent of  
13 public instruction under this section. Participating school districts  
14 shall place a notation on a student's high school diploma and high  
15 school transcript indicating that the student has earned the seal.

16 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
17 adopt rules establishing criteria for award of the Washington state  
18 seal of biliteracy. The criteria must require a student to demonstrate  
19 proficiency in English by meeting state high school graduation  
20 requirements in English, including through state assessments and  
21 credits, and proficiency in one or more world languages other than  
22 English. The criteria must permit a student to demonstrate proficiency  
23 in another world language through multiple methods including nationally  
24 or internationally recognized language proficiency tests and  
25 competency-based world language credits awarded under the model policy  
26 adopted by the Washington state school directors' association.

27 (3) For the purposes of this section, a world language other than  
28 English must include American sign language and Native American  
29 languages.

30 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.230.125 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 130 are each  
31 amended to read as follows:

32 (1) The superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with  
33 the four-year institutions as defined in RCW 28B.76.020, the state  
34 board for community and technical colleges, and the workforce training  
35 and education coordinating board, shall develop for use by all public  
36 school districts a standardized high school transcript. The

1 superintendent shall establish clear definitions for the terms  
2 "credits" and "hours" so that school programs operating on the quarter,  
3 semester, or trimester system can be compared.

4 (2) The standardized high school transcript shall include a  
5 notation of whether the student has earned a certificate of individual  
6 achievement or a certificate of academic achievement.

7 (3) The standardized high school transcript may include a notation  
8 of whether the student has earned the Washington state seal of  
9 biliteracy established under section 2 of this act.

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