
SENATE BILL 5496

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Braun, Fain, Hatfield, Hargrove, Dammeier, Chase, and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 01/31/13. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to authorizing approval of online school programs
2 in private schools; adding a new section to chapter 28A.195 RCW; and
3 creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature supports student access to
6 a variety of educational options, both public and private. However,
7 state policies regarding the approval of private schools were created
8 before online learning was possible. Consequently, these policies do
9 not provide for approval criteria that are sufficiently flexible to
10 accommodate online learning. While some policy adjustments have been
11 made to permit public online choices, current law does not provide a
12 clear process for private schools to obtain state approval to offer
13 similar learning options.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.195
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 (1) If a private school that has been approved under this chapter
17 by the state board of education seeks approval also to offer and
18 administer an online school program as defined under RCW 28A.250.010,

1 including under contract with a third party, the requirements for
2 minimum instructional hour offerings under RCW 28A.195.010(1) shall be
3 deemed met for the online school program. A residential dwelling of a
4 parent, guardian, or custodian shall be deemed an adequate physical
5 facility for students enrolled in the online school program. The
6 online school program is not required to be offered for the same grade
7 levels as the approved private school.

8 (2) The state board of education may approve an online school
9 program under this section that meets other applicable requirements
10 under this chapter.

11 (3) No private school offering and administering an online program
12 under this section, third party that contracts with a private school to
13 offer and administer an online program, or parent or guardian providing
14 an online program may receive state funding to provide the program.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The private school advisory committee
16 appointed under RCW 28A.195.050 shall examine issues associated with
17 state approval of online school programs offered by private schools and
18 shall consider whether criteria or procedures for approval in addition
19 to those provided in section 2 of this act should be considered by the
20 legislature. The committee must submit a report on its deliberations,
21 with recommendations if necessary, to the education committees of the
22 legislature by January 10, 2014. In developing recommendations, the
23 committee shall be mindful of the legislature's intent that private
24 schools should be subject only to those minimum state controls
25 necessary to ensure the health and safety of all the students in the
26 state and to ensure a sufficient basic education to meet usual
27 graduation requirements.

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