

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1511

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**As Passed House:**  
March 4, 2015

**Title:** An act relating to teaching Washington's tribal history, culture, and government in the common schools.

**Brief Description:** Requiring Washington's tribal history, culture, and government to be taught in the common schools.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Ortiz-Self, Hurst, Appleton, Stokesbary, Goodman, Reykdal, Moscoso, Rodne, Pollet, Magendanz, Zeiger, Johnson, Tharinger, Tarleton, Fitzgibbon, Van De Wege, Santos, Wylie, Ormsby, Walkinshaw, Gregerson and Farrell).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 2/3/15, 2/9/15 [DPS].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 3/4/15, 62-34.

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Requires, rather than encourages, school districts to incorporate the history, culture, and government of the nearest federally recognized Indian tribe(s) into the social studies curriculum.
- Requires schools to use curriculum developed by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS**

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Appleton, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair; Johnson, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hawkins, Sawyer and Van De Wege.

**Staff:** Kirsten Lee (786-7133).

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*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.*

**Background:**

There are currently 29 federally recognized Indian tribes whose reservations are located in Washington.

In 2005 legislation was enacted encouraging the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to help school districts identify federally recognized Indian tribes within or near the districts. Further, school districts were encouraged to do the following:

- incorporate curricula about tribal history, culture, and government of the nearest federally recognized tribe(s) and work with tribes to develop such curricula;
- collaborate with tribes to create materials, programs, and cultural exchanges; and
- collaborate with the OSPI on curricular areas of tribal government and history that are statewide in nature.

In 2011 legislation was enacted directing the OSPI to create the Office of Native Education (ONE). The ONE was tasked with providing assistance to school districts to meet the educational needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students. The ONE facilitates the development and implementation of curricula and instructional materials in native languages, culture, history, and the concept of tribal sovereignty, while providing assistance to districts in the acquisition of funding to develop curricula and instructional materials in conjunction with the Native language practitioners and tribal elders.

Washington's high school graduation requirements include a minimum of one-half credit of course work in Washington history and government. Courses designed to meet this requirement are encouraged to include information on the culture, history, and government of Washington Indian tribes.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The OSPI and school districts are required, rather than encouraged, to take certain actions to develop and incorporate curricula about tribes. The OSPI must help school districts identify federally recognized Indian tribes within or near school districts. School districts must do the following:

- when reviewing or adopting social studies curriculum, incorporate curricula about the tribal history, culture, and government of the nearest federally recognized tribe(s) and work with tribes to develop such curricula;
- use curriculum developed and made available free of charge by the OSPI;
- collaborate with any federally recognized Indian tribe within their district and neighboring tribes to incorporate expanded and improved curricular materials about Indian tribes and to create programs of classroom and community cultural exchanges; and
- collaborate with the OSPI on curricular areas of tribal government and history that are statewide in nature.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The OSPI proudly developed a curriculum free of charge. The curriculum is available and has been tested. Two school districts have adopted the curriculum. There are a variety of reasons to support this legislation, including that 99 percent of tribal students are educated in these schools. Often, educators misinterpret and misrepresent tribal history. Using the suggested curriculum will benefit tribal students and the population as a whole.

The legislation is supported by tribal and non-tribal members. The legislation would help the graduation rates of Native Americans in the state and will help educate all students about the history of the state. Current OSPI curriculum should be used, instead of recreating curriculum.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) All students should have knowledge and understanding of this state, including the culture and governments of the tribes. The bill does not call out the OSPI curriculum—the STI curriculum; this creates additional work. There are no other concerns and support would be given for the legislation if the curriculum is identified in the bill.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Dylan Doty and Madrienne Salgado, Muckleshoot Tribe; Leonard Forsman, Suquamish Tribe; and Dawn Vyvyan, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe.

(Other) Ken Kanikeberg, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.