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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1947**

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**State of Washington**

**64th Legislature**

**2015 Regular Session**

**By** House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Pollet, Walsh, Santos, S. Hunt, Orwall, Ortiz-Self, Tarleton, Kagi, Bergquist, Robinson, Gregerson, and Ryu)

READ FIRST TIME 02/20/15.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a comprehensive plan to expand  
2 learning opportunities and improve educational outcomes for students  
3 with disabilities or special needs using multiple strategies and  
4 statewide partnerships; adding new sections to chapter 28A.155 RCW;  
5 adding a new section to chapter 28A.290 RCW; creating a new section;  
6 providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** FINDINGS—INTENT. (1)(a) The legislature  
9 finds that students with disabilities or special needs are not  
10 succeeding in the state's public schools or meeting their potential  
11 at the levels that they would be able to achieve if barriers to  
12 success were recognized and support provided, particularly at early  
13 ages.

14 (b) The legislature recognizes that the United States department  
15 of education has determined that Washington is in "need of  
16 assistance" to meet new federal results-driven outcome measures for  
17 students with disabilities. It is the legislature's intent that the  
18 state adopt a ten-year goal to eliminate the most significant  
19 barriers to the success of students with disabilities or special  
20 needs, and to eliminate the disparity in outcomes between students,  
21 in special education and other students, caused by such barriers. As

1 recommended by the office of the education ombuds' 2014 report on the  
2 creation of a statewide special education task force, required by  
3 chapter 221, Laws of 2014, the 2014 operating supplemental  
4 appropriations act, the legislature establishes a blue-ribbon  
5 commission to develop a strategic plan and roadmap to accomplish this  
6 goal, with annual reports to the legislature containing prioritized  
7 recommendations for eliminating barriers to student success and on  
8 progress towards the goal.

9 (c) Despite recognition that special education is part of basic  
10 education, and the state's growing commitment to meet the education  
11 needs of all students, there remains an opportunity gap for  
12 Washington children and student residents living with disabilities or  
13 special needs, as illustrated by the findings in this subsection  
14 (1)(c) of the task force created by the legislature pursuant to  
15 chapter 221, Laws of 2014.

16 (i) Only fifty-four percent of students with disabilities  
17 graduated high school in 2013, compared to seventy-seven percent of  
18 all students in Washington. Even fewer students with disabilities  
19 engage in higher education, with just twenty-five percent enrolled in  
20 higher education one year beyond high school.

21 (ii) As many as one-third of former students served in special  
22 education are completely disengaged from work or postsecondary  
23 education one year after leaving high school.

24 (iii) Students with disabilities are underrepresented in  
25 enrollment in advanced placement courses, honors programs, and  
26 college preparatory classes and overrepresented in low-performing  
27 schools.

28 (iv) Nearly sixty-five percent of students with disabilities have  
29 a measured cognitive ability that is average or above but are not  
30 achieving similar to their peers due to learning disabilities, speech  
31 and language disabilities, and other health impairments. For the  
32 majority of these students, given appropriate intervention and  
33 accommodations, each could capably access rigorous coursework to  
34 obtain a high school diploma and pursue postsecondary education or  
35 technical and career opportunities. Only thirty-one percent of fourth  
36 grade students with disabilities scored proficient on statewide  
37 general assessments of reading and language arts, compared to  
38 seventy-two percent of all students. Only ten percent of eighth grade  
39 students with disabilities scored proficient on statewide general

1 assessments of mathematics, compared to fifty-four percent of their  
2 peers.

3 (v) Students with disabilities are two and one-half times more  
4 likely to be disciplined and removed from school.

5 (vi) Children living below the poverty line and in foster care  
6 are two times more likely to receive special education services, yet  
7 many students from low-income families or families whose primary  
8 language is not English are not even evaluated for, or provided with,  
9 services.

10 (vii) Students with disabilities are overrepresented in priority  
11 and focus schools.

12 (viii) The mental health needs of students are often unrecognized  
13 as disabling conditions, further increasing the inability of many  
14 students to perform as well as they would if services were provided  
15 either in school or with referrals integrated with school social  
16 workers and counselors.

17 (ix) Neurological conditions, such as dyslexia, which may impair  
18 students' learning absent specialized training for instructional  
19 approaches, are often not recognized due to lack of evaluation; or  
20 are not recognized by school districts as a basis for providing  
21 students with accommodation under an individualized education program  
22 or plan developed under section 504 of the federal rehabilitation act  
23 of 1973.

24 (2) The United States department of education, office of special  
25 education and rehabilitative services has placed Washington on the  
26 "needs assistance" list based on the performance of students with  
27 disabilities on regular statewide assessments. The department of  
28 education is also shifting from measuring compliance solely by the  
29 procedures of states and school districts toward review of objective  
30 measures of outcomes for students. It is the legislature's intent to  
31 have measurement of outcomes for students with disabilities or  
32 special needs, including whether these students are evaluated and  
33 offered services at disparate rates on account of school district of  
34 residence, race, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status, gender,  
35 or status as English language learners. This parallels federal  
36 measurement and obligations of the state and its school districts  
37 under Title VI of the civil rights act of 1964.

38 (3) The legislature finds that statistics showing the  
39 underperformance of students recognized as having disabilities would  
40 likely be significantly higher if other neurological-based

1 impairments to learning, such as dyslexia, were recognized as  
2 disabilities for purposes of providing students with individualized  
3 education plans, and if students of lower incomes and whose families  
4 are not English speaking were evaluated at the same rate and time as  
5 children who face fewer barriers to evaluation and provision of  
6 individualized education programs or plans developed under section  
7 504 of the federal rehabilitation act of 1973.

8 (4) The legislature finds compelling evidence that additional  
9 progress must be made to address the needs of students with  
10 disabilities or special needs in Washington public schools. The  
11 legislature finds that this time of commitment to measurable progress  
12 for student performance is the best opportunity to make a strong  
13 commitment to closing the educational opportunity gap for students  
14 with disabilities or special needs and to affirm the state's  
15 constitutional obligation to provide opportunities to learn for all  
16 students.

17 (5) To provide focus and clarity to efforts to increase learning  
18 opportunities and improve educational outcomes for students with  
19 disabilities or special needs, the legislature intends that students  
20 with disabilities or special needs be included in statewide and  
21 district reviews and reports on the "opportunity" or "achievement"  
22 gap.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** DEFINITIONS. The definitions in this  
24 section apply throughout this section and sections 3 through 10 of  
25 this act unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

26 (1) "Institutions of higher education" includes the community and  
27 technical colleges, public and private four-year institutions of  
28 higher education, independent colleges, degree-granting institutions,  
29 certificate-granting institutions, and the workforce training and  
30 education coordinating board.

31 (2) "Mental health disorder" means any mental, behavioral, or  
32 emotional disorder described in the most recent edition of the  
33 diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, published by  
34 the American psychiatric association, that substantially interferes  
35 with or limits the functioning and social interactions of a child or  
36 adolescent.

37 (3) "School organizations" includes the Washington state school  
38 directors' association, the Washington association of school  
39 administrators, the association of Washington school principals, the

1 Washington state association of educational service districts, and  
2 other organizations that represent the interests of school  
3 administrators, school board members, and unions for classified and  
4 certificated personnel.

5 (4) "State education agencies" includes the office of the  
6 superintendent of public instruction, the state board for community  
7 and technical colleges, the student achievement council, the  
8 professional educator standards board, the state board of education,  
9 and the Washington charter school commission.

10 (5) "Students with disabilities" means students who receive  
11 instruction pursuant to an individualized education program or plan  
12 developed under section 504 of the federal rehabilitation act of  
13 1973; students who are in the process of evaluation and  
14 identification to become eligible for services and protections under  
15 the federal individuals with disabilities education improvement act  
16 or under section 504 of the federal rehabilitation act of 1973; or  
17 students who have previously received educational services and  
18 supports pursuant to an individualized education program or plan  
19 developed under section 504 of the federal rehabilitation act of  
20 1973.

21 (6) "Students with special needs" includes students with  
22 disabilities receiving services under section 504 of the federal  
23 rehabilitation act of 1973, those with mental health or behavioral  
24 issues that are temporary or long-term; those with dyslexia or other  
25 neurological-based conditions that impair the ability to learn via  
26 traditional teaching methods, but that allow a student to learn and  
27 perform equal to their peers when provided specialized instruction,  
28 such as multisensory structured language instruction and  
29 technological assistance; and those who do not receive accommodations  
30 under an individualized education program or plan developed under  
31 section 504 of the federal rehabilitation act of 1973 due to lack of  
32 evaluation.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** COMMISSION ESTABLISHED. The commission on  
34 improving outcomes for students with special needs is established to  
35 develop a ten-year strategic plan to expand learning opportunities  
36 and improve educational outcomes for all students with disabilities  
37 or special needs and an accountability framework to monitor and  
38 report annually on the progress being made toward the ten-year goal.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    COMMISSION—FRAMEWORK AND ROADMAP. (1) In  
2 order to expand learning opportunities and improve educational  
3 outcomes for students with disabilities or special needs, the  
4 commission on improving outcomes for students with special needs  
5 established in section 3 of this act shall propose goals and  
6 priorities to eliminate the most significant barriers to success for  
7 students with disabilities or special needs, with the longer-term  
8 goal of improving educational, workforce, and economic outcomes for  
9 these students. The commission shall identify strategies for meeting  
10 the goals and priorities in a ten-year roadmap and develop means to  
11 measure progress towards the goals using an accountability framework.

12        (2)(a) The initial work plan and strategies of the commission  
13 shall include aligning and combining previous education strategic  
14 plans into a single, cohesive, and comprehensive accountability  
15 framework. The framework must establish a limited number of select  
16 and specific goals that are meaningful indicators of progress toward  
17 eliminating the most significant barriers to success, and disparities  
18 in outcomes, for students with disabilities or special needs within  
19 ten years. The framework must use measures that are quantifiable and  
20 based on data that are regularly and reliably collected statewide,  
21 which may include:

22        (i) Participation of students with disabilities or special needs  
23 in regular statewide achievement assessments;

24        (ii) The educational opportunity gap between students with  
25 disabilities or special needs and other students on regular statewide  
26 assessments;

27        (iii) Percent of students with an individualized education  
28 program or plan age six to twenty-one who are served inside the  
29 general education class setting eighty percent or more of the school  
30 day; and who are served inside the general education class setting  
31 less than forty percent of the school day;

32        (iv) The frequency of use of restraint and isolation in K-12  
33 public school settings;

34        (v) Rates of suspension or expulsion for students with  
35 disabilities or special needs compared to other students for grades  
36 K-12, and for students in transition programs from age eighteen to  
37 twenty-one;

38        (vi) Use of medicaid-funded school-based services;

39        (vii) Percent and demographics of students with disabilities or  
40 special needs who, before age twenty-one:

1 (A) Graduate with a regular diploma;  
2 (B) Graduate with a certificate of academic achievement;  
3 (C) Graduate with a certificate of individual achievement;  
4 (D) Graduate with an assessment waiver;  
5 (E) Obtain a high school equivalency certificate; or  
6 (F) Exit the education system without graduating or obtaining an  
7 equivalency certificate;

8 (viii) Percent of students with disabilities or special needs who  
9 are eligible for supported employment from the developmental  
10 disabilities administration upon exit from secondary school and the  
11 rates of graduation from supported employment one, three, and five  
12 years, postexit, including the number of hours students are employed  
13 per week and their wage rates;

14 (ix) One, three, and five years postexit from secondary school,  
15 the percent of students at least sixteen years old who had an  
16 individualized education program or plan developed under section 504  
17 of the federal rehabilitation act of 1973 at the time they exited  
18 school and who are:

19 (A) Enrolled in state universities, regional universities, or a  
20 state college, as defined in RCW 28B.10.016;  
21 (B) Enrolled in community colleges;  
22 (C) Enrolled in career or technical colleges or programs;  
23 (D) Enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training  
24 program; or  
25 (E) Not engaged in training or postsecondary education;

26 (x) One, three, and five years postexit from secondary school,  
27 the percent of students at least sixteen years old who had an  
28 individualized education program or plan developed under section 504  
29 of the federal rehabilitation act of 1973 at the time they exited  
30 school and who are:

31 (A) Competitively employed;  
32 (B) Engaged in some other employment; or  
33 (C) Not engaged in employment, training, or postsecondary  
34 education; and

35 (xi) One, three, and five years after the case is closed, the  
36 average hourly rate or income level of clients exiting the department  
37 of vocational rehabilitation services.

38 (b) In developing the framework, the commission shall review the  
39 federal framework for accountability, work from the state disability

1 task force, work from the student achievement council, and work from  
2 the governor's committee on disability issues and employment.

3 (3)(a) The commission shall propose goals and priorities to  
4 eliminate the most significant barriers to success for students with  
5 disabilities or special needs in a ten-year roadmap. The roadmap must  
6 address the needs of Washington students with disabilities or special  
7 needs to reach higher levels of educational attainment and be aligned  
8 with Washington's workforce needs for certificates and degrees in  
9 particular fields of study.

10 (b) The commission shall update the ten-year roadmap every two  
11 years with the first report to be submitted to the governor, the  
12 office of the superintendent of public instruction, and the  
13 appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2016.

14 (c) The ten-year roadmap must include recommendations on:

15 (i) System design and coordination, including addressing  
16 shortages of qualified personnel needed to meet the goals proposed by  
17 the commission; and improving the training, recruitment, and  
18 placement of new teachers and professional educators and the ongoing  
19 training and professional development of experienced teachers to  
20 address the barriers faced by students with disabilities or special  
21 needs and to reduce the disparities in outcomes for these students in  
22 comparison to other students;

23 (ii) Reducing barriers to evaluation and provision of appropriate  
24 educational and therapy services for students with disabilities and  
25 special needs, including a review of the basis for the current  
26 statutory assumption about the percentage of students who have  
27 disabilities or special needs, and whether the legislature should  
28 adjust this figure;

29 (iii) Using professionals trained in mental health evaluations,  
30 referrals, and counseling, or school social workers to provide  
31 additional services to students with disabilities or special needs;

32 (iv) Improving student transitions, from early education through  
33 postsecondary education and training and into career;

34 (v) Early and timely evaluation of children to identify  
35 disabilities, including dyslexia or other learning challenges;

36 (vi) Early intervention services from birth to age three and from  
37 age three to age five;

38 (vii) College and career access preparedness, in collaboration  
39 with the office of the superintendent of public instruction and the



1 state board of education, including access to dual credit programs  
2 while in high school;

3 (viii) Strategies to help families and guardians assist in  
4 improving functional, behavioral, and academic skills for their  
5 students with disabilities or special needs;

6 (ix) Expanding participation and success for racial and ethnic  
7 minorities who experience disabilities or special needs;

8 (x) Development and expansion of innovations in education,  
9 including innovations to increase attainment of high school diplomas;  
10 postsecondary certificates; associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and  
11 professional degrees; and innovations to improve precollege education  
12 in terms of cost-effectiveness and transitions to college-level  
13 education.

14 (d) The ten-year roadmap must also include:

15 (i) Higher education data and analysis, in collaboration with the  
16 education data center and the institutions for higher education,  
17 including outcomes for recruitment, transitions, retention, and  
18 success of students in postsecondary programs;

19 (ii) Resources appropriate to meet statewide goals, recognizing  
20 current state economic conditions and state resources, including the  
21 use of federal funds to provide nonacademic services. The first  
22 report must include models and practices for accessing federally  
23 funded services for students with disabilities or special needs in  
24 public schools by school districts in order to integrate services,  
25 provide greater access to services, and free up state resources to  
26 provide additional services, such as mental health and counseling  
27 services, and evaluation for services including occupational,  
28 physical, and speech therapy; and

29 (iii) Relevant policy research.

30 (4) In developing its accountability framework and ten-year  
31 roadmap, the commission shall collaborate with the state education  
32 agencies, the institutions of higher education, school organizations,  
33 the department of early learning, the legislature, and other  
34 stakeholder groups. In addition, as described in section 8 of this  
35 act, the commission may establish subcommittees of invited experts  
36 and representatives of school districts, educators, parents, higher  
37 education teacher training institutions, and such other outside  
38 members as it deems appropriate to consult and recommend strategies  
39 for each goal and priority identified by the commission.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 5.**    COMMISSION REPORT CARD. (1) The commission  
2 on improving outcomes for students with special needs, in  
3 collaboration with the office of the superintendent of public  
4 instruction, shall produce an annual report card on the state's  
5 progress toward expanding learning opportunities and improving  
6 educational outcomes for students with disabilities or special needs  
7 in Washington.

8        (2) The report card must:

9        (a) Illustrate the most recent data for the indicators and  
10 measures of the accountability framework developed under section 4 of  
11 this act;

12        (b) Provide information from the department of early learning,  
13 state education agencies, institutions of higher education, and the  
14 employment security department that indicates the extent that  
15 activities and resources are aligned with and support the  
16 accountability framework. The focus of the reporting for the state  
17 education agencies is on programs and plans specifically identified  
18 in law or budget proviso as relating to both basic education and  
19 special education programs and plans that address the needs of  
20 students with disabilities or special needs in Washington. The focus  
21 of the reporting for the employment security department is on trends  
22 related to hiring students with disabilities or special needs;

23        (c) Provide data regarding current and projected outcome measures  
24 for students with disabilities or special needs;

25        (d) Be prominently displayed on the education data center's data  
26 dashboard, established in RCW 28B.77.090, which must be linked from  
27 any web site created by the commission.

28        (3) The education data center created in RCW 43.41.400 must  
29 coordinate data collection and analysis to support the report card by  
30 designing a common reporting metric, in collaboration with the  
31 commission.

32        (4) The commission must publish the first report card with  
33 baseline data on the identified indicators and measures by January  
34 10, 2016, and must update the report card by each January 10th  
35 thereafter.

36        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 6.**    COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS. (1)(a)  
37 By thirty days after the effective date of this section, the governor  
38 shall appoint two cochairs to the commission on improving outcomes  
39 for students with special needs established in section 3 of this act.

1 One cochair must demonstrate respected leadership in education and  
2 child advocacy, and must be known to foster collaboration and  
3 partnerships. The other cochair must equally represent a diverse  
4 range of child and parent consumer experiences with demonstrated  
5 leadership in building relationships and facilitating accord with  
6 educators, legislators, and policymakers. The cochairs shall hire an  
7 executive director responsible for convening and staffing the task  
8 force and subcommittees, providing research requested by the  
9 commission, administration, and preparation of reports.

10 (b) By thirty days after the effective date of this section, the  
11 governor's office shall create an application process for individuals  
12 interested in participating as members on the commission.

13 (c) By sixty days after the effective date of this section,  
14 individuals interested in participating on the commission shall  
15 submit applications to the office of the governor for review by the  
16 cochairs.

17 (d) By ninety days after the effective date of this section, the  
18 cochairs shall select a pool of nominees for appointment by the  
19 governor. The nominees must be geographically and demographically  
20 diverse and represent a wide variety of stakeholder groups.

21 (e) By one hundred twenty days after the effective date of this  
22 section, the governor shall appoint twelve members to the commission  
23 from the list of nominees, including:

24 (i) Four educators who represent early learning, K-12, and  
25 transitions to postsecondary life as well as special education and  
26 general education perspectives, in the categories of superintendent,  
27 principal, teacher, or related-services staff, with at least one who  
28 represents a recognized bargaining unit of educators;

29 (ii) Two parents;

30 (iii) An expert in neuroscience research, neurodiversity, or  
31 diverse learning styles;

32 (iv) An expert in classroom design that promotes inclusive and  
33 differentiated instruction;

34 (v) A representative of state teacher education colleges or an  
35 organization representing teacher training educators;

36 (vi) A representative of a statewide organization representing  
37 educators and parents involved in providing professional development  
38 for dyslexia or other neurological-based learning disabilities;

39 (vii) A representative of school counselor and social worker  
40 organizations; and

1 (viii) An expert in early evaluation or provision of early  
2 intervention services to prepare children to be ready to learn.

3 (f) The following department heads or their designees are ex  
4 officio nonvoting members of the commission:

5 (i) The superintendent of public instruction;

6 (ii) The secretary of the department of social and health  
7 services;

8 (iii) The director of the department of early learning;

9 (iv) The director of the student achievement council; and

10 (v) The director of the office of the education ombuds.

11 (2) Members of the commission must be reimbursed for travel  
12 expenses, as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060 and are required  
13 to attend full commission meetings, but may not be reimbursed for  
14 costs related to attendance of regional work groups.

15 (3) Staff support for the commission shall be provided by the  
16 governor's office and the office of financial management, with  
17 support from the office of the superintendent of public instruction  
18 and other state education agencies and institutions of higher  
19 education, as necessary.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** COMMISSION POWERS. (1) The commission on  
21 improving outcomes for students with special needs has the powers  
22 described in this section.

23 (2) The commission has the power to convene regional and  
24 statewide work groups that bring persons with relevant expertise to  
25 the work of the commission and create a level of consensus-building  
26 and trust needed for a meaningful shift in the way services are  
27 delivered to students with disabilities or special needs. Work group  
28 subcommittees may include:

29 (a) Classroom educators, both general and special education, from  
30 early learning through postsecondary education systems;

31 (b) Administrators;

32 (c) School finance experts;

33 (d) Representatives of educational service districts,  
34 superintendents, and school board directors;

35 (e) Self-advocates and parents;

36 (f) Representatives of the social and health services, including  
37 experts in juvenile justice and developmental disabilities;

38 (g) Related services professionals, such as school psychologists,  
39 counselors, social workers, speech and language therapists, physical

1 and occupational therapists, audiologists, school nurses, and other  
2 staff involved in the delivery of services and design of plans for  
3 students based on their needs;

4 (h) Experts in brain science and learning;

5 (i) Experts who understand the unique issues posed by students  
6 with disabilities who are English language learners, students of  
7 color, students living in poverty, foster care students, students  
8 involved with the juvenile justice system, or students who have  
9 limited-English speaking families;

10 (j) Representatives of the state ethnic commissions, the state  
11 developmental disabilities council, and the governor's committee on  
12 disability issues and employment; and

13 (k) Representatives of community partners, such as physicians,  
14 psychologists, clinics, hospitals, and public health representatives.

15 (3) The commission has the power to conduct research and system  
16 reviews, and consult experts to inform its work. The commission may  
17 seek grants and federal funding to carry out research or other  
18 activities authorized by the chapter.

19 (4) To the extent possible, the commission shall use the data and  
20 analysis produced by, and in consultation with, the education data  
21 center created in RCW 43.41.400 in fulfilling its duties under  
22 sections 2 through 9 of this act.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** SPECIAL EDUCATION INNOVATION PROJECT. (1)

24 To the extent funds are appropriated specifically for this purpose,  
25 the office of financial management shall contract with a statewide  
26 organization with expertise in promoting and supporting education  
27 from early learning through postsecondary education for students with  
28 disabilities or special needs. The purpose of the contract is to  
29 identify, test, and develop scalable, cost-effective, and evidence-  
30 based approaches for expanding learning opportunities and improving  
31 educational outcomes that are aligned with the framework developed  
32 under section 4 of this act. The activities to be conducted under the  
33 contract shall be as provided in this section, with specific  
34 performance expectations negotiated between the office of the  
35 governor, the office of financial management, and the selected  
36 organization.

37 (2) Under the terms of the contract, the organization selected  
38 under this section must:

1 (a) Conduct a statewide communications campaign to expand  
2 awareness of the importance of educating students with disabilities  
3 or special needs and the opportunities available to close the  
4 educational opportunity gap for disadvantaged students and to promote  
5 economic self-sufficiency and reduced dependence on public benefits  
6 for students with disabilities or special needs over their lifetimes;

7 (b) Expand regional networks of schools, institutions of higher  
8 education, and educational service districts that align best  
9 practices and local resources to promote the inclusion of students  
10 with disabilities or special needs in successful engagement within  
11 general education curriculum and programs; increase the percentage of  
12 students with disabilities or special needs attending and completing  
13 postsecondary training and education; and improve the employment  
14 opportunities of students with disabilities or special needs;

15 (c) Establish an innovation fund and offer competitive innovation  
16 grants to public schools, including charter schools, to support  
17 inclusive and innovative practices in education, from early learning  
18 through postsecondary education, including developing models of  
19 interdisciplinary instruction, inclusive models of delivering  
20 instruction, and project-based learning to improve outcomes for  
21 students with disabilities or special needs;

22 (d) Expand professional development opportunities for educators,  
23 faculty, and principals, including developing technology-enabled  
24 learning systems to support mentoring and best practices for students  
25 with disabilities or special needs; and

26 (e) Create opportunities to align early intervention for students  
27 with disabilities or special needs into all early learning programs.  
28 Early intervention includes programs from birth through age five for  
29 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities or special  
30 needs.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** INTERDISCIPLINARY INSTRUCTION AND PROJECT-  
32 BASED LEARNING IN SCHOOLS. (1) Within existing resources, the office  
33 of the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the  
34 commission on improving outcomes for students with special needs and  
35 the special education innovation project established in section 8 of  
36 this act, shall identify and disseminate resources and materials to  
37 elementary, middle, and high schools that are intended to encourage  
38 and increase interdisciplinary instruction and project-based learning

1 that will assist a student with disabilities or special needs to meet  
2 the requirements of a high school diploma.

3 (2) Within existing resources, the office of the superintendent  
4 of public instruction shall create partnerships for collaboration  
5 using work groups of educators and education service districts,  
6 charter schools, institutions of higher education, and innovation  
7 grant recipients under section 8 of this act. These work groups must:

8 (a) Identify interdisciplinary instructional modules appropriate  
9 for students with disabilities or special needs at different grade  
10 levels;

11 (b) Identify project-based learning models, projects, lessons,  
12 and guides appropriate for students with disabilities or special  
13 needs at different grade levels; and

14 (c) Make the information collected in this section, including  
15 online resource guides, available for teachers to incorporate into  
16 their classroom instruction.

17 (3) Within existing resources, the office of the superintendent  
18 of public instruction shall also disseminate information and research  
19 on best practices in interdisciplinary instruction and project-based  
20 learning that improves successful outcomes for students with  
21 disabilities or special needs.

22 (4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in  
23 collaboration with education service districts, shall make available  
24 professional development opportunities in brain research and  
25 assistive technology regarding learning and instruction for students  
26 with learning, neurological, physical, social-emotional,  
27 developmental disability, or mental health disorders, based upon the  
28 recommendations of the commission on improving outcomes for students  
29 with special needs established in section 3 of this act, and subject  
30 to available funds.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.290  
32 RCW to read as follows:

33 **QUALITY EDUCATION COUNCIL ROLE CLARIFICATION.** (1) This section  
34 clarifies the role of the quality education council, which was  
35 created to recommend and inform the ongoing implementation by the  
36 legislature of an evolving program of basic education and the  
37 financing necessary to support the program of basic education. Added  
38 to the council's duties in this section is the development of  
39 strategic recommendations to improve outcomes for students with

1 disabilities or special needs within the program of basic education  
2 for the common schools. The council shall take into consideration the  
3 strategic plan, the ten-year roadmap, and the annual report card of  
4 the commission on improving outcomes for students with special needs  
5 established in section 3 of this act. Any recommendations for  
6 modifications to the program of basic education must consider the  
7 needs of students with disabilities or special needs and must be  
8 based on evidence that the programs effectively support the learning  
9 of students with disabilities or special needs. The council shall  
10 update the statewide strategic recommendations every four years and  
11 include specific strategies to improve outcomes for students with  
12 disabilities or special needs. The recommendations of the council  
13 must align with the framework and the ten-year goals adopted by the  
14 commission on improving outcomes for students with special needs and  
15 include:

16 (a) Informing future educational policy and funding decisions of  
17 the legislature and governor that include measures that improve  
18 outcomes for students with disabilities or special needs as part of  
19 the program of basic education;

20 (b) Identifying measurable goals and priorities for the  
21 educational system in Washington for a ten-year time period,  
22 including the goals of basic education, and ongoing strategies for  
23 coordinating statewide efforts to eliminate the educational  
24 opportunity gap experienced by students with disabilities or special  
25 needs and enabling the state of Washington to implement an evolving  
26 program of basic education that accounts for students with  
27 disabilities or special needs in the program of basic education.

28 (2) The definitions in section 2 of this act apply to this  
29 section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** Sections 2 through 9 of this act are each  
31 added to chapter 28A.155 RCW.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
33 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of  
34 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes  
35 effect thirty days after signed into law.

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