
Education Committee

HB 1886

Brief Description: Concerning the responsibilities of the superintendent of public instruction and the state board of education.

Sponsors: Representatives Harris, Santos and Pollet.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Transfers numerous duties and responsibilities related to accountability, assessments, high school graduation requirements, basic education requirements and other areas from the State Board of Education to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- Modifies the stated purpose of the State Board of Education to specify that the purpose includes establishing high school graduation requirements, approving school districts as charter school authorizes, and accrediting, approving, and overseeing private schools.

Hearing Date: 2/13/17

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In addition to its constitutional charge of supervising all matter pertaining to public schools, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and its office has numerous and broad responsibilities prescribed in statute, including:

- making rules and regulations necessary for the administration of public education requirements;
- preparing courses of study and other materials and books for the discharge of education duties;
- fulfilling financial responsibilities, including distributing legislatively allocated funds to districts for the operation of the public school system, and awarding numerous state and federally funded grants;

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.

- maintaining and revising, in consultation with the State Board of Education (SBE), a statewide academic assessment system to measure student knowledge and skills on state learning standards and for purposes of state and federal accountability; and
- satisfying numerous reporting and other duties assigned by the Legislature.

State Board of Education.

Although the origins of the SBE predate statehood, the 16-member SBE, which includes the SPI, is created in statute and is not referenced in the constitution. The SBE has numerous system oversight responsibilities, including:

- providing advocacy and strategic oversight of public education;
- adopting and revising academic performance improvement goals;
- establishing high school graduation requirements or equivalencies, including graduation credit and course distribution requirements;
- identifying scores students must meet to achieve standard on statewide student assessments;
- accrediting private schools serving kindergarten through grade 12; and
- reviewing and determining applications of school districts seeking approval to become charter school authorizers.

Summary of Bill:

Modifications to Stated Purposes of the SBE.

The stated purpose of the SBE, as established in statute, is modified to specify that the purpose includes establishing high school graduation requirements, approving school districts as charter school authorizes, and accrediting, approving, and overseeing private schools.

Transfer of Specified Duties and Responsibilities from the SBE to the OSPI.

Numerous duties and responsibilities related to accountability, assessments, high school graduation requirements, basic education requirements, and other areas are transferred from the SBE to the SPI. Examples of transferred duties and responsibilities, by general category, are listed below.

I. Accountability

1. Implementing a standards-based accountability framework that creates a unified system of increasing levels of support for schools to improve academic achievement.
2. Adopting and revising performance improvement goals to improve student learning that relate to academic performance and student attendance.
3. Designating low-performing school districts as required action districts (RAD), receiving and approving related action plans from the applicable school boards and superintendents, and redirecting certain federal funds for districts that have not received approval for their action plans.
4. Releasing school districts from the RAD designation.
5. Proposing rules for establishing an accountability framework that creates a unified system of support for challenged schools. (The statutory date for the implementation of the system by the SBE is the 2014-15 school year, but new rules must be proposed by the SPI for system implementation in the 2018-19 school year).
6. Developing the Washington Achievement Index to identify schools and districts for recognition, continuous improvement, and additional state support.

7. Working with the Education Data Center in the Office of Financial Management on issues related to reports of how state education resources are used.

II. Assessments, Including Assessments for High School Graduation Requirements

1. Identifying the scores that students must achieve to meet standard on statewide student assessments and, for high school students, to obtain a certificate of academic achievement.
2. Conducting annual reviews of the assessment reporting system.
3. Approving equivalent career and technical courses and their curriculum frameworks.
4. Approving provisions governing high school student work samples for alternative assessment options.
5. Obligating the SPI to mandate that one-half credit of the social studies requirement be coursework in civics.

III. Basic Education Requirements

1. Adopting rules to implement and ensure district compliance with basic education requirements.
2. Ordering the withholding of state funds for basic education for districts with basic education programs that fail to meet enumerated requirements.
3. Adopting rules governing the eligibility of a child between the ages of 16 and 18 to take a test to earn a high school equivalency certificate, and rules related to the issuance of a high school diploma by community and technical colleges.
4. Assisting in the approval of qualifying adult education programs in school districts.
5. Being solely subject to an appeal of agency actions under the state's Administrative Procedure Act.
6. Adjusting the boundaries of educational service districts.

IV. Waiver Granting Authority

1. Granting waivers from 180-day school year requirements to small districts.
2. Granting waivers from certain career and technical education course requirements for districts with fewer than 2,000 students.
3. Granting waivers from basic education requirements for innovation schools and other requestors.
4. Granting waivers for educational restructuring programs.

V. Other Provisions

1. Creating a school facilities citizen advisory panel.
2. Adopting rules related to the exclusion of students from school if a medication or treatment order addressing any life-threatening health condition that a child has that may require medical services to be performed at the school has not been provided to the school.

Transfer of Selected Duties from the SPI to the SBE.

Selected duties and responsibilities are transferred from the SPI to the SBE. The transferred duties and responsibilities relate to:

1. receiving and reviewing annual educational compliance statements from private schools;
2. appointing a private school advisory committee; and

3. determining what information must be included in annual reports from private schools to educational service districts;
4. employing or terminating the executive director of the SBE and other employees of the SBE who were appointed by the SBE; and
5. conducting elections for members of the SBE.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 8, 2017.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section section 105, which relates to local plans in required action districts, and section 604, which relates to waivers for educational restructuring plans, both take effect June 30, 2019.