

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5318

As of February 19, 2017

Title: An act relating to agriculture science education in public schools.

Brief Description: Promoting agriculture science education in schools.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt, Takko, Warnick, Brown, Rolfes, Conway and Bailey.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/07/17, 2/14/17 [DP-WM].
Ways & Means: 2/20/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to designate one or more high schools to serve as lighthouse programs on how to combine agriculture science education with a focus on STEM and partnerships with businesses and the community.
- Creates the Agriculture Science Education Grant Program to award grants to provide professional development for certificated instructors, obtain consumable laboratory equipment supplies, acquire equipment commonly used in the agriculture industry, and cover administrative costs.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Zeiger, Chair; Fain, Vice Chair; Rolfes, Ranking Minority Member; Billig, Mullet, Rivers and Warnick.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Jeffrey Mitchell (786-7438)

Background: Career and Technical Education (CTE) consists of classes that fall into one of 16 “career clusters.” A career cluster is a group of jobs and industries that are related by

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skills or products. Within each cluster, there is a collection of courses and training opportunities to prepare students for a given career. One of the Career Clusters is Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; and one is Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

Since 2010, the OSPI has annually designated middle and high schools as STEM lighthouse schools and in 2012 also began designating elementary STEM lighthouse schools. The designated schools serve as resources and provide technical assistance to other schools and communities in the initial stages of creating a learning environment focused on STEM. If funded by the Legislature, the lighthouse schools receive a grant. Thirty-two schools and four school districts have received grants of up to \$20,000.

Summary of Bill: Subject to funds being appropriated, OSPI must designate one or more high schools to serve as lighthouse programs on how to combine agriculture science education with a focus on STEM and partnerships with businesses and the local community. OSPI and the lighthouse high school or schools must publicize the models of STEM best practices used by the lighthouse schools and encourage other schools and communities to work with the lighthouse schools to replicate similar models. An account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer to provide resources to support agriculture science education lighthouse programs and schools interested in replicating similar models. Revenues to the account may include funds from any source, including private sector gifts, federal, or state funds.

The Agriculture Science Education Grant Program is created. OSPI must establish funding criteria for agriculture science education grants. Grants up to \$3,000 may be awarded to provide professional development for certificated instructors in an agriculture science education program. Grants up to \$15,000 may be awarded to obtain consumable laboratory equipment supplies needed for the program; acquire equipment commonly used in the agriculture industry; and to cover administrative costs to adopt or continue agriculture science education curricula. Recipients awarded grants may apply for subsequent grants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: This proposal is based on the Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE). CASE provides intense teacher professional development, a rigorous curriculum that includes hand-on learning experiences for students in agriculture science education, and real-time feedback. The Prosser School District started using CASE and now 67 agriculture science departments are operating in school districts. These programs link students with timber, farming, and other agriculture industries and STEM education. CASE provides a path for equivalent CTE crediting, which helps students obtain the 24-credits needed to graduate from high school and enables students to who have an interest in agriculture to participate in Washington FFA.

One challenge for these programs is having sufficient equipment for the students to train upon and the grants in the bill will help with that. The agriculture industry is growing and is in the need of trained laborers. This bill will benefit students and the economy of our state.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Senator Sam Hunt, Prime Sponsor; Stewart Padelford, Washington FFA Foundation; Dawn Lantz, Yelm School District; Tye Taylor, Washington FFA Association; Luke Moore, Washington FFA Association; Sal Prohim, Taylor Shellfish; Rebecca Wallace, Agricultural Science Program Supervisor; Tim Knue, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education):
No one.