
Education Committee

HB 1076

Brief Description: Modifying certain common school provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Dolan and Jinkins; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Reduces the minimum number of programs or activities that a Building Bridges Program of local partnerships is required to provide.
- Establishes a new alternative to stand-alone civics course requirements in high schools by specifying that civics content and instruction that is embedded in a qualifying career and technical education course satisfies the stand-alone civics course requirement.
- Modifies duties of the Superintendent of Public Instruction relating to reading assessments administered to second grade students.

Hearing Date: 1/13/20

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Building Bridges Program.

Legislation enacted in 2007 established the Building Bridges Program to award grants to local partnerships consisting of schools, families, and community-based organizations for the purpose of developing dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval systems.

The Building Bridges Program must, through local partnerships, provide each of the following programs or activities:

- a system that identifies individual students at risk of dropping out from middle or high school, and provides timely interventions for students and dropouts;
- coaches or mentors for students, as necessary;

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- staff responsible for the coordination of community partners;
- retrieval or reentry activities; and
- alternative educational programming.

Civics Education.

In accordance with legislation adopted in 2018, each school district that operates a high school must provide a mandatory one-half credit stand-alone course in civics for each high school student. With limited exceptions, civics content and instruction embedded in other social studies courses do not satisfy this requirement.

The content of the mandatory civics course must include, but is not limited to:

- federal, state, tribal, and local government organization and procedures;
- rights and responsibilities of citizens addressed in the Washington and United States Constitutions;
- current issues addressed at each level of government;
- electoral issues, including elections, ballot measures, initiatives, and referenda;
- the study and completion of the civics component of the federally administered naturalization test; and
- the importance in a free society of living certain basic values and character traits.

Credit awarded to students who complete the civics course must be applied to course credit requirements in social studies that are necessary for high school graduation.

Career and Technical Education.

As defined in statute, "career and technical education" (CTE) is a planned program of courses and learning experiences that begins with an exploration of career options and supports basic academic and life skills.

Career and technical education instruction is provided in two general course classifications—exploratory and preparatory—both of which must comply with numerous standards established by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Career and technical education instruction is delivered through programs at middle and high schools, through approved online courses, and at skill centers, the regional CTE instructional venues established and operated by a host school district.

Credits awarded through a CTE course apply to core academic and graduation requirements if equivalency requirements are met, and high schools or school districts must have course equivalencies for CTE courses offered to students in high schools and skill centers. As part of this requirement, each school district board of directors must develop a course equivalency approval procedure, and an equivalency may be for whole or partial credit.

Statewide Assessments - Generally and Second Grade Reading Assessments.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with the State Board of Education, maintains and revises a statewide academic assessment system to measure student knowledge and skills on state learning standards and for purposes of state and federal accountability. The state assessment system covers the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science for elementary, middle, and high school years.

Federal requirements also govern assessment practices in Washington. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act requires states to assess students based on state learning standards in reading and mathematics in each of grades three through eight and in one high school grade, as well as in science in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school.

In addition to statewide assessments administered in grades three and higher, a reading assessment must be administered by school districts each fall to students in the second grade. The purpose of the assessment is to provide information to parents, teachers, and school administrators on the level of acquisition of oral reading accuracy and fluency skills of each student at the beginning of second grade. Provisions governing the assessment direct the SPI to identify a collection of reading passages and assessment procedures that can be used to measure second grade oral reading accuracy and fluency skills. In administering the assessment, districts must use an assessment selected from the collection adopted by the SPI.

The assessment procedures and reading passages in the collection must meet specified requirements, including:

- providing a reliable and valid measure of a student's oral reading accuracy and fluency skills;
- having been approved by a panel of nationally recognized professionals in the area of beginning reading, and
- assessing student skills in recognition of letter sounds, phonemic awareness, word recognition, and reading connected text.

The SPI has financial duties related to the assessments. The SPI is required to develop a per-pupil cost for the assessments in the collection of reading passages that details the costs for administering the assessments, booklets, scoring, and training that is required to reliably administer the test. To the extent funds are appropriated, the SPI must pay for the cost of administering and scoring the assessments, booklets or other assessment materials, and training required to administer the test.

Summary of Bill:

Building Bridges Program.

Provisions governing the Building Bridges Program are modified to specify that a Building Bridges Program must, through local partnerships, provide one or more, rather than all, of the following programs or activities:

- a system that identifies individual students at risk of dropping out from middle or high school, and provides timely interventions for students and dropouts;
- coaches or mentors for students, as necessary;
- staff responsible for the coordination of community partners;
- retrieval or reentry activities; and
- alternative educational programming.

Civics Education.

Provisions governing the mandatory one-half credit stand-alone course in civics that school districts must provide are modified. A new alternative to the stand-alone civics course requirement is established. Under the new alternative, civics content and instruction that is

embedded in a CTE high school equivalency course satisfies the stand-alone civics course requirement.

Second Grade Reading Assessments.

Provisions directing the SPI to identify a collection of reading passages and assessment procedures for use by districts in measuring the reading skills of second grade students are removed.

Provisions establishing the purpose of the second grade reading assessment are modified to include a reference to comprehension. With that inclusion, the specified purpose of the assessment is to provide information to parents, teachers, and school administrators on the level of (1) acquisition of oral reading accuracy, (2) comprehension, and (3) fluency skills of each student at the beginning of second grade.

The passages used for the assessment must meet specified criteria, including having been approved by nationally recognized professionals, rather than a panel of nationally recognized professionals, in the area of beginning reading, and must be administered according to the publishers' guidelines. Also, additional references to "comprehension" are added to criteria governing requirements for the assessment.

The assessment-related financial duties of the SPI are modified. Rather than being directed to develop a per-pupil cost for the assessments, the SPI is authorized to provide an estimated per-pupil cost for assessments aligned to state learning standards. To the extent funds are appropriated, the SPI, rather than paying for the assessment costs, must instead provide districts with funds to purchase assessment materials and professional learning for educators who are needed to implement the district's reading assessment system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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