

ESSB 5878 - H COMM AMD
By Committee on Education

ADOPTED AS AMENDED 03/03/2022

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Washington state has long led the way
4 in creating arts education policy. Washington state was one of the
5 first states to adopt visual and performing arts graduation
6 requirements. Our state has a two-credit visual and performing arts
7 graduation requirement, although the second credit may be waived in
8 certain circumstances. Our state has also been a leader by formally
9 declaring the arts including dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and
10 media as core content areas in the definition of basic education.
11 However, there is a very large gap between policy and practice in our
12 state. While most high schools offer a range of arts courses, it is
13 not uncommon for middle schools to offer only one of the arts,
14 usually music, and for elementary schools to offer no formal arts
15 instruction at all, during the regular school day. When arts
16 instruction is offered, it is often as an extracurricular activity, a
17 volunteer docent program, or as a program which meets far less often
18 than other core subjects do. Further, students who perform poorly on
19 standardized tests in math and English often have what little arts
20 instruction they would normally receive taken away, in favor of
21 remediation in the test subject areas. Our students who live in low
22 socioeconomic areas tend to perform worse on standardized tests. As a
23 result, poorer students in our state tend to be denied arts
24 instruction at a higher rate than students from economically stable
25 homes and neighborhoods. The evidence of the multiple benefits of
26 arts education is voluminous and undeniable. The arts are not only a
27 vehicle for doing better at other subjects; they have immense value
28 in their own right and should be taught as stand-alone disciplines,
29 the way our laws and policies are written.

30 (2) The legislature intends to clarify, for schools and school
31 districts, the importance of arts education and to bring our schools'

1 practices in line with our state and federal laws and policies, and
2 the promises made to our communities, by ensuring formal instruction
3 in the core disciplines of visual and performing arts for all
4 Washington students, regardless of their family's socioeconomic
5 status or the relative affluence of the neighborhood in which they
6 live. The legislature recognizes and supports that the best practice
7 is for basic education courses, including the arts, to be taught by
8 certificated teachers who are qualified through an endorsement to
9 teach in the subject area of the course. However, the legislature
10 acknowledges that there is a shortage of arts endorsed teachers in
11 Washington, so intends to allow arts instruction to also be provided
12 by certificated teachers actively pursuing an endorsement in the
13 relevant arts discipline.

14 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.020 and 2013 c 23 s 48 are each amended to
15 read as follows:

16 All common schools shall give instruction in reading,
17 handwriting, orthography, written and mental arithmetic, geography,
18 the history of the United States, English grammar, visual and
19 performing arts, physiology and hygiene with special reference to the
20 effects of alcohol and drug abuse on the human system, science with
21 special reference to the environment, and such other studies as may
22 be prescribed by rule of the superintendent of public instruction.
23 All teachers shall stress the importance of the cultivation of
24 manners, the fundamental principles of honesty, honor, industry and
25 economy, the minimum requisites for good health including the
26 beneficial effect of physical exercise and methods to prevent
27 exposure to and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, and
28 the worth of kindness to all living creatures and the land. The
29 prevention of child abuse may be offered as part of the curriculum in
30 the common schools.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
32 RCW to read as follows:

33 (1) Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, public schools shall
34 offer regular instruction in at least one visual art or at least one
35 performing art, throughout the school year. Each student must receive
36 instruction in at least one arts discipline throughout their
37 elementary education experience. For grades nine through 12, all

1 students must be given the opportunity to take arts coursework each
2 academic year.

3 (2) Every student must have access to arts education, as part of
4 basic education under RCW 28A.150.210. Arts instruction must be
5 accessible by all students, in a manner that is commensurate with
6 instruction in other core subject areas.

7 (3) Arts instruction must be provided by either: A certificated
8 teacher with an endorsement in the relevant arts discipline; or a
9 certificated teacher actively pursuing an endorsement in the relevant
10 arts discipline.

11 (4) Instruction under this section must be solely for the arts
12 discipline in the skills and craft of each specific arts discipline
13 as their own end, rather than as a vehicle to enhance learning in any
14 other nonarts subject area. If schools wish to integrate or infuse
15 the arts into other subject matter, they must do so in addition to
16 the regular, formal arts instruction required by this section.

17 (5) The arts instructors in each school district, as subject
18 matter experts, shall be consulted to determine which specific visual
19 and performing arts courses to offer at given grade levels, so that
20 instruction is properly aligned to state learning standards in the
21 arts and students' developmental stages and vertically aligned to
22 give arts-focused students the best chance for success in their arts
23 college or career pathway.

24 (6) For the purposes of this section, "public schools" has the
25 same meaning as in RCW 28A.150.010."

26 Correct the title.

EFFECT: (1) Specifies that every student must have access to arts education, as part of basic education;

(2) Provides that arts instruction be accessible to all students, in a manner that is commensurate with instruction in other core subject areas (rather than requiring arts instruction to take place during the regular school day and with instruction time equal to time devoted to other core subject areas);

(3) Requires arts instruction to be provided by either: A certificated teacher with an endorsement in the relevant arts discipline; or a certificated teacher actively pursuing an endorsement in the relevant arts discipline; and adds intent language to this effect;

(4) Continues to require that arts instructors be "consulted" in the process of determining which arts courses to offer in the district, but removes the requirement that arts instructors be "given an equal part in this decision process"; and

(5) Specifies that one of the purposes of consulting arts instructors is to properly align arts instruction to the state learning standards in the arts.

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