

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESSB 5878

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Clarifying visual and performing arts instruction.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Rolfes, Wellman, Hunt, Lovick, Nobles and Wilson, C.).

### Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education House Committee on Education

**Background:** High School Graduation Requirements. Washington State students must meet various requirements to graduate high school and receive a diploma. Currently, students must:

- complete 24 credits in specified subject areas as determined by the State Board of Education;
- complete a High School and Beyond Plan;
- meet the requirements of at least one graduation pathway; and
- satisfy any local requirements.

Of the 24 credits required for graduation, 17 credits are considered core credits and cannot be waived. The remaining seven credits are considered flexible credits that are either an elective credit or personalized pathway requirements. Personalized pathway requirements are up to three credits chosen by a student determined by the student's High School and Beyond Plan.

These rules also specify that one arts credit is considered a core credit, while one credit is considered a flexible credit which may be replaced with a personalized pathway requirement. The essential content in an arts credit may be satisfied in dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts.

School Curriculum in Washington State. Common schools in Washington are subject to curriculum requirements set by state law. These requirements include that all common schools provide instruction in, among other things, reading, arithmetic, and science with

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special reference to the environment. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction may prescribe other required curriculum areas by rule.

**Summary:** Arts Instruction. Visual and performing arts are added to the areas in which all common schools shall give instruction.

Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, school districts with more than 200 enrolled students must offer regular instruction in at least one visual art or at least one performing art throughout the academic school year. Each student must receive instruction in at least one arts discipline throughout their K-8 education experience. For grades 9 through 12, all students must be given the opportunity to take arts coursework each academic year.

Every student must have access to arts education, as part of basic education. Arts instruction must be accessible by all students, in a manner that is commensurate with instruction in other core subject areas.

Teacher Qualifications and Consultation. Arts instruction must 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.

A person holding a limited teaching certificate may provide arts instruction while either:

- the school district recruits and hires a certificated teacher with the defined qualifications; or
- the qualified certificated teacher takes leave as provided in the school district's written leave policy.

Arts instructors shall be consulted and given an equal part in the decision process to determine which specific visual and performing arts courses to offer at given grade levels.

Application to Charter Schools and State-Tribal Compact Schools. Arts instruction requirements also apply to charter schools with more than 200 enrolled students and state-tribal compact schools with more than 200 enrolled students.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	47	2	
House	92	4	(House amended)
Senate	46	3	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** June 9, 2022