
State Government & Tribal Relations Committee

HB 1692

Brief Description: Creating student advisory groups.

Sponsors: Representatives Bergquist, Christian, Gregerson, Santos, Pollet, Macri and Simmons.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a Legislative District Student Council, composed of 11 student members, in each legislative district to serve as nonpartisan advisory bodies, examine issues affecting youth and education, and make recommendations to legislators.
- Requires the Washington State School Directors' Association to form a Student Representative Network composed of student school board representatives to examine issues important to youth and engage in the legislative process.
- Requires the Legislative Youth Advisory Council to explore options to expand its student membership and, in coordination with the Student Representative Network, organize an annual day of youth civic education in Olympia.

Hearing Date: 1/16/24

Staff: Benjamin Ratcliff (786-7291) and Jason Zolle (786-7124).

Background:

Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

The Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) is a nonpartisan, youth-led committee of 22

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student members created for the purpose of examining issues of importance to youth, including those related to education, employment, youth participation in state and municipal government, safe environments for youth, substance abuse, emotional and physical health, foster care, poverty, and youth access to services on a statewide and municipal basis. The LYAC is responsible for:

- advising the Legislature and various study groups about proposed and pending legislation and policy matters relating to youth;
- conducting periodic seminars for its members regarding leadership, government, and the Legislature;
- accepting and soliciting grants and donations to support its activities; and
- reporting annually to the Legislature on its activities, including proposed legislation that implements recommendations of the LYAC.

Each year, the LYAC also organizes a day known as Action Day, when youth travel from across Washington to the State Capitol in Olympia for the purposes of civic engagement and direct engagement with the legislative process.

The LYAC is student-led and co-administered by the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and the Washington State Leadership Board.

Washington State School Directors' Association.

The Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) is a body consisting of all locally elected school board directors and school board members from each of Washington's school districts. The WSSDA was created for the coordination of policy-making, control, and management among the school districts to increase the efficiency of the common school system. The WSSDA has various responsibilities, which include:

- conducting studies and disseminating information in order to increase efficiency in local school board administration;
- providing advice and assistance to school boards;
- providing certain services upon request by a school board, including for specialized services, research information, and consultants to advise and assist school boards in particular problem areas;
- creating model policy and procedures for topics relating to waiving credit for high school graduation, nurturing a positive social and emotional school and classmate climate, implementing student discipline policy, and accommodating students with epilepsy or other seizure disorders; and
- developing cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion standards and training for school director governance.

Summary of Bill:

Creation of Legislative District Student Councils.

A Legislative District Student Council (Council) is created in each legislative district in Washington to serve as nonpartisan advisory bodies. The Councils are responsible for

examining issues affecting youth and education and making recommendations to legislators on those issues. Each Council is facilitated by the offices of legislators who choose to assist in facilitating the Council program.

Various aspects of the Council program must be developed by the LYAC, in consultation with the Student Representative Network created by the bill. These include:

- the processes and procedures that may be used to set up each Council;
- an application and selection process that may be used to select student members to serve on the Council;
- model processes, programs, and duties for the Councils which must include mechanisms for administration, supervision, and facilitation support for the Councils; and
- model practices enabling public schools to conduct Council meetings as extracurricular activities.

Chairs of each Council are selected by the LYAC to two-year terms. Council chairs must coordinate with the legislators from their legislative district to establish and maintain their district's Council. Each Council may not conduct more than four in-person meetings, with one of those meetings being a mandatory in-person meeting in Olympia on the LYAC's Action Day.

Each Council has a maximum of 11 members, including:

- one chair, selected by the LYAC;
- up to five student board representatives, selected by the WSSDA, who attend a public school that serves students in any of grades 9 through 12 (qualifying public school) which is located within that Council's legislative district;
- at least five additional members who are under the age of 21 at the time of appointment and attend either a qualifying public school or a community or technical college that is located within that Council's legislative district.

Initial membership of the Council must be selected by January 15, 2024, by a committee of the chairs of each Council, convened by the LYAC for this specific purpose. Members are selected to two-year terms. The selection of subsequent members is the responsibility of each Council and must occur no later than January 15, 2026, and on January 15 every two years thereafter.

To the extent feasible, the members of each Council must attend either a qualifying public school or a community or technical college that is located within their Council's district. However, if no students from that district apply, students attending either a qualifying public school or a community or technical college in an adjacent legislative district may be selected for membership. The process for selecting student members must take into consideration the balance of representation among the various grades, with at least one student being in grade 11 and one being in grade 12.

Creation of the Student Representative Network.

The WSSDA must form a Student Representative Network (Network) consisting of student school board representatives to examine issues of importance to youth and engage in the

legislative process. The WSSDA must facilitate a connection between Network members and the legislators in their legislative district and provide Network members with learning opportunities about education policy. In legislative districts where there are no established student board representatives, the WSSDA must communicate with the appropriate school districts to create awareness of the role and encourage participation. The WSSDA must invite legislators to participate in the Network in an advisory capacity.

The Network's duties include:

- advising the Legislature and various study groups about proposed and pending legislation relating to matters impacting youth;
- collaborating with the LYAC to organize Action Day, an in-person annual day of youth civic education in Olympia;
- developing and assembling resources for new and existing student board representatives;
- providing training, photos, and other content for WSSDA publications;
- collaborating with WSSDA standing committees, advisory committees, task forces, and caucuses as invited; and
- providing additional student voices at WSSDA events.

The Network may not hold more than four in-person meetings, with one of those meetings being a mandatory in-person meeting in Olympia on the LYAC's Action Day. The Network, in consultation with the WSSDA, must issue a report on December 1 of each year to the Legislature on the number of student board representatives in the state and the activities of the Network.

Other Provisions Related to the LYAC.

The LYAC must explore options to expand its student membership and to increase other methods of student participation, particularly to include students from each legislative district.

The LYAC, in coordination with the Network, must organize Action Day, the in-person annual day of youth civic education in Olympia.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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