

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5071

As of January 30, 2023

Title: An act relating to creating the purple star award.

Brief Description: Creating the purple star award. [**Revised for 1st Substitute:** Creating the purple star designation.]

Sponsors: Senators Nobles, Wagoner, Conway, Hunt, Kuderer, Lovick, Randall, Salomon, Shewmake, Stanford, Trudeau, Wellman, Wilson, C., Wilson, J. and Wilson, L..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/11/23, 1/18/23 [DPS-WM].
Ways & Means: 1/30/23.

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Creates the Purple Star Designation to recognize school districts that demonstrate educational and social-emotional supports to students of military service members as they face transitions to a new school.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5071 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Dozier, Hunt, McCune, Mullet and Pedersen.

Staff: Alexandra Fairfortune (786-7416)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Trevor Press (786-7446)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background: The Legislature enacted the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (compact) in 2009 to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families due to frequent moves and deployment of their parents.

Article VIII of the compact requires each member state to have a state council to coordinate compliance with the provisions of the compact. The state council appoints the military family education liaison to assist military families and the state in facilitating the implementation of the compact.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): The Purple Star Designation is created to recognize school districts that demonstrate educational and social-emotional supports to students of military service members as they face transitions to a new school. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) may collaborate with a state agency or nonprofit organization that has experience serving the needs of a diverse K-12 population to establish and administer the designation. The designation shall be awarded every two years beginning in 2024.

A school district must be considered for a Purple Star Designation if it completes all the required activities and at least one optional activity. The required activities are:

- have a staff point of contact for military students and families; and
- maintain a dedicated page on its website featuring resources for military families.

The staff point of contact must work jointly with the state military family education liaison; serve as the primary liaison between military families and the school district; complete professional development on special considerations for military students and families; and identify and inform teachers of military-connected students in their classrooms and the special considerations they should receive.

The optional activities are:

- provide professional development for additional staff on special considerations for military students and families;
- pass a resolution publicizing the district's support for military children and families;
- or
- host a military recognition event that demonstrates a military friendly culture.

OSPI must make the following available on its website:

- a simple application for the designation;
- a timeline for submitting the application and announcing recipients; and
- the criteria being used to review the applications and determine which school districts receive the designation.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Changes the bill title and language to refer to a Purple Star Designation rather than a Purple Star Award.
- States that the designation is created to “recognize school districts that demonstrate educational and social-emotional supports to students of military service members as they face transitions to a new school.”

Appropriation: The bill contains a null and void clause requiring specific funding be provided in an omnibus appropriation act.

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 on Original Bill (Early Learning & K-12 Education): *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: Purple Star designation will be led by a group of committed state leaders who seek to support military students and families. Military children face constant change such as new schools, new people, and new environments leaving them vulnerable. This change makes it difficult for military connected students to find support in lonely times. Students of military families can be uplifted through inclusion from staff, students, and the community. Feeling understood makes life easier and the purple star bill aims to achieve this for other students of military families. Military connected students move 6 to 9 times on average during their education, creating instability. The purple star program will assist in providing the stability for these military connected students, allowing for academic, social, and emotional success. The purple star award would extend the work of the Student-to-Student program which creates a welcoming environment for students and their families. It would also help ensure that schools and districts meet the requirements related to connecting and supporting our military students. The Purple Star award appears to be more of a designation for schools, this language change has been advised.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Senator T'wina Nobles, Prime Sponsor; AmyJo Rotante; Tammie Perreault, Department of Defense; Krestin Bahr, Peninsula School District; Brendan Masini, Peninsula School District; Isidro (Rey) Ornelas, Medical Lake School District; Nasue Nishida, Washington Education Association; Venus Cariaso, Steilacoom High School; Nykita Steward, Steilacoom High School.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means): PRO: This will serve as partner to the military compact passed in Washington almost 10 years ago that allows for additional accommodations and provisions for transitioning military students and addresses challenges

that come with enrollment, placement, and graduation requirements. Many districts are unfamiliar with the provisions of the compact and how best to recognize and support the unique academic and social/emotional needs of military students who have unique transitions, deployments, and family separations. The purple star bill provides a framework that districts across the state can use to provide staff for consistent and appropriate training, and signal to incoming families that their needs will be met. Washington's 26,000 military students need the additional support provided by friendships and the knowledge of their teachers knowing they are a military kid. This eases the burden military families feel during the move cycle. Housing the administration and maintenance of this program with an existing association like WASA minimizes any fiscal impact to the state and ensures success for this program.

OTHER: This designation must be inclusive and truly serve military families with exceptional family members. Pre-K through 12 military children in the EFM program typically have or are eligible for Section 504 plans or individualized education programs in the public school system. Districts seeking this designation should have a point of contact with training on the EFM program, who works closely with the section 504 coordinator for special education services division. The dedicated page on the school's website must feature disability related resources for military families. Any district in Washington that would seek to earn this designation to declare their commitment and service to military families should be inclusive of families with exceptional family members.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Tammie Perreault; Natalie Wimberley, Peninsula School District.

OTHER: Jen Chong Jewell, PAVE.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Ways & Means): No one.