

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6264

As of January 24, 2024

Title: An act relating to supporting the implementation of competency-based education.

Brief Description: Supporting the implementation of competency-based education.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman, Hasegawa, Nobles, Saldaña and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/25/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop and recommend a process to identify and designate schools and school districts that are implementing competency-based education (CBE) and identify costs associated with this process.
- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to adopt rules to authorize funding for students enrolled by CBE programs and to create competencies aligned with state learning standards.
- Directs the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association to include in its rule adoption process a review of barriers related to students participating in CBE.
- Requires the SBE, in consultation with other agencies, to develop or adopt a format for a CBE high school transcript as an alternative to the standardized high school transcript.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

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: Mastery-Based Learning. Legislation passed in 2019—E2SHB 1599—directed the State Board of Education (SBE) to convene and staff a mastery-based learning work group to inform the Governor, Legislature, and public about barriers to mastery-based learning (MBL).

MBL is also commonly known as competency-based education. For the purpose of the work group, MBL was defined as a program model whereby:

- students advance upon demonstrated mastery of content;
- competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students;
- assessments are meaningful and a positive learning experience for students;
- students receive rapid, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs; and
- learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge and the development of important skills and dispositions.

The work group was directed to examine opportunities to increase student access to relevant and robust mastery-based academic pathways aligned to personal career goals and postsecondary education. At the direction of the Legislature, the work group published recommendations for the profile of a graduate to the SBE in 2022.

In 2021, the Omnibus Operating Appropriations Act appropriated \$1.5 million in the 2022 fiscal year and \$3.5 million in the 2023 fiscal year to the SBE for the implementation of MBL in school district demonstration sites. The SBE was directed to require grant recipients to report on impacts and participate in a collaborative to share best practices.

Washington Interscholastic Activities Association. In Washington State, school boards may delegate control, supervision, and regulation of extracurricular activities to the Washington Interscholastic Athletics Association (WIAA) or any other voluntary nonprofit entity. Under state law, the WIAA or any other voluntary nonprofit entity may adopt rules and policies that govern student participation, as well as penalties for rules violations upon coaches, school district administrators, school administrators, and students, as appropriate and subject to statutory requirements.

Standardized Transcripts. The standardized high school transcript used by school districts was developed at the direction of the Legislature by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in consultation with the public four-year institutions of higher education, the State Board for Community- and Technical- Colleges, and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Summary of Bill: Definitions. Definitions are provided for various terms in the context of the bill and the resulting statutory chapter.

Competencies are defined as the rigorous, shared expectations for learning that encompass

knowledge, skills, and abilities across grade levels. Competencies are broader than learning standards and may encompass multiple learning standards. Competencies are defined as transparent, measurable, relevant, and transferable to multiple contexts.

Competency-based education (CBE) is defined as an education that meets the following elements:

- students are empowered daily to make important decisions about their learning experiences, how they will create and apply knowledge, and how they will demonstrate their learning;
- assessment is a meaningful, positive, and empowering learning experience for students that yields timely, relevant, and actionable evidence;
- students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs;
- students progress based on evidence of mastery, not seat time;
- students learn actively using different pathways and varied pacing;
- strategies to ensure equity for all students are embedded in the culture, structure, and pedagogy of schools and education systems; and
- rigorous, common expectations for learning, including knowledge, skills, and dispositions, are explicit, transparent, measurable, and transferable.

For the purposes of the chapter, mastery-based learning has the same meaning as competency-based education.

Designation of Schools, Creation of Competencies. The SBE must develop and recommend a process to identify and designate schools and school districts that are implementing CBE and identify costs associated with this process. OSPI shall consult with the SBE on how this designation can be displayed on the Washington State Report Card website.

OSPI, in consultation with the SBE, must develop and recommend a process for OSPI to create competencies aligned with state learning standards and identify costs associated with this process. The process must incorporate relevant materials and guidance developed through the MBL collective established in the 2021 Omnibus Operating Operations Act. OSPI must submit recommendations and associated costs to the SBE by December 1, 2025.

Funding for Students Enrolled in Competency-Based Education Programs. By September 1, 2024, OSPI must adopt rules to authorize full-time enrollment for students enrolled in CBE programs identified by the SBE based on school membership in the MBL collaborative, the school having a current waiver from credit-based graduation requirements granted by the SBE, or under the identification process developed by the SBE.

Rules adopted by OSPI must permit school districts to report full-time equivalent students in eligible CBE programs for general apportionment funding.

Washington Interscholastic Activities Association Rule Adoption. The WIAA must include

in its rule adoption process a review of whether the rule would create any potential barriers related to students participating in CBE in order to ensure continued equitable access to interscholastic activities for those students.

Standardized Transcripts. Before the 2025-26 school year, the Superintendent of Public Instruction must develop and update a standardized high school transcript. The SBE is added to the groups with which the superintendent must consult.

Before the 2025-26 school year, the SBE, in consultation with various groups, must develop or adopt a format for a CBE high school transcript that can be used by all public school districts as an alternative to the standardized high school transcript. OSPI must inform public school districts of updates to standardized transcripts and the alternative transcript developed by the SBE.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2024.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.