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**SENATE BILL 5189**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Wellman, Dhingra, Harris, Nobles, C. Wilson, Kauffman, Hasegawa, and Saldaña

AN ACT Relating to supporting the implementation of competency-based education; amending RCW 28A.230.125; adding a new chapter to Title 28A RCW; and repealing RCW 28A.300.810.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Competencies" mean 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 transparent, measurable, relevant, and transferable to multiple contexts.

(2)(a) "Competency-based education" means education that includes the following elements:

(i) 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;

(ii) Assessment is a meaningful, positive, and empowering learning experience for students that yields timely, relevant, and actionable evidence;

(iii) Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs;

(iv) Students progress based on evidence of mastery, not seat time;

(v) Students learn actively using different pathways and varied pacing;

(vi) Strategies to ensure equity for all students are embedded in the culture, structure, and pedagogy of schools and education systems; and

(vii) Rigorous, common expectations for learning, including knowledge, skills, and dispositions, are explicit, transparent, measurable, and transferable.

(b) "Mastery-based learning" has the same meaning as "competency-based education."

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) By September 1, 2025, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to authorize full-time enrollment funding for students enrolled in competency-based education programs identified by the state board of education based on:

(a) School membership in the mastery-based learning collaborative established in section 502(2), chapter 334, Laws of 2021 or the school having a current waiver from credit-based graduation requirements granted by the state board of education under RCW 28A.300.750; or

(b) The process developed by the state board of education under section 3 of this act.

(2) Rules adopted pursuant to this section must permit school districts to report full-time equivalent students in eligible competency-based education programs for general apportionment funding.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The state board of education shall design and recommend a process to identify and designate schools and school districts that are implementing competency-based education and identify costs associated with this process. This process must consider the extent to which competency-based education is being implemented as compared to the seven elements of the definition in section 1 of this act. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall consult with the state board of education on how this designation can be displayed on the Washington state report card website.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the state board of education, shall develop and recommend a process for the office of the superintendent of public instruction to create competencies aligned with the state learning standards and identify costs associated with this process. This process must incorporate relevant materials and guidance developed through the mastery-based learning collaborative established in section 502(2), chapter 334, Laws of 2021. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall submit the recommendations and associated costs developed in accordance with this subsection to the state board of education by December 1, 2025.

(3) The state board of education shall include the recommendations and associated costs developed in accordance with this section in the report required by section 502(2), chapter 475, Laws of 2023 that is due December 31, 2025.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The Washington interscholastic activities association shall include in its rule adoption process a review of whether the rule would create any potential barriers related to students participating in competency-based education in order to ensure continued equitable access to interscholastic activities for those students.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.230.125 and 2024 c 202 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) ((~~The~~)) (a) Before the 2026-27 school year, the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the four-year institutions as defined in RCW 28B.76.020, the state board for community and technical colleges, the state board of education, and the workforce training and education coordinating board, shall develop and update for use by all public school districts a standardized high school transcript. The superintendent shall establish clear definitions for the terms "credits" and "hours" so that school programs operating on the quarter, semester, or trimester system can be compared.

((~~(2)~~)) (b) The standardized high school transcript must include a notation of whether the student has earned the Washington state seal of biliteracy established under RCW 28A.300.575.

(2) Before the 2026-27 school year, the state board of education, in consultation with the four-year institutions as defined in RCW 28B.76.020, the state board for community and technical colleges, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the Washington student achievement council, and the workforce training and education coordinating board, shall develop or identify and recommend to the office of the superintendent of public instruction a format for a competency-based education high school transcript that can be used by all public school districts as part of, or as an alternative to, the standardized high school transcript developed under subsection (1) of this section.

(3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must inform public school districts of updates to the transcripts developed under this section.

(4) For the purposes of this section, "competency-based education" has the same meaning as in section 1 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 4 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 28A RCW.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  RCW 28A.300.810 (Innovative learning pilot program) and 2020 c 353 s 2 are each repealed.

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