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**SENATE BILL 5780**

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

**By** Senator Gildon

AN ACT Relating to reimbursement payments for replacing student transportation vehicles; and amending RCW 28A.160.200 and 28A.160.170.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.160.200 and 1995 1st sp.s. c 10 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) The superintendent shall develop a reimbursement schedule to pay districts for the cost of student transportation vehicles ((~~purchased after September 1, 1982~~)). While it is the responsibility of each district to select and pay for each student transportation vehicle purchased by the district, each district shall be paid a sum based on the category of vehicle, anticipated lifetime of vehicles of this category, and state reimbursement rate for the category plus inflation as recognized by the reimbursement schedule established in this section as set by the superintendent.

(b) Categories and reimbursement rates of vehicles shall be those established under RCW 28A.160.195. The accumulated value of the payments and the potential investment return thereon shall be designed to be equal to the replacement cost of the vehicle less its salvage value at the end of its anticipated lifetime. The superintendent shall revise at least annually the reimbursement payments based on the current and anticipated future cost of comparable categories of transportation equipment.

(c) If a school district is awarded a local, state, or federal grant or rebate to replace a student transportation vehicle, the superintendent shall reduce the district's reimbursement payments to ensure that duplicative funding is not provided to replace the same vehicle. A reduction made pursuant to this subsection (1)(c) may not exceed the total replacement cost of the vehicle being replaced, less its salvage value.

(d) Reimbursements to school districts for approved transportation equipment shall be placed in a separate transportation vehicle fund established for each school district under RCW 28A.160.130. However, educational service districts providing student transportation services pursuant to RCW 28A.310.180(4) and receiving moneys generated pursuant to this section shall establish and maintain a separate transportation vehicle account in the educational service district's general expense fund for the purposes and subject to the conditions under RCW 28A.160.130 and 28A.320.300.

(2) To the extent possible, districts shall operate vehicles acquired under this section not less than the number of years or useful lifetime now, or hereafter, assigned to the category of vehicles by the superintendent. School districts shall properly maintain the transportation equipment acquired under the provisions of this section, in accordance with rules established by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. If a district fails to follow generally accepted standards of maintenance and operation, the superintendent of public instruction shall penalize the district by deducting from future reimbursements under this section an amount equal to the original cost of the vehicle multiplied by the fraction of the useful lifetime or miles the vehicle failed to operate.

(3) The superintendent shall annually develop a depreciation schedule to recognize the cost of depreciation to districts contracting with private carriers for student transportation. Payments on this schedule shall be a straight line depreciation based on the original cost of the appropriate category of vehicle.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.160.170 and 2021 c 234 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Each district shall submit three times each year to the superintendent of public instruction during October, February, and May of each year a report containing the following:

((~~(1)~~))(a)(i) The number of eligible students transported to and from school as provided for in RCW 28A.160.150, along with identification of stop locations and school locations, and ((~~(b)~~)) (ii) the number of miles driven for pupil transportation services as authorized in RCW 28A.160.150 the previous school year; ((~~and~~

~~(2)~~)) (b) Other operational data and descriptions as required by the superintendent to determine allocation requirements for each district. The superintendent shall require that districts separate the costs of operating the program for the transportation of eligible students to and from school as defined by RCW 28A.160.160(3), non-to-and-from-school pupil transportation costs, and costs to provide expanded services under RCW 28A.160.185(1) in the annual financial statement. The cost, quantity, and type of all fuel purchased by school districts for use in to-and-from-school transportation shall be included in the annual financial statement; and

(c) The amount of any local, state, or federal grant or rebate awarded to the school district to replace a student transportation vehicle.

(2) Each district shall submit the information required in this section on a timely basis as a condition of the continuing receipt of school transportation moneys.

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