
SENATE BILL 5497

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators McAuliffe, Holmquist, Rasmussen, Oemig, Pridemore, Zarelli, Weinstein, Eide, Hobbs, Keiser, Fraser, Hewitt, Tom, Kauffman, Clements, Hargrove, Kilmer, Franklin, Kohl-Welles and Shin; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Read first time 01/22/2007. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval;
2 adding new sections to chapter 28A.175 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It is the intent of the legislature that
5 increasing academic success and increasing graduation rates be dual
6 goals for the K-12 system. The legislature finds that only seventy-
7 four percent of the class of 2005 graduated on time. Students of
8 color, students living in poverty, students in foster care, students in
9 the juvenile justice system, and students with disabilities have lower
10 graduation rates than the average. The legislature further finds that
11 students who drop out experience more frequent occurrences of early
12 pregnancy, delinquency, substance abuse, and mental health issues, and
13 have greater need of publicly funded health and social services. The
14 legislature further finds that helping all students be successful in
15 school requires active participation in coordinating services from
16 schools, parents, and other stakeholders and agencies in the local
17 community. The legislature finds that existing resources to vulnerable
18 youth are used more efficiently and effectively when there is
19 significant coordination across local and state entities. The

1 legislature further finds that efficiency and accountability of the K-
2 12 system would be improved by creating a dropout prevention and
3 intervention grant program that implements research-based and emerging
4 best practices and evaluates results.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Subject to the availability of funds
6 appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of
7 public instruction shall create a grant program to local partnerships
8 of schools, families, and communities to begin the phase in of a
9 statewide comprehensive dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval
10 system. This program shall be known as the building bridges program.
11 For purposes of sections 2 through 7 of this act, a "building bridges
12 program" means a local partnership of schools, families, and
13 communities that provides all of the following programs or activities:

14 (1) A system that identifies individual students at risk of
15 dropping out from middle through high school based on local predictive
16 data, including state assessment data starting in the fourth grade, and
17 provides timely interventions for such students, including a plan for
18 educational success as already required by the student learning plan as
19 defined under RCW 28A.655.061. Students identified shall include
20 foster care youth and adjudicated youth;

21 (2) Coaches or mentors for students as necessary;

22 (3) Staff responsible for coordination of community partners that
23 provide a seamless continuum of academic and nonacademic support in
24 schools and communities;

25 (4) Retrieval or reentry activities; and

26 (5) Alternative educational programming, including, but not limited
27 to, career and technical education preparatory programs and online
28 learning opportunities.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The office of the superintendent of public
30 instruction shall:

31 (1) Identify criteria for grants and evaluate proposals for funding
32 in consultation with the workforce training and education coordinating
33 board;

34 (2) Develop and monitor requirements for grant recipients to:

35 (a) Identify their own strengths and gaps in services provided to
36 youth;

- 1 (b) Set their own local goals for program outcomes;
- 2 (c) Use research-based and emerging best practices that lead to
3 positive outcomes in implementing the building bridges program; and
- 4 (d) Coordinate an outreach campaign to bring public and private
5 organizations together and to provide information about the building
6 bridges program to the local community;
- 7 (3) In setting the requirements under subsection (2) of this
8 section, encourage creativity and provide for flexibility in
9 implementing the local building bridges program;
- 10 (4) Identify and disseminate successful practices;
- 11 (5) Develop requirements for grant recipients to collect and report
12 data, including, but not limited to:
- 13 (a) The number of and demographics of students served;
- 14 (b) Washington assessment of student learning scores;
- 15 (c) Dropout rates;
- 16 (d) On-time graduation rates;
- 17 (e) Absenteeism rates; and
- 18 (f) Credit retrieval;
- 19 (6) Contract with a third party to evaluate the infrastructure and
20 implementation of the partnership including the leveraging of outside
21 resources that relate to the goal of the partnership; and
- 22 (7) Report to the legislature by December 1, 2008.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** In awarding the grants under section 3 of
24 this act, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
25 prioritize schools or districts with dropout rates above the statewide
26 average and shall attempt to award building bridges program grants to
27 different geographic regions of the state. Eligible recipients shall
28 be one of the following entities acting as a lead agency for the local
29 partnership: A school district, a tribal school, an area workforce
30 development council, an educational service district, an accredited
31 institution of higher education, a vocational skills center, a
32 federally recognized tribe, a community organization, or a nonprofit
33 501(c)(3) corporation. If the recipient is not a school district, at
34 least one school district must be identified within the partnership.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** To be eligible for a grant under section 3
36 of this act, grant applicants shall:

1 (1) Build or demonstrate a commitment to building a broad-based
2 partnership of schools, families, and community members to provide an
3 effective and efficient building bridges program. The partnership
4 shall include local membership from, but not limited to, school
5 districts, tribal schools, secondary career and technical education
6 programs, skill centers that serve the local community, an educational
7 service district, the area workforce development council, accredited
8 institutions of higher education, tribes or other cultural
9 organizations, the parent teacher association, the juvenile court, the
10 local health department, health care agencies, public transportation
11 agencies, local division representatives of the department of social
12 and health services, businesses, city or county government agencies,
13 civic organizations, and appropriate youth-serving community-based
14 organizations. Interested parents and students shall be actively
15 included whenever possible;

16 (2) Demonstrate how the grant will enhance any dropout prevention
17 and intervention programs and services already in place in the
18 district;

19 (3) Provide a twenty-five percent match that may include in-kind
20 resources from within the partnership;

21 (4) Track and report data required by the grant; and

22 (5) Describe how the dropout prevention, intervention, and
23 retrieval system will be sustained after initial funding, including
24 roles of each of the partners.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Educational service districts, in
26 collaboration with area workforce development councils, shall:

27 (1) Provide training to local partnerships established under a
28 grant awarded under section 3 of this act on subjects such as cultural
29 competency, identifying diverse learning styles, and collecting and
30 using performance data;

31 (2) Assist school districts and their partners in identifying
32 effective intervention strategies for students at risk for dropping
33 out; and

34 (3) Provide training to assist in the design of functional
35 sustainability plans including the identification of potential funding
36 sources for future operation.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) The office of the superintendent of
2 public instruction shall establish a state-level work group that
3 includes K-12 and state agencies that work with youth who have dropped
4 out or are at risk of dropping out of school. The state-level
5 leadership group shall consist of one representative from each of the
6 following agencies and organizations: The workforce training and
7 education coordinating board; career and technical education including
8 skill centers; relevant divisions of the department of social and
9 health services; the juvenile courts; the employment security
10 department; accredited institutions of higher education; the
11 educational service districts; the area workforce development councils;
12 parent and educator associations; the department of health; local
13 school districts; community organizations serving youth; federally
14 recognized tribes and urban tribal centers; and the minority
15 commissions.

16 (2) To assist and enhance the work of the building bridges programs
17 established in section 5 of this act, the state-level work group shall:

18 (a) Identify and make recommendations to the legislature for the
19 reduction of fiscal, legal, and regulatory barriers that prevent
20 coordination of program resources across agencies at the state and
21 local level;

22 (b) Develop and track performance measures and benchmarks for each
23 partner agency or organization across the state; and

24 (c) Identify research-based and emerging best practices regarding
25 prevention, intervention, and retrieval programs.

26 (3) The work group shall report to the legislature and the governor
27 on an annual basis beginning December 1, 2007, with recommendations for
28 implementing emerging best practices, needed additional resources, and
29 eliminating barriers.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Sections 2 through 7 of this act are each
31 added to chapter 28A.175 RCW.

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