
SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1944

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By House Education Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Kagi, Walsh, Sullivan, Haigh, Carlyle, Quall, Kenney, and Ormsby)

READ FIRST TIME 03/02/09.

1 AN ACT Relating to developing and implementing a kindergarten
2 assessment; adding a new section to chapter 43.215 RCW; adding a new
3 section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.320
4 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that gathering quality
7 information about a child's knowledge, skills, and abilities when the
8 child enters kindergarten engages and empowers parents to assist in
9 their children's learning processes and supports educators in
10 developing meaningful and culturally responsive instruction for the
11 child. The legislature further finds that a uniform kindergarten
12 assessment process can provide valuable feedback to early learning
13 programs engaged in quality and culturally responsive improvement
14 efforts and will support cross-systems communication and promote
15 seamless transitions to kindergarten for children and families. The
16 legislature also finds that stakeholder involvement is an important
17 element of successful program development and implementation. It is
18 therefore the intent of the legislature to direct the department of
19 early learning and the office of the superintendent of public

1 instruction in consultation with the early learning advisory council to
2 convene a work group to develop and field test a uniform statewide
3 kindergarten assessment process. The legislature finds that meeting
4 the needs of families, communities, and schools to work effectively for
5 children's connection and learning will ensure that schools prepare
6 children for the challenges of the twenty-first century.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW
8 to read as follows:

9 (1) The department and the office of the superintendent of public
10 instruction jointly and in collaboration with the early learning
11 advisory council, shall convene a work group to develop a statewide
12 kindergarten assessment process to be field tested and made available
13 to school districts. The work group shall include representatives from
14 school districts, early learning providers, parent organizations,
15 federally recognized tribes, and organizations or groups reflecting
16 cultural and linguistic diversity. The purposes of the assessment
17 process include:

18 (a) Providing parents and teachers with information about a child's
19 knowledge, skills, abilities, and supports that may be needed upon
20 entering kindergarten in order to inform instruction for the child;

21 (b) Facilitating culturally responsive communication with parents
22 about what children are learning, and engaging and empowering parents
23 to support their children's educational success; and

24 (c) Providing feedback to early learning programs to improve
25 transitions to kindergarten and the alignment between early learning
26 programs and kindergarten classrooms. The assessment shall not be used
27 to screen or preclude children from entering kindergarten if they are
28 otherwise eligible for enrollment.

29 (2) The kindergarten assessment process shall be uniform across the
30 state. In developing the kindergarten assessment process, the work
31 group shall strive to balance the need for an assessment process that
32 is:

33 (a) Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically
34 relevant, and socioeconomically aware;

35 (b) Sufficiently flexible and adaptable to accommodate children
36 with disabilities and special needs;

1 (c) Cost-effective in a way that maximizes the benefit to students,
2 teachers, and parents and minimizes the use of resources that would
3 otherwise be available for instruction; and

4 (d) Designed to provide data and reporting using a single, easy-to-
5 use, web-based platform.

6 (3) The work group shall provide a report to the department and the
7 office of the superintendent of public instruction that:

8 (a) Identifies the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be assessed;

9 (b) Determines the extent of desirable alignment with early
10 learning standards and benchmarks, including social and emotional
11 learning;

12 (c) Defines the assessment methodology and approaches to be
13 implemented for all children, including children from diverse cultures
14 and languages, children from different socioeconomic backgrounds, and
15 children with disabilities and special needs;

16 (d) Specifies data collection needs, tools, and procedures;

17 (e) Determines whether and how parents may opt out of the process
18 and forgo the assessment on behalf of a child;

19 (f) Identifies a training plan and implementation strategy for use
20 by school districts and schools with the involvement of parents;

21 (g) Recommends schools and districts representing culturally
22 diverse populations for the field test;

23 (h) Identifies effective strategies for facilitating communication
24 with and engagement of parents in their child's kindergarten assessment
25 process; and

26 (i) Identifies methods for providing feedback to early learning
27 programs to enable continuous quality improvement and to enhance the
28 alignment between early learning and kindergarten classrooms.

29 (4) The kindergarten assessment process shall be field-tested in
30 selected schools and districts representing culturally diverse
31 populations during the 2010-11 school year. During the field testing
32 phase more than one assessment process may be utilized, but for
33 purposes of statewide implementation, a single assessment process shall
34 be selected.

35 (5) The work group shall examine and assess the results of the
36 field test and make recommendations to the department and the office of
37 the superintendent of public instruction for statewide implementation
38 of the kindergarten assessment process.

1 (6) The department and the office of the superintendent of public
2 instruction shall provide a report, including cost estimates and
3 whether the kindergarten assessment process is ready for statewide
4 voluntary implementation, to the governor and the legislature not later
5 than January 15, 2010.

6 (7) Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, the office of the
7 superintendent of public instruction shall:

8 (a) Identify the statewide kindergarten assessment process;

9 (b) Make necessary materials and training available;

10 (c) Provide technical assistance, if requested; and

11 (d) Encourage all school districts to implement a uniform
12 kindergarten assessment process.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300
14 RCW to read as follows:

15 The office of the superintendent of public instruction and the
16 department of early learning jointly and in consultation with the early
17 learning advisory council shall convene a work group to develop a
18 statewide kindergarten assessment process to be field tested and made
19 available to school districts pursuant to section 4 of this act.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.320
21 RCW to read as follows:

22 (1) Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, the office of the
23 superintendent of public instruction shall encourage all school
24 districts to implement a uniform kindergarten assessment process
25 developed under section 2 of this act.

26 (2) The superintendent of public instruction may adopt rules to
27 implement this section.

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