

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5392

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 3, 2015

Title: An act relating to eliminating the quality education council.

Brief Description: Eliminating the quality education council.

Sponsors: Senators Litzow, McAuliffe, Fain, Dammeier, Hill and Rivers.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/29/15, 2/03/15 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; Fain, Hill and Rivers.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Billig, Mullet and Rolfes.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: In 2009 the Legislature created the Quality Education Council (QEC) with the stated purpose to recommend and inform the ongoing implementation by the Legislature of an evolving program of basic education and the financing to support it; and to identify measurable goals and priorities for the educational system in Washington State. QEC members are eight legislators, and one representative from each of the following: the Office of the Governor, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the State Board of Education (SBE), the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), the Department of Early Learning, and the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC). QEC is limited to meeting no more than four times per year. QEC must report to the Governor and the Legislature in 2010 but otherwise has no reporting requirement.

In subsequent years, the Legislature has given the following additional tasks to QEC:

- to receive an annual report from the state-level building bridges working group regarding dropouts, which is also submitted to the Legislature and the Governor;

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- to receive from SBE any proposed changes to the high school graduation requirements, which is also submitted to the Legislature for review;
- to work collaboratively with OSPI, SBE, PESB, and EOGOAC to close the achievement gap; and
- to monitor and oversee with the Legislature, the compensation working group, which submitted its final report June 2012.

Summary of Bill: The statute creating QEC is repealed and the references to QEC in other statutes are removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The QEC has run its course. It duplicates efforts of others and the workgroups which it was to oversee have completed their reports. The reports are still available for the Legislature to refer to for implementation of the paramount duty of state.

CON: SBE does not believe that all the QEC duties have been fulfilled and, in fact, some remain unresolved. There is a high premium for public discussion on the paramount duty of the state and SBE would still support having a public body for these discussions.

OTHER: Meetings for the sake of meetings are not productive. However, this type of public meeting provides the opportunity for open and rigorous discussion on difficult or complex issues and results in greater information for the Legislature and others through studies and public discussions. If this Council ends then the Legislature needs to ensure that there is some way to maintain that kind of open, public dialog on issues regarding basic education.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Litzow, prime sponsor.

CON: Ben Rarick, SBE.

OTHER: Skip Priest, OSPI.