
HOUSE BILL 1466

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2021 Regular Session

By Representatives Rule, Ryu, J. Johnson, Lekanoff, Sutherland, Berg, Peterson, Bergquist, Taylor, Dent, Ramel, Pollet, Davis, Eslick, Hackney, Bronoske, and Riccelli

Read first time 02/02/21. Referred to Committee on Appropriations.

1 AN ACT Relating to promoting access to outdoor education; adding
2 a new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; creating a new section; and
3 providing an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that outdoor
6 education has many benefits for students, for example promoting
7 creativity and problem solving, developing social skills, improving
8 classroom engagement, and increasing physical activity. During the
9 COVID-19 pandemic, many students have transitioned to distance
10 learning; however, outdoor play and classmate interaction remain
11 important for students and can be achieved using outdoor education.
12 Outdoor environments have low rates of transmission of the virus that
13 causes COVID-19, so students and teachers can safely come together
14 for in-person classes.

15 (2) Therefore, the legislature intends to establish a pilot
16 project to provide assistance to schools to provide access to outdoor
17 education, bring students and teachers together for in-person
18 classes, and to further investigate the benefits of outdoor, nature-
19 based classrooms for Washington's children and families.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630

2 RCW to read as follows:

3 (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
4 establish a pilot project for outdoor, nature-based education
5 programs in public schools. The pilot project must begin in the
6 2021-22 school year and conclude at the end of the 2024-25 school
7 year.

8 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must
9 develop an application for the pilot project. Applications must
10 include an implementation plan.

11 (3) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
12 specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public
13 instruction must award grants to up to 15 schools selected for
14 participation in the pilot project. When selecting pilot project
15 locations, the office of the superintendent of public instruction
16 shall aim to select a mix of rural, urban, and suburban locations
17 across the state and must give priority to schools with a high
18 percentage of students eligible for the free and reduced-price meals
19 program.

20 (4) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
21 specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public
22 instruction may convene an advisory group of outdoor, nature-based
23 education practitioners to inform and support implementation of the
24 pilot project.

25 (5) By November 30, 2024, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036,
26 the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall provide
27 a report on findings from the pilot project, including
28 recommendations for modifying or expanding the availability of
29 outdoor, nature-based education programs, to the governor and the
30 appropriate committees of the legislature.

31 (6) This section expires July 1, 2025.

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