

Education Committee

HB 1940

Brief Description: Rewarding schools for meeting fourth grade reading goals.

Sponsors: Representatives Pearson, Quall, Talcott, Cox, Anderson, D. Schmidt, Morell, O'Brien and Kessler.

Brief Summary of Bill

Hearing Date: 2/21/01

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

The 1998 Legislature directed each school district to establish a three-year, district-wide goal to decrease by at least 25 percent the number of students who did not meet the reading standard on the fourth grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). In addition, each district was directed to establish and approve separate goals for each elementary school within the district. The district was permitted to use student scores for either the 1997 or 1998 fourth grade reading WASL as the district's baseline year. The 1999 Legislature revised the requirement to condition the use of the 1997 assessment to districts in which all elementary schools participated in the reading WASL. School districts must meet these goals by the end of the 2000-01 school year.

The Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission, in its November 2000 report to the legislature, recommended that schools and school districts that met the reading goal be given non-monetary recognition awards in the fall of 2001. It recommended that the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) provide the awards from funds appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose. It also recommended that the awards consist of press releases, banners, plaques, letterhead logos, and statewide honorary dinners or celebrations. In addition, it recommended that teachers, principals, and other educators from the recognized schools and districts be invited to share their instructional practices

through a variety of means including professional conferences, the internet, in schools that need assistance, and in other forums.

Summary of Bill:

The SPI will honor each school that has met or exceeded its fourth grade reading goal on the 2000 and 2001 WASL. The award will include a banner and five dollars for each fourth grade student in the school. However, schools with fewer than 25 fourth grade students will receive a minimum award of \$100.

The staff from each school may decide how to spend the award and who will share in the recognition. The recognition may include, but is not limited to: community celebrations; school-wide events that may include staff, parents, and community members selected by the staff; or an off-campus event for selected school staff.

If by June 30, 2001, a reference to this legislation and funding for the awards are not included in the biennial budget, the legislation is null and void.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 21, 2001.

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