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SENATE BILL 5655

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State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senators Schmidt, Rasmussen, Eide, Jacobsen, Poulsen, Kline and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 02/01/2005. Referred to Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to teaching Washington's tribal history, culture,  
2 and government in the common schools; amending RCW 28A.230.090; adding  
3 a new section to chapter 28A.320 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) Social studies and civics is the integrated study of the social  
7 sciences and humanities to promote involvement in civic affairs, and  
8 because civic issues are multidisciplinary in nature, understanding  
9 these issues and developing resolutions to them require  
10 multidisciplinary education;

11 (2) The primary purpose of social studies and civics is to help  
12 young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned  
13 decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse,  
14 democratic society in a diverse world;

15 (3) Cross-cultural respect and understanding are fostered through  
16 a culturally rich curriculum and instruction;

17 (4) Teaching Washington state tribal history and culture can be a  
18 critical factor in successful educational experiences and promoting

1 cultural sensitivity for all students. The effect is particularly  
2 strong for Native American students;

3 (5) Within the twenty-nine federally recognized tribes whose  
4 traditional lands and territories reach across and beyond the  
5 boundaries of Washington state, there are more than fifty tribal  
6 nations represented with uniquely diverse histories, languages, and  
7 cultures;

8 (6) The full and remarkable history of the state of Washington has  
9 never been compiled nor taught in our state's education system;

10 (7) The potential to have a positive impact on student learning is  
11 in part dependent upon the willingness of the local education agency to  
12 collaborate with sovereign tribal governments; and

13 (8) Tribes possess the ultimate authority and expertise of their  
14 history and culture.

15 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.090 and 2004 c 19 s 103 are each amended to  
16 read as follows:

17 (1) The state board of education shall establish high school  
18 graduation requirements or equivalencies for students.

19 (a) Any course in Washington state history and government used to  
20 fulfill high school graduation requirements (~~(is encouraged to)~~) shall  
21 include information on the culture, history, and government of the  
22 American Indian peoples who were the first inhabitants of the state.

23 (b) The certificate of academic achievement requirements under RCW  
24 28A.655.061 or the certificate of individual achievement requirements  
25 under RCW 28A.155.045 are required for graduation from a public high  
26 school but are not the only requirements for graduation.

27 (c) Any decision on whether a student has met the state board's  
28 high school graduation requirements for a high school and beyond plan  
29 shall remain at the local level.

30 (2) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state board of  
31 education to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation  
32 requirements, the state board shall periodically reevaluate the  
33 graduation requirements and shall report such findings to the  
34 legislature in a timely manner as determined by the state board.

35 (3) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages other  
36 than English established by the state board of education or a local  
37 school district, or both, for purposes of high school graduation,

1 students who receive instruction in American sign language or one or  
2 more American Indian languages shall be considered to have satisfied  
3 the state or local school district graduation requirement for  
4 instruction in one or more languages other than English.

5 (4) If requested by the student and his or her family, a student  
6 who has completed high school courses before attending high school  
7 shall be given high school credit which shall be applied to fulfilling  
8 high school graduation requirements if:

9 (a) The course was taken with high school students, if the academic  
10 level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth  
11 grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by completing  
12 the same course requirements and examinations as the high school  
13 students enrolled in the class; or

14 (b) The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for  
15 seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for high  
16 school credit, because the course is similar or equivalent to a course  
17 offered at a high school in the district as determined by the school  
18 district board of directors.

19 (5) Students who have taken and successfully completed high school  
20 courses under the circumstances in subsection (4) of this section shall  
21 not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform  
22 any other additional assignment to receive credit.

23 (6) At the college or university level, five quarter or three  
24 semester hours equals one high school credit.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.320  
26 RCW to read as follows:

27 (1) By January 1, 2015, or when a school district reviews or adopts  
28 its social studies curriculum, whichever is sooner, the school district  
29 must incorporate into its history and social studies curricula for each  
30 grade in which the district offers instruction on Washington state and  
31 United States history, the tribally and district-approved history and  
32 culture curriculum of a federally recognized Indian tribe whose  
33 reservation in whole or in part sits within the boundaries of the  
34 school district. If a district has no portion of a tribal reservation  
35 located within its boundaries, the district must incorporate into its  
36 curricula the tribally and district-approved history and culture  
37 curriculum of the federally recognized Indian tribes whose traditional

1 lands and territories are within a one hundred mile radius of the  
2 school district. The program of Indian education within the office of  
3 the superintendent of public instruction must assist school districts  
4 in determining the location of tribal reservations and traditional  
5 lands and territories.

6 (2) A school district must collaborate with the Indian tribe to  
7 develop and implement the history and culture curriculum required under  
8 subsection (1) of this section.

9 (3) The tribal history and culture curriculum required under this  
10 section may be taught only by a teacher who has completed that tribe's  
11 first people's language and culture teacher certification program, or  
12 by a teacher who has been approved by the respective tribe whose  
13 curriculum is to be taught.

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