
SENATE BILL 5535

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators Murray, Jacobsen and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 01/23/2007. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to school district board of directors; amending RCW
2 28A.343.300 and 28A.343.400; adding a new section to chapter 28A.300
3 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.343 RCW; and creating new
4 sections.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that there is
7 increased focus on student academic performance and school
8 accountability, but attention is seldom paid to the role of the school
9 boards in meeting the state and federal demands in these areas. The
10 legislature further finds that there needs to be a clear understanding
11 of the purpose, role, structure, appropriate functions, training, and
12 compensation of school boards.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The joint legislative audit and review
14 committee shall conduct a broad performance audit of school boards of
15 directors in Washington and analyze the roles, responsibilities, costs,
16 and compensation of school boards of directors. In addition to the
17 standard items reviewed in a performance audit, the committee shall

1 examine the efficiency and effectiveness of school district boards of
2 directors, including the following:

3 (a) In light of state and federal demands for student achievement
4 and school reform, what is the appropriate role for school boards to
5 assist in improving student and school's performance?

6 (b) Should school boards primarily authorize and monitor the
7 operations of schools or should they be involved more directly with
8 school operations?

9 (c) Should a new system be considered with most of the decision-
10 making authority vested in a different entity?

11 (d) What is the appropriate compensation for school boards in light
12 of their duties and under any recommendations for revised duties?

13 (2) In conducting the performance audit, the committee may also use
14 performance measures or standards used by other states or school
15 districts in developing its findings. The committee shall report the
16 findings to the legislature by December 1, 2008.

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

19 The office of school director training and instruction is
20 established within the office of the superintendent of public
21 instruction. The sole purpose of the office of school director
22 training and instruction is to develop an initial core training program
23 for first-time directors and to annually provide the initial core
24 training and annual ongoing professional development, training, and
25 instruction for school directors. The office shall work
26 collaboratively with the Washington state school directors' association
27 in developing the content of the courses. The office may contract with
28 the Washington state school director's association or other providers
29 to provide the courses. There is no charge to the individual directors
30 to take a course offered. The initial core training for first-time
31 directors shall consist of fourteen hours and must be obtained within
32 the first two years of serving on the board. After the initial core
33 training has been obtained, each school district director shall
34 annually obtain a minimum of seven hours of professional development,
35 training, or instruction courses. Hours obtained in excess of the
36 minimum requirements each year may accumulate and be carried forward
37 from year to year. A statement of each school director's hours

1 obtained in the preceding year must be included on the web site of the
2 school district. Additionally, the office of school director training
3 and instruction shall maintain a record of hours of training and
4 instruction taken by each director and shall post the record on the web
5 site of the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.343
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) A proposed change in the structure of a school district board
9 of directors from an elected board to an appointed board or back to an
10 elected board, may be initiated by a petition proposing such a change
11 filed with the appropriate county auditor by any legal voter residing
12 within the school district, either individually or on behalf of an
13 organization. The appropriate county auditor is the auditor of the
14 county in which a majority of the registered voters of the school
15 district reside.

16 (2) The petition submitted to the auditor must be submitted at
17 least sixty or more days prior to the next general election and be
18 signed by registered voters of the school district equal to at least
19 ten percent of the registered voters in a given district. The petition
20 must designate who will appoint the school district board of directors.
21 The size of the appointed board and the terms of the appointed
22 directors shall comply with the requirements of RCW 28A.343.300.

23 (3) The county auditor shall review the signatures and certify
24 sufficiency of the petition if there is a sufficient number of valid
25 signatures. If the auditor certifies the petition, then a ballot
26 proposition authorizing the change in the structure of the school
27 district board of directors shall be submitted to the voters in the
28 school district at the next district general election.

29 (4) If the ballot proposition is approved by a simple majority vote
30 of the registered voters within the school district, then the change in
31 the structure of the board shall take effect January 1st of the
32 following year.

33 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28A.343.300 and 1991 c 363 s 20 are each amended to
34 read as follows:

35 The governing board of a school district shall be known as the
36 board of directors of the district.

1 (~~Unless otherwise specifically provided, as in RCW 29.13.060,~~)
2 Each member of a board of directors (~~(shall be elected by ballot by the~~
3 ~~registered voters of the school district and)~~) shall hold office for a
4 term of four years and until a successor is elected and qualified.
5 Terms of school directors shall be staggered(~~(, and insofar as~~
6 ~~possible,~~). Not more than a majority of one shall be elected to full
7 terms at any regular election. In case a member or members of a board
8 of directors are to be elected to fill an unexpired term or terms, the
9 ballot shall specify the term for which each such member is to be
10 elected.

11 Except for a school district of the first class having within its
12 boundaries a city with a population of four hundred thousand people or
13 more which shall have a board of directors of seven members, the board
14 of directors of every school district of the first class or school
15 district of the second class shall consist of five members.

16 **Sec. 6.** RCW 28A.343.400 and 1987 c 307 s 2 are each amended to
17 read as follows:

18 Each member of the board of directors of a school district may
19 receive compensation (~~(of fifty dollars)~~) per day or portion thereof
20 for attending board meetings and for performing other services on
21 behalf of the school district(~~(, not to exceed four thousand eight~~
22 ~~hundred dollars per year)~~) equal to the regular federal per diem rate,
23 with fifty percent of the cost covered by the state, if the district
24 board of directors has authorized by board resolution, at a regularly
25 scheduled meeting, the provision of such compensation. A board of
26 directors of a school district may authorize such compensation only
27 from locally collected excess levy funds available for that purpose,
28 and compensation for board members shall not cause the state to incur
29 any present or future funding obligation.

30 Any director may waive all or any portion of his or her
31 compensation under this section as to any month or months during his or
32 her term of office, by a written waiver filed with the district as
33 provided in this section. The waiver, to be effective, must be filed
34 any time after the director's election and before the date on which the
35 compensation would otherwise be paid. The waiver shall specify the
36 month or period of months for which it is made.

1 The compensation provided in this section shall be in addition to
2 any reimbursement for expenses paid to such directors by the school
3 district.

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