

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6740

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As of January 29, 2010

**Title:** An act relating to a comprehensive K-12 education policy.

**Brief Description:** Concerning a comprehensive K-12 education policy.

**Sponsors:** Senators Hobbs, Oemig, Gordon, McAuliffe and Shin.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/04/10.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

**Background:** In 2009 the Legislature created the Quality Education Council (QEC) to recommend and inform the ongoing legislative implementation of a program of basic education and necessary financing. The QEC is composed of eight legislative members, and one representative each from: the Office of the Governor, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the State Board of Education, the Professional Educator Standards Board, and the Department of Early Learning.

In addition, the Legislature directed the Office of Financial Management (OFM), with assistance from OSPI, to convene a technical working group to develop options for a new system of supplemental school funding local school levies and local effort assistance. The working group must consider the impact of overall school district revenues of the new basic education funding system, and recommend a phase-in plan for a new system of supplemental funding.

**Summary of Bill:** The Legislature finds that public schools have been increasingly relying on excess property tax levies, which are not a dependable and regular source of financing.

The technical working group created in 2009 to develop options for a new system of supplemental school funding must also examine options for a comprehensive K-12 finance policy based on the following principles:

- increasing support for public schools through the statewide property tax;
- reducing reliance on property taxes from voter-approved excess levies;

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- removing historical inequities caused by grandfathering of levy lids in certain school districts;
- providing a consistent source of financing to support K-12 capital facilities; and
- providing a fair and equitable means of adjusting tax burden for property-poor school districts.

The working group must consider innovative proposals that have previously been developed, identify possible alternatives, analyze their strengths and weaknesses, and examine the impact on taxpayers in various regions of the state.

The working group must make a preliminary report to the QEC and the Legislature on its findings and analysis by December 1, 2010, in addition to the final report due December 1, 2011.

The Department of Revenue must provide technical assistance, including financial and legal analysis, to the working group, in addition to the staff support provided by OFM and OSPI.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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