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HOUSE BILL 2818

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State of Washington                      62nd Legislature                      2012 1st Special Session

By Representatives Haigh, Santos, and Seaquist

Read first time 03/14/12.                      Referred to Committee on Education  
Appropriations & Oversight.

1            AN ACT Relating to establishing a joint select committee on  
2 education finance and accountability; and amending RCW 28A.657.125.

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

4            **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.657.125 and 2010 c 235 s 114 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6            (1)(a) The McCleary decision by the state supreme court in 2011  
7 found that the legislature is not meeting its paramount duty to  
8 adequately fund K-12 basic education. The court also found that recent  
9 legislative efforts to adjust the basic education definition and  
10 funding models using the prototypical school model will meet the  
11 paramount duty if implemented and fully funded in a timely manner.

12            (b) The legislature finds that in return for increased investment  
13 in education, the public expects a unified and equitable system of  
14 education accountability, which must include expectations and  
15 benchmarks for improvement, along with support for schools ((and)),  
16 districts, and other educational institutions to make the necessary  
17 changes that will lead to success for all students. Such a system must  
18 also clearly address the consequences for persistent lack of  
19 improvement. ((Establishing a process for school districts to prepare

1 and implement a required action plan is one such consequence. However,  
2 to be truly accountable to students, parents, the community, and  
3 taxpayers, the legislature must also consider what should happen if a  
4 required action district continues not to make improvement after an  
5 extended period of time. Without an answer to this significant  
6 question, the state's system of education accountability is  
7 incomplete.) Furthermore, accountability must be appropriately shared  
8 among various levels of decision makers, including ((in the building,  
9 in the district,)) at the local or institutional level and at the  
10 state.

11 (c) The legislature further finds increasing evidence that  
12 comprehensive early learning programs, particularly for at-risk  
13 children, have a significant impact both on children's readiness to  
14 learn and on their success in early grades and beyond. At the same  
15 time, students' readiness for career and college after high school  
16 graduation is increasingly important in today's economy. These  
17 findings suggest that the educational system from prekindergarten  
18 through postsecondary should be considered comprehensively rather than  
19 as individual sectors.

20 (2)(a) A joint select committee on education finance and  
21 accountability is established beginning no earlier than May 1, 2012,  
22 with the following voting members:

23 (i) The president of the senate shall appoint ((two)) four members  
24 from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

25 (ii) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint  
26 ((two)) four members from each of the two largest caucuses of the house  
27 of representatives.

28 (iii) The superintendent of public instruction or a designee shall  
29 serve as a member of the committee.

30 (b) The committee shall choose its chair or cochairs from among its  
31 legislative membership.

32 (3) ((The committee shall:

33 (a)) The purpose of the committee is to identify revenue sources  
34 to adequately fund the state's education system; identify and analyze  
35 options for a complete system of education accountability, particularly  
36 consequences in the case of persistent lack of improvement ((by a  
37 required action district;

1 ~~(b) Identify and analyze appropriate decision-making~~  
2 ~~responsibilities and accompanying consequences at the building,~~  
3 ~~district, and state level within such an accountability system;~~

4 ~~(c) Examine models and experiences in other states;~~

5 ~~(d) Identify the circumstances under which significant state action~~  
6 ~~may be required; and~~

7 ~~(e) Analyze the financial, legal, and practical considerations that~~  
8 ~~would accompany significant state action)); and assist the legislature~~  
9 in meeting the requirements of the McCleary decision in a timely  
10 manner.

11 (4)(a) The committee shall establish a scope of work and identify  
12 the priority issues to be addressed, taking into consideration its  
13 purpose and the time available for the task force to operate. The  
14 committee shall consider the previous work of the basic education  
15 finance task force, the quality education council, the state board of  
16 education, the educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability  
17 committee, and technical working groups convened under chapter 548,  
18 Laws of 2009; the timelines for implementation of chapter 236, Laws of  
19 2010; the comprehensive plan for a voluntary program of early learning;  
20 the state's application for flexibility under the federal elementary  
21 and secondary education act; and other relevant research and reports.

22 (b) One objective of the committee is to provide maximum  
23 transparency for parents, educators, and other citizens regarding how  
24 the state's education system is funded and how education system  
25 performance expectations are established and measured. A second  
26 objective is to assure balance and shared responsibility between the  
27 local and state level, including through stable and predictable funding  
28 sources at both the local and state level.

29 (c) The preliminary report of the committee is due January 1, 2013,  
30 and at a minimum shall include:

31 (i) The scope of work and priority issues the committee intends to  
32 address, including the extent that the scope will include early  
33 learning, K-12 education, and higher education, and including a work  
34 plan with timelines for completion of the committee's work;

35 (ii) Based on the scope of work, recommendations for adjusting the  
36 membership and organization of the committee, if necessary to provide  
37 expertise to address the priority issues; and

1 (iii) Strategies for involving and seeking input from the public  
2 and groups representing parents, educators, business, labor, and other  
3 interested community members, which may include creation of  
4 subcommittees.

5 (d) The final report of the committee is due January 1, 2014. The  
6 committee may recommend multiple options, but shall recommend one  
7 preferred alternative, including an outline of necessary implementing  
8 legislation. The committee must recommend areas in the budget to be  
9 eliminated or reduced if an option includes no new revenues.

10 (5) Staff support for the committee must be provided by the senate  
11 committee services and the house of representatives office of program  
12 research, with assistance from the legislative evaluation and  
13 accountability program committee, the office of the superintendent of  
14 public instruction, the office of financial management, the Washington  
15 state institute for public policy, and other state agencies as  
16 necessary.

17 ~~((5) The committee shall submit an interim report to the education~~  
18 ~~committees of the legislature by September 1, 2012, and a final report~~  
19 ~~with recommendations by September 1, 2013.))~~

20 (6) This section expires June 30, 2014.

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