

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1076

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to modifying certain common school provisions.

Brief Description: Modifying certain common school provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Dolan and Jinkins; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/28/19, 1/31/19 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Reduces the minimum number of programs or activities that a Building Bridges Program of local partnerships is required to provide.
- Modifies duties of the Superintendent of Public Instruction relating to reading assessments administered to second grade students.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Paul, Vice Chair; Steele, Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Callan, Corry, Harris, Kilduff, Kraft, Ortiz-Self, Rude, Stonier, Thai, Valdez and Ybarra.

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Building Bridges Program.

Legislation enacted in 2007 established the Building Bridges Program to award grants to local partnerships consisting of schools, families, and community-based organizations for the purpose of developing dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval systems.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

As specified in statute, a Building Bridges Program must, through local partnerships, provide all of the following programs or activities:

- a system that identifies individual students at risk of dropping out from middle or high school, and provides timely interventions for the students and for dropouts;
- coaches or mentors for students, as necessary;
- staff responsible for the coordination of community partners;
- retrieval or reentry activities; and
- alternative educational programming.

Statewide Assessments - Generally and Second Grade Reading Assessments.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with the State Board of Education (SBE), maintains and revises a statewide academic assessment system to measure student knowledge and skills on state learning standards and for purposes of state and federal accountability. The state assessment system must cover the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science for elementary, middle, and high school years.

Federal requirements also govern assessment practices in Washington. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act requires states to assess students based on state learning standards in reading and mathematics in each of grades three through eight and in one high school grade, as well as in science in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school.

In addition to statewide assessments administered in grades three and higher, a reading assessment must be administered by school districts each fall to students in the second grade. The administration of the assessments, which began with voluntarily participating schools and a pilot project, began statewide in the 1998-99 school year.

The purpose of the reading assessment is to provide information to parents, teachers, and school administrators on the level of acquisition of oral reading accuracy and fluency skills of each student at the beginning of second grade. Provisions governing the assessment direct the SPI to identify a collection of reading passages and assessment procedures that can be used to measure second grade oral reading accuracy and fluency skills. In administering the assessment, districts must use an assessment selected from the collection adopted by the SPI.

The assessment procedures and reading passages in the collection must meet specified requirements, including:

- providing a reliable and valid measure of a student's oral reading accuracy and fluency skills;
- having been approved by a panel of nationally recognized professionals in the area of beginning reading; and
- assessing student skills in recognition of letter sounds, phonemic awareness, word recognition, and reading connected text.

The SPI has financial duties related to the assessments. The SPI is required to develop a per-pupil cost for the assessments in the collection of reading passages that details the costs for administering the assessments, booklets, scoring, and training that is required to reliably administer the test. To the extent funds are appropriated, the SPI must pay for the cost of

administering and scoring the assessments, booklets or other assessment materials, and training required to administer the test.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Building Bridges Program.

Provisions governing the Building Bridges Program are modified to specify that a Building Bridges Program must, through local partnerships, provide one or more, rather than all, of the following programs or activities:

- a system that identifies individual students at risk of dropping out from middle or high school, and provides timely interventions for the students and for dropouts;
- coaches or mentors for students, as necessary;
- staff responsible for the coordination of community partners;
- retrieval or reentry activities; and
- alternative educational programming.

Second Grade Reading Assessments.

Provisions directing the SPI to identify a collection of reading passages and assessment procedures for use by districts in measuring the reading skills of second grade students are removed.

Provisions establishing the purpose of the second grade reading assessment are modified to include a reference to comprehension. With that inclusion, the purpose of the assessment is to provide information to parents, teachers, and school administrators on the level of (1) acquisition of oral reading accuracy, (2) comprehension, and (3) fluency skills of each student at the beginning of second grade.

The passages used for the assessment must meet specified criteria, including having been approved by nationally recognized professionals, rather than a panel of nationally recognized professionals, in the area of beginning reading, and must be administered according to the publishers' guidelines. Also, additional references to "comprehension" are added to criteria governing requirements for the assessment.

The assessment related financial duties of the SPI are modified. Rather than being directed to develop a per-pupil cost for the assessments, the SPI is authorized to provide an estimated per-pupil cost for assessments aligned to state learning standards. To the extent funds are appropriated, the SPI, rather than paying for the assessment costs, must instead provide districts with funds to purchase assessment materials and professional learning for educators needed to implement the district's reading assessment system.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill removes provisions that allow civics content and instruction that is embedded in a qualifying career and technical education course to satisfy a stand-alone civics course requirement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The bill allows communities to tailor a Building Bridges Program to their needs and provides local flexibility. The bill also eliminates the need for the SPI to select reading passages for second grade reading assessments and adds comprehension to what is tested. These changes to second grade reading assessment practices basically codify existing practices.

This is an agency request technical bill.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The civics provisions are concerning. Granting an exception to the stand-alone civics course requirement for career and technical education (CTE) courses would favor the CTE courses over all other civics-related social studies courses. This bill will also encourage districts to seek other exceptions and may lead to a return of the previous practices of embedding civics credit in other courses. Last year's legislation for a stand-alone civics course was widely supported, and the existing law should stand. Civics content embedded into another course is not the same as a civics stand-alone course.

The SBE recognizes and supports civics, as well as the specific civics content approved by the Legislature last year. The SBE supports the idea of embedding civics in all or any courses. Embedding allows greater flexibility for student schedules and their chosen academic pathways. Districts are best equipped to honor the content and to decide how to best provide civics content.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Simone Boe, Washington Education Association; and Marissa Rathbone, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

(Other) Carol Coe, Washington State Council for the Social Studies; and Kaaren Heikes, Washington State Board of Education.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.