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ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1130

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State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Orwall, McCaslin, Pollet, Ryu, Lovick, Stanford, and Valdez)

READ FIRST TIME 02/22/19.

1 AN ACT Relating to language access in public schools; adding a  
2 new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; creating a new section; and  
3 providing an expiration date.

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

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

6 (1) It is the policy of the state to welcome and encourage the  
7 presence of diverse cultures and the use of diverse languages and  
8 modalities of communication in business, government, and private  
9 affairs in this state;

10 (2) Washington public schools' ability to effectively communicate  
11 with students and their family members who have language access  
12 barriers impacts the schools' ability to engage students and families  
13 effectively in the education process and contributes to inequalities  
14 and increased gaps in student achievement;

15 (3) Effective communication is not taking place for a variety of  
16 reasons, including: (a) Some school districts do not consistently  
17 assess the language needs of their communities or consistently  
18 evaluate the effectiveness of their language access services; (b)  
19 resources, including time and money, are often not prioritized to  
20 engage families with language access barriers; and even when language  
21 access is a priority, some districts do not know the best practices

1 for engaging families with language access barriers; (c) school staff  
2 are often not trained on how to engage families with language access  
3 barriers, how to engage and use interpreters, or when to provide  
4 translated documents; and (d) there are not enough interpreters  
5 qualified to work in educational settings; and

6 (4) Providing meaningful, equitable access to students and their  
7 family members who have language access barriers will not only help  
8 schools meet their civil rights obligations, but will help students  
9 meet the state's basic education goals under RCW 28A.150.210  
10 resulting in a decrease in the educational opportunity gap between  
11 learners with language access barriers and other students, because  
12 student outcomes improve when families are engaged in the student's  
13 education.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630  
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction and  
17 the office of the education ombuds must jointly convene a work group  
18 to improve meaningful, equitable access for public school students  
19 and their family members who have language access barriers.

20 (2) The work group must advise the office of the superintendent  
21 of public instruction and the Washington state school directors'  
22 association on the following topics:

23 (a) The elements of an effective language access program for  
24 systemic family engagement and a plan for the implementation of this  
25 program;

26 (b) The components of a technical assistance program for language  
27 access and a plan for the implementation of this program;

28 (c) The development and sharing of a tool kit to help public  
29 schools:

30 (i) Assess the language needs of their communities; and

31 (ii) Develop, implement, and evaluate their language access plans  
32 and language services;

33 (d) The development and sharing of educational terminology  
34 glossaries that improve all families' access to the public school  
35 system; and

36 (e) The development and sharing of best practices or strategies  
37 for improving meaningful, equitable access for public school students  
38 and their family members who have language access barriers, including

1 effective use of interpreters and when to provide translated  
2 documents in other formats.

3 (3) The work group must develop recommendations for practices and  
4 policies that should be adopted at the state or local level to  
5 improve meaningful, equitable access for public school students and  
6 their family members who have language access barriers, including  
7 recommendations on the following topics:

8 (a) Standards for interpreters working in education settings,  
9 including familiarity with legal concepts related to, and service  
10 requirements of, Part B of the federal individuals with disabilities  
11 education improvement act and section 504 of the federal  
12 rehabilitation act of 1973;

13 (b) Development and assessment of interpreters' knowledge of  
14 education terminology;

15 (c) The feasibility and cost-effectiveness of adapting another  
16 state agency's interpreter program to test, train, or both,  
17 interpreters for educational purposes;

18 (d) Updates to the Washington state school directors'  
19 association's model language access policy;

20 (e) Use of remote interpreter services, including the conditions  
21 under which remote interpreter services may be used to provide high  
22 quality interpreter services; and

23 (f) Data collection and use necessary to create and improve state  
24 and local language access programs.

25 (4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction and  
26 the office of the education ombuds must select up to twenty-five work  
27 group members who:

28 (a) Are geographically diverse and represent people with a  
29 variety of language access barriers; and

30 (b) Represent the following groups: The educational opportunity  
31 gap oversight and accountability committee; the state school for the  
32 blind; the childhood center for deafness and hearing loss; the  
33 special education advisory council at the office of the  
34 superintendent of public instruction; the Washington state school  
35 directors' association; a state association of teachers; a state  
36 association of principals; a state association of parents; the  
37 Washington state commissions on African-American affairs, Asian  
38 Pacific American affairs, and Hispanic affairs; the governor's office  
39 of Indian affairs; interpreters working in education settings;  
40 interpreter unions; families with language access barriers; and

1 community-based organizations supporting families with language  
2 access barriers.

3 (5) The office of the superintendent of public instruction and  
4 the office of the education ombuds must provide staff support to the  
5 work group.

6 (6) The work group may form subcommittees and consult with  
7 necessary experts.

8 (7) By October 1, 2020, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the  
9 work group must report its findings and recommendations to the  
10 appropriate committees of the legislature.

11 (8) This section expires December 31, 2020.

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