

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2631

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 27, 1992

**Brief Description:** Changing school construction financing.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Peery, Brough, H. Sommers, Neher, Sheldon, Roland, Valle, Paris, Pruitt, Mitchell, Prentice, Betrozoff, Rasmussen, P. Johnson and J. Kohl)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL FACILITIES & FINANCING

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Erwin, Vice Chairman; Oke, Pelz, Rinehart, A. Smith, and Talmadge.

**Staff:** Leslie Goldstein (786-7424)

**Hearing Dates:** February 26, 1992; February 27, 1992

**BACKGROUND:**

The State Board of Education is responsible for allocating state funds to school districts for school construction and modernization.

Historically, state funds for school construction and modernization have been generated from revenues from common school trust lands, which are managed by the Department of Natural Resources. For a variety of reasons, the amount of revenue from these lands has dropped. At the same time, the demand for new school construction and modernization has significantly increased. These trends are expected to continue.

Several options have been suggested to provide other dedicated revenue sources for school construction. Changes in how buildings are used have also been suggested.

There are a number of ways to increase the use of buildings, including double-shifting and using a multi-track, year-round school calendar. When using this modified school calendar, students are divided into different tracks. Each track is staggered and scheduled throughout the entire year. While the number of days a child attends school might remain the same (e.g. 180 days), the number of days the building is used increases, as does the building's pupil capacity. Increases in capacity of up to 40-50 percent have been reported in some school districts in other states.

**SUMMARY:**

The State Board of Education shall allocate funds for the modernization and construction of school facilities based on a priority system. For the funding of construction of new school facilities to meet enrollment growth in fiscal year 1994 and thereafter, priority shall be given to projects in school districts that have implemented a modified school calendar or a schedule designed to increase the pupil capacity of the district's school buildings.

The state board may allocate funds, if appropriated, to school districts for planning and implementing a modified school calendar or schedule.

By January 15, 1993, the State Board of Education must submit its proposed priority system to the appropriate legislative committees.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested January 23, 1992

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:**

The intent section is changed to state that it is important to investigate new methods of using school buildings more effectively. Districts that have implemented and are implementing projects with a modified school calendar are eligible. Revenues from a sales tax on mail order out-of-state catalogues will be deposited in the common school construction account. This applies only to revenues collected above \$6 million and only if the United States Supreme Court issues a decision that would permit the tax to be collected.

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

Modified school calendars can benefit student achievement. We need to conserve our resources and encourage the better, more economical use of our school buildings.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

The issue should be addressed by rule rather than statute. The State Board is planning to include the concept in its priority system. Multitrack systems do not work everywhere. It should not be mandated.

**TESTIFIED:** Representative Kim Peery, original prime sponsor; Grant Hendrickson, Longview School District (pro); Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors Association (pro); Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association (pro with concerns); Lynda Byrnes, State Board of Education (pro with concerns); Jerry Hansen, Washington Education (con)