
HOUSE BILL 2409

State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Representatives Talcott, Stensen, Carlson, Rockefeller, Quall, Santos, Haigh, O'Brien, Veloria, Keiser, D. Schmidt, Thomas, D. Sommers, McDonald, Lantz, Hurst, Skinner, Ruderman and Esser

Read first time 01/12/2000. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to character education; adding new sections to
2 chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that academic success
5 rests on a foundation of character. The legislature further finds that
6 parents are the first and primary moral educators of children, and that
7 schools have a role in reinforcing the character traits and values
8 deemed important by parents and the local community. The legislature
9 further finds that when character education is integrated into a
10 school's curriculum there is a decline of incidences involving
11 violence, bullying, and harassment.

12 The legislature finds and reasserts that the goal of the state
13 basic education act for the schools of the state of Washington is to
14 provide students with the opportunity to become responsible citizens,
15 to contribute to their own economic well-being and to that of their
16 families and communities, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives.
17 The legislature recognizes and reasserts that certain basic values and
18 character traits are essential to liberty, fulfillment, and happiness,
19 however these traits are not intended to be assessed or be standards

1 for graduation. The legislature intends that local communities have
2 the responsibility for determining how these values and character
3 traits are learned. The legislature further intends to assist
4 interested schools in their efforts to implement character education
5 programs developed in partnership with parents and the entire spectrum
6 of stakeholders in the local community.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The Washington character education
8 partnership program is established. The purpose of the program is to
9 assist public schools in their efforts to design and implement
10 character education programs developed in partnership with parents and
11 the schools' local communities. The program shall be administered by
12 the office of the superintendent of public instruction. In its
13 administration of the program, the office of the superintendent of
14 public instruction shall simplify, to the extent feasible, the
15 administrative and reporting requirements of participants and shall
16 provide to interested schools and districts a simple application of no
17 more than three pages, including attachments, for the program. In its
18 selection of participants, the office of the superintendent of public
19 instruction shall seek state-wide balance geographically and in terms
20 of size of districts and schools.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Subject to funding appropriated by the
22 legislature for the character education partnership program, the office
23 of the superintendent of public instruction shall design and implement
24 a competitive grant program to provide character education partnership
25 grants of up to twenty-five thousand dollars each to schools, school
26 districts, or educational service districts applying on behalf of two
27 or more schools or school districts. The grants may be used
28 exclusively for the design and implementation of each applicant's
29 character education partnership program. Participants in the program
30 shall meet the following conditions, and any other conditions contained
31 in any legislative appropriation for the program:

32 (1) Participants are eligible to receive a grant for a maximum of
33 two years.

34 (2) Grant applications must be supported by the school's or school
35 district's superintendent and local board of directors.

1 (3) Participants must create and maintain for at least the duration
2 of the grant partnerships with parents and the entire spectrum of the
3 local community to:

4 (a) Develop the community's definition of character;

5 (b) Identify the character traits and values that will be
6 reinforced through the school's character education partnership
7 program; and

8 (c) Identify the roles of schools in reinforcing the values and
9 identified character traits.

10 (4) Grants may be used for the following purposes:

11 (a) To meet the requirements of subsection (3) of this section,
12 however, no more than one thousand dollars of the grant funds may be
13 used for this purpose;

14 (b) To determine how to integrate the identified traits and values
15 into the school's curriculum and culture, and to develop a set of
16 strategies for the implementation of the school's or district's
17 character education partnership program;

18 (c) To construct and offer staff development materials that support
19 the instruction developed for the school's or district's character
20 education partnership program;

21 (d) To provide training for students, educators, and staff in
22 conflict resolution and personal accountability and responsibility; and

23 (e) To develop or purchase curriculum materials and learning
24 resources, integrated with the state essential learnings and keyed to
25 children's developmental levels, for reinforcing the values and
26 character traits identified by the process instituted under subsection
27 (3) of this section.

28 (5) Participants shall provide information at least annually to
29 parents and the community on the implementation of the character
30 education partnership programs.

31 (6) Participants shall provide to the office of the superintendent
32 of public instruction a summary report of the process, strategies, and
33 materials used in the program, an explanation of the strategies used to
34 achieve and maintain the parental and community partnership of the
35 participant's program, and information on any achievements that result
36 from the program.

37 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The office of the superintendent of public
38 instruction shall:

1 (1) Provide a central clearinghouse for reports from participants
2 in the character education partnership program;

3 (2) To the extent that funding is provided for this purpose,
4 provide technical assistance to participants and to schools or school
5 districts interested in applying for character education partnership
6 grants; and

7 (3) Designate a coordinator for character education who, to the
8 extent that funding is provided for this purpose, shall have full-time
9 responsibility for character education.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 2 through 4 of this act are each
11 added to chapter 28A.300 RCW.

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