

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1998

As Reported by House Committee On:

Education
Capital Budget

Title: An act relating to awards for the improvement of student achievement.

Brief Description: Creating the apple award program.

Sponsors: Representatives P. Sullivan and Santos.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/21/05, 2/24/05 [DP];
Capital Budget: 3/3/05, 3/4/05 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Apple Award to honor public elementary schools that have made the most improvement on the fourth grade reading, writing, and mathematics Washington Assessment of Student Learning.
- Provides \$25,000 for capital projects selected by students in those schools.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; P. Sullivan, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Curtis, Haigh, Hunter, McDermott, Santos, Shabro and Tom.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

By law, each year, public school students in the fourth, seventh, and 10th grades must take the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in reading, writing, and mathematics. Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, WASL's in reading and mathematics will be added in the third, fifth, sixth, and eighth grades as well. Students in the fifth, eighth, and 10th grades must also take the science WASL.

The 2004 Legislature provided \$100,000 in the capital budget for Apple Award Construction Achievement Grants. The grants were provided to the four public elementary schools that had the greatest increase in the percentage of students who met the state standards in reading,

writing, and mathematics on the WASL from the 2002-03 to the 2003-04 school year. Each school received \$25,000 to use for capital construction in the school or in the community. The decision on how to use the money was made by the students.

The schools that won the awards were:

- Garden Heights Elementary, Moses Lake School District - play shelter.
- Coulee City Elementary, Coulee Hartline School District - no decision yet but the students are considering an interactive white board, an outdoor garden area, and a snow cone machine.
- Wishkah Valley Elementary, Wishkah Valley School District - no decision yet but students are leaning toward an electronic sign.
- Green Mountain Elementary, Green Mountain School District - may be multipurpose room stage improvements.

Summary of Bill:

The Apple Award program is created to honor public elementary schools that have the greatest combined average increase in the percentage of students who meet the state standard on the fourth grade reading, writing, and mathematics WASL. The program will be administered by the State Board of Education.

Each school selected for the award will receive \$25,000 to use for capital construction projects that have been selected by the school's students and approved by the school board. The projects may occur at the school or on public land in the community, city, or county.

Five hundred thousand dollars is appropriated from the education construction account for the 2005-07 biennium for the Apple Awards.

Appropriation: The sum of \$500,000.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This legislation provides positive accountability since it provides an award to children who have worked hard to improve their reading, math, and writing skills. It is also a powerful civics lesson since, within limits, children get to decide the projects that will be funded through their efforts. It benefits the school's community since the projects will enhance the school or other public land in the community. It is such a good idea that maybe it should be expanded to middle and high schools as well.

Testimony Against: It is important that the funding required for the awards not compromise the State Board of Education's capital budget request for improvements to the education system as a whole.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative P. Sullivan, prime sponsor.

(With concerns) Kate Lykins Brown, State Board of Education; and Wes Pruitt, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

(Opposed) Chance Kennedy, Shoreline Community College.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Jarrett, Ranking Minority Member; Hankins, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, Chase, DeBolt, Eickmeyer, Ericks, Ericksen, Green, Hasegawa, Holmquist, Kretz, Kristiansen, McCune, Moeller, Morrell, Newhouse, O'Brien, Roach, Schual-Berke, Serben, Springer, Strow and Upthegrove.

Staff: Kathryn Leathers (786-7114).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Capital Budget Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Education:

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The Apple Award has been a tremendous success and serves two key functions: an incentive for students preparing for the WASL exam and as a lesson in civics. It empowers students to participate, under adult supervision, in deciding how to spend the Award money to best serve their school or community, thereby developing their own advocacy skills. Participation in the decision making process has also taught the students invaluable lessons about negotiating, compromise, philanthropy and setting a good example for younger students.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative P. Sullivan, prime sponsor; and Kathryn Lykens Brown, State Board of Education.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.