
Education Committee

ESSB 5732

Brief Description: Revising the powers, duties, and membership of the state board of education and the Washington professional educator standards board and eliminating the academic achievement and accountability commission.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Weinstein, Schmidt, Berkey, Rockefeller, Shin, Prentice, Thibaudeau, Pridemore, Carrell, Kohl-Welles, Regala, Spanel, Fairley, Delvin and Rasmussen.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Reconstituting membership of the State Board of Education and permitting the Governor to appoint four of the board members.
- Moving educator and administrator certification and preparation from the State Board of Education to the Professional Educator Standards Board.
- Abolishing the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission on July 1, 2005.

Hearing Date: March 21, 2005

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

State Board of Education

The State Board of Education (SBE) is composed of one member of each Congressional district elected by local school boards of directors, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) , and one at-large member elected by school boards of directors of all private schools in the state. Each member, except the SPI, serves for four years. The SPI is the Chief Executive Officer and is an ex officio, non-voting member, except in instances of a tie vote. The SBE is responsible for, among other policy areas, the preparation and certification of teachers, administrators, and educational staff associates; the funding distribution for state matching funds for school construction; the establishment of state minimum high school graduation requirements; school accreditation; private school approval; school district boundaries; and monitoring school district compliance with the Basic Education Act.

Professional Educator Standards Board

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), which was created in 2000, is composed of the SPI and 20 members appointed by the Governor. It includes four public school teachers, one private school teacher, three individuals who represent higher education educator preparation programs, four school administrators, two educational staff associates, one public school instructional paraprofessional, one parent, and one citizen. The SPI is an ex officio, non-voting member. The PESB serves as the sole advisory body to the SBE on issues related but limited to the recruitment, hiring, preparation and certification of teachers, administrators, and educational staff associates. The PESB is responsible for overseeing alternative routes to certification and teacher basic skills and subject matter assessments.

Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission

The Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission (A+ Commission), which was created in 1999, is composed of the SPI and eight members appointed by the Governor. Four of the members are appointed from lists recommended by each major caucus of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The chair of the commission is appointed by the Governor from among the commission members. The A+ Commission oversees the state's K-12 accountability system and is responsible for adopting and revising performance improvement goals in reading, writing, mathematics, and science as well as setting school and school district improvement goals for high school graduation rates and dropout reduction; setting academic achievement standards students must achieve on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) and, for high school students, to acquire a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA); adopting criteria to identify successful schools and school districts as well as to identify schools and school districts in need of assistance and those in which significant numbers of students persistently fail to meet state academic standards; and identifying performance incentives that have improved or have the potential to improve student achievement.

Summary of Bill:

State Board of Education

The membership of the State Board of Education (SBE) is reconstituted. The SBE is comprised of the SPI and additional nine members. Four of the members will be appointed by the Governor, including one representative of early learning programs, one representative of state institutions of higher education, and two at-large members. Four additional members will be elected by the membership of the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA). The WSSDA must elect one member representing a First Class school district and one member representing a Second Class school district. The WSSDA is encouraged to elect members who are geographically representative of the state, particularly electing members from the western and eastern regions of the state. The final member, who will be elected by the directors of private schools, will represent private schools and may vote only on those issues pertaining to those schools.

All appointed and elected members serve a four-year term and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. All members are voting members.

The chair of the board, who must be elected by a majority vote of the board members, will serve a two-year term, and may be elected to more than one term if elected to do so with a majority vote of the board members. The SPI is prohibited from serving as chair of the SBE.

With the exception of duties for educator preparation and certification, the SBE will retain its present duties. In addition, it will adopt performance standards (i.e., cut scores), in consultation with the SPI; performance improvement goals for schools, school districts, and groups of students; and performance standards for the CAA. The improvement goals will focus on improving student learning in reading, writing, mathematics, science, academic, and technical skills in secondary career and technical education programs, student attendance and high school graduation. The performance standards must be adopted by rule by the SBE. The SBE must present to the education committees of the Legislature the standards for review, allowing the Legislature time to take any action deemed necessary for each goal is implemented. The performance improvement goals must not conflict with the goals included in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended. The board must provide the Legislature an opportunity to review and to take any statutory action on the performance standards to attain a CAA before the standards are implemented.

The staff of the SBE is transferred to the newly reconstituted SBE.

Professional Educator Standards Board

All statutory authority previously held by the SBE pertaining to educator preparation and certification transfers to the PESB. The PESB retains all previous statutory authority for alternative routes to certification and educator assessments. The PESB will adopt policies and practices for teacher, administrator, and educational staff associates preparation and certification. The certification responsibilities include approval of traditional and nontraditional preparation programs, preparation of a list of approved preparation programs, supervision of the issuance of educator certificates, and a review at least every five years of program approval standards. The PESB will specify the types and kinds of educator certificates, hear certification appeals, adopt rules, apply for federal funds, and submit annual reports to agencies and legislative committees. The PESB will also maintain data on educator certification, the quality of preparation programs, and employer needs. The PESB will no longer advise the SPI on the revocation or suspension of educator and administrator certificates. All members, including the SPI, are voting members.

Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission

The Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission is abolished and its powers, duties, personnel, and functions are transferred to the SBE. Staff is transferred to the SBE.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 17, 2005.

Effective Date: These changes take place July 1, 2005.