

2SHB 2597 - S COMM AMD

By Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds compelling evidence
4 from research and from the efforts of innovative school districts in
5 Washington that when students enter the K-12 public schools ready to
6 learn, their progress and achievement is greatly enhanced. The
7 legislature further finds that the foundational skills for kindergarten
8 success can be assessed using a variety of assessment tools. Many
9 school districts are using a kindergarten entry assessment and are
10 working closely with early learning providers and parents in their
11 communities. However, because there is no common kindergarten entry
12 assessment, there is no statewide baseline for students' readiness to
13 learn. Such a baseline is critical for developing new early
14 interventions with struggling students and for measuring the impact of
15 such initiatives as full-day kindergarten. A common kindergarten entry
16 assessment could also serve as an accountability and quality measure
17 for early learning programs.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW
19 to read as follows:

20 (1) The department and the office of the superintendent of public
21 instruction, jointly and in collaboration with thrive by five
22 Washington, shall study and make recommendations to the governor and
23 the legislature regarding implementation of a statewide kindergarten
24 entry assessment. The study and development of recommendations shall
25 include consultation with the following:

- 26 (a) The Washington early learning advisory council;
27 (b) The Washington association for the education of young children;
28 (c) The foundation for early learning;

1 (d) Washington Indian tribes including, but not limited to, the
2 confederated tribes of the Yakama nation and the Colville confederated
3 tribes;

4 (e) Early childhood educators;

5 (f) Kindergarten teachers; and

6 (g) Specialists in early childhood assessments.

7 (2) In conducting the study and developing the recommendations, the
8 department shall examine:

9 (a) Research on the critical knowledge and skills, including social
10 skills, for successful entry and progress in kindergarten; and

11 (b) Examples of assessments used by schools and early learning
12 providers in Washington state and in other states;

13 (3) The study and recommendations shall:

14 (a) Identify a preferred kindergarten entry assessment that
15 addresses the following knowledge and skills, at a minimum:

16 (i) Letter and sound recognition;

17 (ii) Numbers and number concepts; and

18 (iii) Social skills for the school environment;

19 (b) Specify a plan for use of the assessment in a pilot phase and
20 a voluntary use phase, and a time certain when school districts must
21 offer the assessment;

22 (c) Describe a recommended methodology for conducting the
23 assessments, including a plan for training or professional development
24 of individuals who will administer the assessment to ensure reliable
25 and comparable results;

26 (d) Describe a process for reporting results of the assessment to
27 parents, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, and
28 the department of early learning in a common format; and

29 (e) Propose a plan for communicating with early learning providers
30 and parents about the knowledge and skills covered by the assessment.

31 (4) In collaboration with thrive by five Washington and in
32 consultation with others, the department and the office of the
33 superintendent of public instruction shall: Analyze how the assessment
34 can be used to improve instruction to be responsive to the needs and
35 strengths of individual students entering kindergarten; whether and how
36 the assessment results can be used to improve the early learning and
37 K-12 systems, as well as the transition between systems; and the costs

1 of the assessment, including the time required to administer the
2 assessment.

3 (5) The kindergarten entry assessment selected must be sensitive to
4 cultural and socioeconomic differences influencing the development of
5 young children. The assessment shall not be used to screen or
6 otherwise preclude children from entering kindergarten if they are
7 otherwise eligible.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The department of early learning and the
9 office of the superintendent of public instruction jointly shall submit
10 a report with recommendations for implementing the kindergarten entry
11 assessment to the governor and the appropriate committees of the
12 legislature by October 15, 2009. Prior to statewide implementation of
13 the kindergarten entry assessment, the department of early learning
14 shall present the assessment to the legislature and the legislature
15 shall formally approve the implementation of the assessment through the
16 omnibus appropriations act or by statute or concurrent resolution.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 The office of the superintendent of public instruction and the
20 department of early learning, jointly and in collaboration with thrive
21 by five Washington, shall study and make recommendations to the
22 governor and the legislature regarding implementation of a statewide
23 kindergarten entry assessment, in accordance with section 2 of this
24 act.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** If specific funding for the purposes of this
26 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by
27 June 30, 2008, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and
28 void."

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1 On page 1, line 1 of the title, after "assessment;" strike the
2 remainder of the title and insert "adding a new section to chapter
3 43.215 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating
4 new sections."

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