

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6534

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to the revision of the mathematics standards.

Brief Description: Regarding the revision of mathematics standards.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe and Tom.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/28/08 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Declares legislative intent that revised mathematics learning standards from the Superintendent of Public Instruction should provide greater clarity, rigor, relevance, and measurability, and make clear all aspects of mathematics, including content, conceptual understanding, and application.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Lias, Roach, Santos and Sullivan.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) has the responsibility to develop and revise the learning standards that identify the knowledge and skills expected from public school students in various academic content areas. If the SPI proposes any modification to the learning standards, then the SPI must, upon request, provide opportunities for the education committees of the Legislature to review the proposed modifications before they are adopted.

In 2007 the Legislature directed the State Board of Education (SBE) and the SPI to undertake a revision of the learning standards in mathematics and science using a specified process. First,

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the SBE recommends revisions to the learning standards based on a set of review criteria. The SBE engages national consultants and creates citizen advisory panels to assist with this work. The report from the SBE and its consultant was completed September 30, 2007, and recommended a series of improvements that should be made to the mathematics learning standards.

Next, the SPI must revise the learning standards based on the recommendations and present them to the Legislature. The mathematics learning standards were presented January 31, 2008. Finally, the SPI adopts the revised learning standards and grade level expectations unless otherwise directed by the Legislature during the 2008 legislative session.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature intends that the revised mathematics standards by the SPI will fortify content and increase rigor; provide greater clarity, specificity, and measurability of what is expected of students; supply more explicit guidance for educators; enhance the relevance of mathematics to students, and ultimately result in more Washington students having the opportunity to be successful in mathematics. Additionally, the revised standards should make clear the importance of all aspects of mathematics, including content, conceptual understanding, and application.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction has worked faithfully and diligently to implement the recommendations of the SBE. The latest set of revisions will be done in a day or two. This has been hard, difficult work, but the recommendations have been implemented. Postponing adoption of the standards risks losing another year of work with teachers on professional development and moving forward with curriculum recommendations. The bill should go forward as is, without amendments. Everyone wants a really good set of standards. The SBE is willing to have its consultant do another high level review, similar to the February 5 review, with a quick turnaround and completion in March.

(Opposed) What you have heard is unacceptable. There is far too much at stake to have competing consultants debating whether or not the revised standards are adequate. This makes it appear that Washington cannot get to rigorous, clear, easy-to-use math standards. But such standards exist and have already been created. These recommendations are being ignored.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Robert Butts, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Edie Harding, State Board of Education.

(Opposed) Elliot Paul, Where's the Math.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.