

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1412

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, April 3, 2013

Title: An act relating to community service as a high school graduation requirement.

Brief Description: Making community service a high school graduation requirement.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Bergquist, Zeiger, Maxwell, Reykdal, Kagi, Riccelli, Santos, Fitzgibbon, Tarleton, Lytton, Pollet, Farrell, Freeman, Ryu, Stonier, Stanford, Hunt, Van De Wege, Kochmar, Buys, Magendanz, Hayes, O'Ban, Fey, Morrell and Jinkins).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/13/13, 92-6.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/25/13, 4/03/13 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Rolfes, Assistant Ranking Member; Billig, Brown, Cleveland, Fain, Hill, Mullet and Rivers.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: According to a database developed by SBE in 2011, at least 20 school districts require students to complete community service for graduation. The required number of hours ranges from 10-100.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments): Legislative findings are made regarding the positive impacts on students when participating in community service. By September 1, 2013, each school district must adopt a policy that is supportive of community service and provides an incentive, such as recognition or credit, for students who participate in community service.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments): Maintains the legislative findings regarding the positive impacts on students when participating in community service. Removes the language making community service a high school graduation requirement.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Requires school districts to adopt a policy that is supportive of community service and provides an incentive for students to participate in community service.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Engrossed Substitute House Bill: PRO: The Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) supports this bill. This helps some students to have something to include on their resumes when otherwise they might not have any other relevant experience to include. It provides background for students to explore career pathways open to students and provides experience that employers look for in job applicants. The parameters are determined by the local school district so it is flexible to meet the needs of the districts.

OTHER: SBE supports encouraging districts to offer these types of experiences but hesitate mandating it. SBE recently completed six years revising the state-level high school graduation requirements and SBE decided not to include community service as a graduation requirement. While this does not create barriers to high school graduation, since if a student transfers then they will not need to redo the community service, there are other reasons that it might not be appropriate for some students so there should be a waiver that could be sought by a student and a parent.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Bergquist, prime sponsor; Amber Galaz, Hannah Russ, LYAC; and Christopher Smith, citizen.

OTHER: Emily Persky, SBE; Marie Sullivan, WA State School Director's Assn.