

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5588

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 13, 2013

Title: An act relating to the definition of school day.

Brief Description: Changing the definition of "school day."

Sponsors: Senators Litzow, Dammeier, Sheldon, Rivers, Fain and Tom.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/06/13, 2/13/13 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5588 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Current state law does not provide a minimum number of hours in a school day. A school day is defined as each day of the school year on which pupils enrolled in the common schools of a school district are engaged in academic and career and technical instruction planned by, and under the direction of, the school.

The definition of instructional hours includes the hours students are provided the opportunity to engage in educational activity planned by, and under the direction of, school district staff, as directed by the administration and board of directors of the district, inclusive of intermissions for class changes, recess, and teacher and parent-guardian conferences that are planned and scheduled by the district for the purpose of discussing students' educational needs or progress, and exclusive of time actually spent for meals.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) must conduct an analysis of how school districts use school days. To the extent that data is not available at the statewide level, JLARC may use case studies or other methods to conduct the analysis. A report must be presented by December 2014.

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.

The analysis must include the following:

- how school districts define classroom time, non-classroom time, instructional time, non-instructional time, and any other definitions of how the school day is divided or used;
- estimates of time in each category;
- when non-instructional hours occur;
- how non-instructional are hours are used, including how much of the non-instructional time is devoted to professional development for the purposes of teacher and principal evaluation training or common core state standards training; and
- the extent the use of each category of time is identified or defined in collective bargaining agreements.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): The definition of school day is not changed. Instead, JLARC must conduct an analysis of how school districts use school days. To the extent that data is not available at the statewide level JLARC may use case studies or other methods to conduct the analysis. A report must be presented by December 2014.

The analysis must include the following:

- how school districts define classroom time, non-classroom time, instructional time, non-instructional time, and any other definitions of how the school day is divided or used;
- estimates of time in each category;
- when non-instructional hours occur;
- how non-instructional are hours are used, including how much of the non-instructional time is devoted to professional development for the purposes of teacher and principal evaluation training or common core state standards training; and
- the extent the use of each category of time is identified or defined in collective bargaining agreements.

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 Original Bill: CON: The ability to have half days with our teachers for professional development is important. If we want to improve instruction in our classroom, it means that teachers need the time to be able to grow, develop, and work with each other. Our community and parents understand the need for teachers to work together. To do this outside of the school day without additional funding is impossible. Our early release days have been carefully planned so that we use the time effectively – these are not wasted days. Big reforms like the common core standards, new student assessments, and new teacher evaluations require time for us to collaborate in professional communities and the late arrival time is important for that to occur. This is a slap in the face to educators because the Legislature asked schools and districts to make changes but then took away the state-funded learning improvement days when we could work on the changes. We don't

want to short change our students but we need time to make changes. If the state funded collaborative time for teachers to work together then there would not be any shortened days. This bill does not allow for late starts because of inclement weather, which is a safety issue.

Persons Testifying: CON: Gene Sementi, Superintendent West Valley School District; Jim Kowalkowski, Superintendent Davenport School District; Kevin Chase, Grandview School District; Paul Farris, Ellensburg School District; Elaine Beraza, Lee Maras, Yakima School District; Mike Parker, Hoquiam School District; Holly Koon, Mount Baker School District.