

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5243

As of February 9, 2023

Title: An act relating to high school and beyond planning.

Brief Description: Concerning high school and beyond planning.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman, Hunt, Kuderer, Nobles and Wilson, C.; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/23/23, 1/30/23 [DPS-WM].
Ways & Means: 2/09/23.

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Revises high school and beyond plan (HSBP) requirements.
- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to facilitate the transition to and adoption of a common online platform for HSBPs.
- Requires OSPI to develop and submit to the Governor and Legislature an inventory of existing vendors of an online platform and associated costs by January 1, 2024.
- Specifies requirements for an online HSBP platform.
- Requires school districts to transition to an adopted universal platform within two years of statewide adoption.
- Repeals provisions relating to student learning plans.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5243 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Dozier, Hunt, McCune and Pedersen.

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Trevor Press (786-7446)

Background: Graduation Requirements—Overview. To qualify for graduation from a public high school in Washington, students must satisfy course and credit requirements established by the State Board of Education (SBE), meet any locally established requirements, complete a high school and beyond plan (HSBP), and meet the requirements of at least one graduation pathway option.

High School and Beyond Plan. All high school students must have a HSBP. Each HSBP must be initiated in seventh- or eighth-grade with a career interest and skills inventory. The plan must be updated to reflect high school assessment results, and must identify available interventions and academic support for students who are not on track to graduate.

All plans must include, among other items, an identification of career and educational goals, identification of dual credit opportunities, information on certain scholarship opportunities, and a four-year plan for course taking. Decisions on whether a student has met HSBP requirements are made at the local level.

Student Learning Plans. Districts are required to prepare student learning plans for eighth-grade students who were not successful on any or all of the content areas of the state assessment in the previous school year, or who are not on track to graduate due to credit deficiencies or absences.

Student learning plans must contain certain information, including assessment results, credit deficiencies, attendance rates, academic progress, remediation strategies, and programs available to help meet graduation requirements.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): High School and Beyond Plan Requirements. In addition to existing HSBP requirements, beginning in the seventh-grade, each student must be administered a career interest and skills inventory which is intended to be used to inform eighth-grade course taking and development of an HSBP. No later than either grade, each student must have an HSBP that includes a proposed plan for first-year high school courses aligned with graduation requirements and secondary and postsecondary goals.

School districts are to provide students who have not met standards on state assessments or are behind in requirements, with opportunities to access certain interventions, academic supports, and courses, with parental notification.

An HSBP must be provided in a language that the student and parents or legal guardians understand, and in accordance with the school district's language access policy and procedures. HSBPs must also include information on the potential impacts of a student's course selection on postsecondary opportunities, and information on opportunities for partial credit accrual, including mastery-based credit.

Statewide Online High School and Beyond Plan Platform. OSPI must facilitate the transition to and adoption of a common statewide online platform for the HSBP, and develop an inventory of existing vendors. OSPI must submit an inventory of existing vendors and associated costs to the Governor and education policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature by January 1, 2024, and must include an estimated transition timeline for statewide implementation that does not exceed two years.

The statewide online platform must meet certain requirements, including the incorporation of career exploration opportunities, accessibility options, the ability to develop support and recovery plans, and other provisions.

OSPI must develop or adopt a universal HSBP planning tool by June 1, 2024. Within two years of adoption, school districts must transition to the adopted universal platform, with technical assistance provided by OSPI. In carrying out these requirements, OSPI shall seek input from various groups and organizations.

Proposed Legislation Establishing a New High School and Beyond Plan. After selection of the vendor for a universal HSBP platform, OSPI must develop proposed legislation that establishes a new HSBP that, in addition to existing criteria:

- begins in no later than the fifth-grade;
- is updated multiple times per year;
- is engaging to students, and both allows and encourages them to meaningfully explore their strengths and interests on an ongoing basis;
- supports mastery-based learning programs and crediting; and
- identifies the graduation pathway option or options the student has selected to complete and how they align with the student's individual career and postsecondary education goals.

The proposed legislation shall be submitted to the Governor and the Education committees of the Legislature by November 1, 2024.

Student Learning Plans. Provisions relating to student learning plans are repealed.

Appropriation: The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on First Substitute (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: HSBPs vary widely by districts, including how meaningful they are in the counseling process. A universal HSBP platform could lead to a more customized plan with assistance and input from educators from around the state. Utilizing a statewide platform would help to spread positive work throughout the state. A uniform platform would allow parents and educators to access plans and would allow students to continue to use their plan if they change schools.

CON: It is not always clear how it is determined that students have met the standards required by law.

OTHER: Good platform options already exist for HSBP. Switching platforms can lead to additional training and support. Many districts have invested resources in their current platforms.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Senator Lisa Wellman, Prime Sponsor; Jayme Shoun, Washington STEM; Natalya Yudkovsky, Washington State PTA; Jenny Plaja, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); J. Lee Schultz, Washington State Board of Education.

CON: Andy Cilley, Parents.

OTHER: Kate Atvars, Lake Washington School District.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education):
No one.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means): PRO: High school and beyond plans are often not useful working documents and are not known about by parents. The current ratio of students to counselors is 400:1. There is no way for counselors to know every student and their aspirations. This planning should begin in 5th grade and be an exploratorium. This plan will eliminate language barriers and promote accessibility. The committee should consider some additional aspects that would strengthen the bill including adding a high school and beyond coordinator, that running start students are integrated, and review of these plans.

OTHER: This bill will be excellent for consistency, however the implementation timeline is too fast for a full transition and it is unclear how funding will be provided.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Senator Lisa Wellman, Prime Sponsor; Natalya Yudkovsky, Washington State PTA.

OTHER: Kate Atvars, Lake Washington School District; Margaret Rice, Washougal School District.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Ways & Means): No one.