

RCW 28A.188.090 Lighthouse programs—Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics focus. (1) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the superintendent of public instruction shall designate schools at the elementary, middle, and high school level to serve as resources and examples of how to combine the following best practices:

(a) A small, highly personalized learning community;

(b) An interdisciplinary curriculum with a strong focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics delivered through a project-based instructional approach; and

(c) Active partnerships with businesses and the local community to connect learning beyond the classroom.

(2) The designated elementary, middle, and high schools shall serve as lighthouse programs and provide technical assistance and advice to other schools and communities in the initial stages of creating an alternative learning environment focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The designated schools must have proven experience and be recognized as model programs.

(3) In addition, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall work with the designated elementary, middle, and high schools to publicize the models of best practices in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics instruction used by the designated schools and shall encourage other schools and communities to work with the designated schools to replicate similar models.

[2012 c 151 § 1; 2010 c 238 § 2. Formerly RCW 28A.630.065.]

Intent—2010 c 238: "(1) The legislature has made a commitment to support multiple strategies to improve teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in Washington's public schools. In recent years, Washington has adopted new technology, mathematics, and science learning standards; initiated funding for middle schools to provide a career and technical program in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics at the same rate as a high school operating a similar program; provided professional development for mathematics and science teachers; created a scholarship program to encourage students to enter mathematics and science degree programs; supported career and technical education in high-demand fields; and authorized alternative ways for teachers to earn certification in the mathematics and science fields.

(2) At the local level, school districts and their communities are also finding new ways to improve teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Some districts have combined several best practices into promising learning models for students. For example, Aviation high school in the Highline school district offers a small, highly personalized learning community that is focused on interdisciplinary immersion in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics using a hands-on, project-based curriculum. Delta high school in the Tri-Cities is a collaboration among three school districts, a skill center, two institutions of higher education, a community foundation, and local business leaders. The science and math institute at Point Defiance in Tacoma offers students field-based applied learning using the natural, historical, and community resources of a large metropolitan park. These schools draw students from across regions who are seeking an exciting, rigorous, and nontraditional learning experience. Other schools and communities

across the state are seeking to replicate these innovative learning models.

(3) The legislature intends to support continued expansion of the type of innovation and creativity displayed by Aviation, Delta, and the science and math institute by designating so-called "lighthouse" high schools to serve as resources and examples of best practices in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics instruction." [2010 c 238 § 1.]