

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## 2SSB 5022

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Education*

**Title:** An act relating to the Washington award for excellence in education program.

**Brief Description:** Changing the Washington award for excellence in education program.

**Sponsor(s):** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Gaspard, Bailey, Rinehart, von Reichbauer, Murray, Conner and Erwin).

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Education, April 3, 1991, DPA.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION**

**Majority Report:** *Do pass as amended.* Signed by 17 members: Representatives Peery, Chair; G. Fisher, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; Vance, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Betrozoff; Broback; Cole; Dorn; Holland; P. Johnson; Jones; Neher; Orr; Phillips; Rasmussen; Roland; and Valle.

**Staff:** Susan Kirkpatrick (786-7291).

**Background:** In 1986, the Washington Award for Excellence in Education Program was created to recognize teachers, principals, superintendents, and school boards for their leadership, contributions, and commitment to education. In subsequent years, administrators other than principals and classified employees have been added to the groups who are recognized under the program.

The awards for teachers and principals/administrators include: (1) waivers of tuition and fees to attend state colleges and universities and a stipend of \$1,000 or less to cover costs incurred in taking courses for which the tuition and fees have been waived, or (2) a grant of \$1,000 or less, if the teacher or principal/administrator at their discretion, elects to forego the waiver of tuition and fees and the stipend.

With respect to the tuition waivers, the colleges and universities bear the financial responsibility of the award. Also, the tuition waivers are not applicable to summer programs because they are required to be self-supporting. Additionally, there is no date specified in statute for recipients to complete courses. According to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), this has created administrative difficulties for them.

***Summary of Amended Bill:***

CATEGORIES OF AWARDS

Recipients of the Washington Award For Excellence receive one or more of the following:

1. A certificate presented by the governor and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, or their designated representatives, at a public ceremony or ceremonies in appropriate locations.
2. An academic grant which shall be used to take courses at an institution of higher education.
  - a. An Institution of Higher Education is defined to include the following:
    - (i) any public university, college, community college, or vocational-technical institute operated by the state of Washington or any political subdivision; and
    - (ii) any private institution located in Washington that is a member institution of an accrediting association recognized by rule of the board or any institution, branch, extension, or facility operating in Washington which is affiliated with an institution operating in another state which is a separately accredited member institution of an accrediting association recognized by the board. Courses may be taken at a private institution if the grant does not exceed the current academic year full-time resident graduate tuition and services and fees in effect at the state-funded research universities, the grant is matched on at least a dollar-for-dollar basis by the private institution with actual money or by waiver of fees and the grant is not used for any courses involved in a program that includes any religious worship, exercise, or

the pursuit of any degree in religious, seminarian, or theological academic studies; and

- (iii) a public or private institution in another state or country. Courses may be taken at an out-of-state or out-of-country institution if the institution has an exchange program with an institution in Washington and the program is approved or recognized by the Higher Education Coordinating (HEC) Board, the institution meets HEC Board approval criteria, and the award recipient submits in writing to the HEC Board an explanation why the preferred courses(s) are not available at an institution in Washington.
  - b. The academic grant shall not exceed the current academic year full-time resident graduate tuition for courses taken at one of the state's research universities or the state's regional universities or The Evergreen State College at the time the grant is awarded.
  - c. Recipients have four years to complete courses fully paid for by the academic grant. Recipients may receive 30 clock hours of continuing education toward the 150 clock hours of required continuing education if the courses paid for by the grant are related to the recipient's responsibilities or assignments.
3. The recognition stipend is not to exceed \$1,000.
4. The educational grant is not to exceed \$1,000. It is awarded by SPI as long as a written grant application is submitted to SPI within one year after the award is received. The grant application shall identify the educational purpose toward which the grant shall be used.

Recipients of the award must notify SPI within one year of receiving the award whether they want to claim the academic grant, the recognition stipend, or the educational grant. SPI is required to notify the HEC Board of those recipients who select the academic grant. The academic grants, recognition stipends, and educational grants are not considered compensation for salary compliance purposes.

#### CATEGORIES OF RECIPIENTS

1. Teachers and principals or administrators may choose one of the following:
  - a. Academic grant;
  - b. Recognition stipend; or
  - c. Educational grant.
2. Superintendents may choose one of the following:
  - a. Recognition stipend; or
  - b. Educational grant.
3. School boards receive an educational grant not to exceed \$2,500.

#### ADMINISTRATION

SPI establishes the selection criteria for the Washington Award for Excellence in Education Program and administers the grants, except for the academic grants. The HEC Board administers the academic grants part of the program.

#### SURVEY AND REPORT

SPI is required to conduct a survey to determine the interest of classified employees in being provided the option of selecting an academic grant, educational grant, or recognition stipend as part of their award. SPI is required to report to the Legislature by December 1, 1991, with recommendations and costs.

#### NULL AND VOID

The bill is made contingent on funding in the budget.

***Amended Bill Compared to Second Substitute Bill:*** The amendment makes technical corrections to the bill by replacing a reference to Section 6(1) with a reference to Section 6 to clarify that all provisions of Section 6 are exceptions to the requirement that courses paid for by an academic grant be taken at a state institution of higher education. The term "equivalent" is deleted from the provision regarding "full-time resident graduate tuition" at one of the state's research universities.

***Fiscal Note:*** Available.

***Effective Date of Amended Bill:*** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

**Testimony For:** The bill gives teachers receiving the award the opportunity to take out-of-state classes.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Bob Maier, Washington Education Association (in favor).