

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5851

AS OF FEBRUARY 26, 1991

Brief Description: Adopting the quality schools act.

SPONSORS: Senators McDonald, Anderson, Cantu, Owen, McCaslin and Craswell.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Staff: Larry Davis (786-7422)

Hearing Dates:

BACKGROUND:

Over the last ten years, a number of national and state reports have been issued on the need for educational reform. During the same period, the state has enacted a number of requirements, in statute and through state agency rules, in an effort to enhance the quality of the common school system. It is suggested that to increase the accountability of the state's education system and result in higher student achievement, educational reform should focus on parent's rights and responsibilities, compensation for educators -- including optional performance pay, student achievement testing, teacher testing, and alternative teacher certification.

SUMMARY:

PART I - PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A Parent's Bill of Rights and Responsibilities is created to define certain rights of parents to be informed of, and participate in, the education of their children.

School districts are:

- 1) Required to make educational materials and programs available for inspection by parents;
- 2) Encouraged to seek participation from parents and the community in the development of experimental or pilot education programs. Prior to implementation of any new programs, districts are required to consult and communicate with parents regarding the proposed program.
- 3) Prohibited from performing psychological testing of a student without the written permission of the parents.
- 4) Prohibited from placing a student in an experimental or pilot program in the district without prior written

notice provided to the parent. Parents may elect not to have their child participate in the experimental or pilot program.

Current law is retained requiring school boards to adopt policies assuring parents access to their child's classroom. The law is amended to require each school board to cooperate with teacher and parent organizations in adopting the classroom access policy and that the policy is not subject to collective bargaining.

By December 31 of each year, every school district superintendent is required to publish and distribute to the school board and every parent in the district a report on: student achievement; dropout, absenteeism, and graduation rates; any measurements of the performance of the district's students in college; and a description of the academic environment of the schools, including curriculum content, teacher turnover rate, and any innovative programs undertaken by the district.

The report must specify the relative standing of the district and the district's schools to other districts and schools in the state and nation regarding student achievement. To the extent possible, the standing must be stated in terms of national and statewide standardized test scores.

The collection and comparability of the information required in the annual school district reports is coordinated by the College of Education at the University of Washington with the cooperation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, educational service districts, and school districts.

PART II - PERFORMANCE-BASED TEACHER COMPENSATION

A voluntary performance-based salary increase program is created. In any given school year, one-third of the state funds appropriated by the Legislature for salary increases are allocated solely for the voluntary performance-based salary increase program.

A majority vote of the certificated staff in a school building is required for participation in the voluntary performance-based salary increase program. If a school building does not participate in the program, the funds for the building for that program are not allocated to the building.

Participating buildings are required to establish a committee of no more than eleven members which adopts a performance pay plan for the building. The committee must seek input from identified groups in developing the plan and hold at least one public hearing before adopting the plan.

A majority of the committee must be parents of students in the building or representatives of the community served by the school. The remaining members are teachers and administrators employed in the building, including the building principal and at least one teacher elected by the teachers in the building. The parents or community representatives are appointed by the

principal. Excepting the school principal, members may serve no more than three consecutive years on the committee.

The committee must be appointed by January 1 of each year and adopt the performance pay plan by May 30 of each year. The plan must provide annual written evaluations of each certificated staff person based on criteria established in the plan. The performance pay plan is not subject to collective bargaining and, under unusual circumstances, if at least 75 percent of the committee members so vote, the committee may adopt a performance pay plan that results in uniform across-the-board salary increases.

The plan must award performance-based salary increases using at least the following criteria:

- a) Demonstrated improved student competency in grades 4, 8, 10, and 12 on statewide tests in reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, and geography.
- b) Evaluation of improved student achievement against student learning objectives contained in lesson plans.
- c) Demonstrated staff competency in assigned subject matter and pedagogy.
- d) A clearly understood grading procedure that is directly related to student learning objectives and is administered fairly.
- e) Demonstrated increased student motivation, self-direction, and self-discipline.
- f) Demonstrated improvement in parent/staff relationships and communication.
- g) Demonstrated reduced rates of absenteeism and dropouts.

PART III - STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

The statewide standardized achievement test in grade four is amended to include assessing students' skills in writing, science, history, and geography.

The statewide eighth grade assessment is amended to include information about students' current academic proficiencies in writing, science, economics, history, and geography.

The statewide eleventh grade assessment is amended to include measurements of students' skills in reading, writing, mathematics, language, history, geography, economics, and science and technology.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is directed to prepare and administer a standardized achievement test to be given annually to all students in twelfth grade. The test is to determine student competence in reading, writing,

mathematics, language, science and technology, economics, history, geography, and reasoning and thinking skills.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction establishes standards for successful completion of the grades 4, 8, 11, and 12 tests. Districts are required to notify each student's parents of the student's performance on the tests relative to other students in the district.

Districts may not advance a student beyond grades 4, 8, and 11 unless the student has successfully completed the statewide test for that grade. The student may be advanced if the educational interests of the student would best be served by advancement but a student cannot be advanced by the district if the student's parents object. After October 1, 1997, no student may graduate from high school who has not successfully passed the statewide grade twelve achievement test.

Districts must offer additional educational opportunities for students who fail any of the statewide tests to prepare them to retake all or part of the test. Districts must also provide an administrative appeals process.

PART IV - EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Effective August 31, 1993, current law directs the State Board of Education to require teacher certification candidates completing teacher preparation programs to pass an exit examination to receive initial certification. The current law requires candidates to pass a primarily essay examination testing knowledge and competence in instructional skills, classroom management, and student behavior and development.

The law is amended to:

- o Include candidates who have completed an alternative certificate preservice training program;
- o Delete reference to the exam being primarily of essay questions;
- o Authorizes rather than requires the State Board to test candidates in instructional skills, classroom management, and student behavior and development;
- o Require that the exam test candidates' knowledge and competence in the subjects tested under the statewide grade 4, 8, 11, and 12 tests. The exam, in appropriate instances, may test knowledge and competence in the particular subject matter to be taught by the teacher.

PART V - ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION

By January 1, 1992, the State Board of Education must develop and adopt standards and procedures for alternative teacher certification. The board adopts standards for eligibility, preservice training, inservice training, supervision, and evaluation.

The eligibility standards include: The person must hold a bachelor's degree in the arts, sciences, or humanities; have completed a minimum number of years, as determined by the State Board of Education, of occupational experience; and have completed the Washington State Patrol background check.

The preservice training standards include completion of a program in professional education knowledge and skills developed jointly by at least one school district and one state-approved teacher preparation program. The program may be no more than 15 quarter credit hours, and, if operated by a state institution of higher education, must be operated on a self-supporting basis.

The inservice training standards include: Assignment of a mentor teacher to the alternative certificate teacher under the Teacher Assistance Program; and local provision of necessary assistance and planning and study time for the alternative certificate teacher.

An initial alternative certificate is issued by the State Board upon completion of the preservice training program. An alternative certificate is issued upon completion of the inservice training program.

PART VI - SUPPLEMENTAL CONTRACTS

The statutory authority for school districts to grant supplemental salary contracts for "incentives" is deleted.

PART VII - SCHOOL CALENDAR

By May 30 annually, each school board must establish the schedule of student attendance days for the following school year. A public hearing must be held prior to the board adopting the student school calendar. Student attendance days are designated employee work days and are removed from collective bargaining. Employee work days beyond student attendance days may be subject to collective bargaining.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested February 26, 1991

Effective Date: October 1, 1993 for students to pass the statewide tests in grades 4, 8, and 11 in order to advance to the next grade.