

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SSB 5953**

**AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 5, 1992**

**Brief Description:** Improving the common school system.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senator Bailey)

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5953 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Erwin, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Craswell, Metcalf, and Oke.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Murray, Pelz, Rinehart, and A. Smith.

**Staff:** Larry Davis (786-7422)

**Hearing Dates:** February 24, 1992

**BACKGROUND:**

Throughout the state there are a number of local initiatives underway to improve the education of and educational experience for students. However, systemic educational restructuring will still take time. It is suggested that to increase student performance and the accountability of the state's education system, comprehensive educational reform should include: enhancing the teaching profession by revising certification, testing and probationary requirements for teachers; enhancing parents' rights to include providing parents and the public with annual reports on the performance of schools and students; expanding the broad powers and authority of school boards; strengthening student assessment and learning opportunities; and establishing a state level panel to monitor education reform progress.

**SUMMARY:**

**PART I - ENHANCING THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

The masters degree requirement for continuing teacher certification is repealed. The initial certificate is valid for seven years and may be reinstated pursuant to State Board of Education rules.

The entrance-to-practice exam for initial teacher certification, effective August 31, 1993, is amended to also test a candidate's knowledge of subject matter. The exam shall include rather than consist primarily of essay questions. The State Board shall adopt rules for handling cases in which a

candidate passes only one part of the entrance-to-practice exam.

The period of nonrenewal of employment contract for teachers and other nonsupervisory certificated personnel is extended from one to three years during the person's first three years of employment with the district. This does not apply to persons who have completed at least three years of certificated employment in another district in Washington, in which case the period of nonrenewal of employment contract in the new district is limited to one year.

## PART II - PARENTS' RIGHTS

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's adoption of 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.

Each school board shall publish annually a school district accountability report. A copy must be available for public inspection at each school in the district, at the district office, and in public libraries. Information in the report includes: mission of the district, student enrollment and demographic data, annual expenditures per pupil and the average compensation for teachers, student scores on mandated tests and college entrance exams, student dropout-absenteeism-graduation rates, and budget information.

School boards are given broad discretionary power to adopt policies that provide for the development and implementation of programs and practices that benefit the education of citizens, and promote the effective, efficient, or safe maintenance and operation of school district programs, activities, services, or practices. School boards must give prior notice before adopting policies and provide reasonable opportunity for public written or oral comment.

## PART III - STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

If a student's scores on the state 4th, 8th, or 11th grade tests indicate that the student needs help in identified areas, the district must adjust the curriculum in the identified areas.

If funding is provided, the Superintendent of Public Instruction is directed to prepare and administer an annual assessment of all students in grade twelve and after October 1, 1998, no student may graduate from high school who has not successfully passed the statewide grade twelve assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to determine student competence in reading, writing, math, language, science and technology, economics, history, geography, and reasoning and thinking skills.

The statutory state minimum high school graduation requirements are repealed and the State Board of Education is again directed to establish state high school graduation requirements in rule.

**PART IV - EDUCATIONAL REFORM PROGRESS MONITORING**

The Washington Educational Progress Oversight Panel is created. The panel will report annually to the Legislature and the Governor on the progress of educational restructuring efforts throughout the state. The members of the panel are the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the president of the State Board of Education, and the executive directors of the following: Washington State School Directors' Association, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Work Force Training and Education Coordinating Board.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** available

The following testimony was provided for SB 6178 on January 21, 1992:

**TESTIMONY FOR (Master's Repeal):**

Public higher education institutions bear the burden of having to offer masters programs to meet student demand, but have little state funding to support necessary additional staff. Program quality is being affected. A better incentive to encourage teachers to get a masters degree is to reward them on the salary schedule.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** (Pro) Dr. Gerald Stacy, Central Washington University; Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals; Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

**TESTIMONY (Entrance-to-Practice Exam):**

Consideration should be given to delaying the effective date for the full exam or the subject matter portion of the exam. There will be additional costs to expanding the entrance-to-practice exam to include subject matter.

**TESTIFIED:** Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals; Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

**TESTIMONY FOR (Extending Teacher Probation Period):**

It is important that more time be given to evaluate the performance and growth of new teachers. Extending the period of probation is good for both new teachers and administrators with the responsibility for evaluating them. Extending the probation period for evaluative purposes could be especially important if there is a supply-demand problem and the recruiting pool becomes more shallow.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

Lengthening the period of probation for new teachers will not assure that more evaluation will occur.

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals. CON: Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

**TESTIMONY FOR (Student School Calendar):**

Removing the student school calendar from collective bargaining would increase the likelihood of more uniform calendars between districts. In some cases, removal of the calendar from collective bargaining would add some stability to districts.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

Bargaining over the student school calendar has not been a problem in school districts.

**TESTIFIED:** John Kvamme, Tacoma School District. PRO: Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals. CON: Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

**TESTIMONY FOR (Annual District Accountability Report):**

A good idea. The information is important to get to parents and the community. There are very few requests now to see the school district descriptive guide.

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals

**TESTIMONY FOR (Broaden School Board Powers):**

It is appropriate to give greater flexibility to school boards.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association (pro)

**TESTIMONY (Student Learning Opportunities):**

Use of the word "appropriate" needs to be more clearly defined. Lack of clarity could lead to litigation. It is not clear if the requirement is meant to apply to all students.

**TESTIFIED:** John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals

**TESTIMONY FOR (High School Graduation Test):** None

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

A new statewide test will have cost implications, including maintaining test security and providing retake opportunities. An exit test will not serve the interests of all students. Wait for the report of the Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding.

**TESTIFIED:** John Kvamme, Tacoma School District. CON: Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals; Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association

**TESTIMONY FOR (Graduation Requirements to SBE):**

Returning the establishment of graduation requirements to the rule-making process of the State Board would make it easier to change the requirements. The public would still know there are minimum graduation requirements.

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; John Kvamme, Tacoma School District; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

**TESTIMONY FOR (Educational Progress Panel):**

An Educational Progress Panel is a good idea. The annual progress report would also serve as a means to foster greater communication and cooperation between the agencies represented on the panel.

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: Linda Byrnes, State Board of Education; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Perry Keithley, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

**TESTIFIED BEFORE WAYS & MEANS (February 3, 1992):** Judy Hartmann, WEA (pro master's repeal) (con entrance-to-practice exam); Lorraine Wilson, Washington School Directors Association (pro master's repeal, school board powers expansion, extending

teacher probation) (con requiring provision of individual student learning opportunities)

**HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):**

**PART I - ENHANCING THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

The repeal of the masters degree requirement for continuing teacher certification remains in the bill. The statutory limitation on the length of validity of initial certificates is repealed.

The period of nonrenewal of employment contract for teachers and other nonsupervisory certificated personnel is extended from one to two years, rather than one to three years. Persons who have completed at least two, rather than three, years of certificated employment in another district in Washington are subject to one year of probation when transferring to another district.

The State Board of Education, in conjunction with the Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding, is directed to study the current requirements for the certification of teachers and administrators, and present to the Legislature, by December 1, 1992, options for improving the current certification system.

**PART II - COMMISSION ON STUDENT LEARNING**

A nine-member Commission on Student Learning is established. The current Governor appoints three members by July 1, 1992, the State Board of Education self-selects three members to serve on the commission, and the next Governor appoints the remaining three members by February 1, 1993. Educators, business leaders, and parents are to be represented on the commission.

The commission begins its substantive work only after the 1993 Legislature takes action to ratify by July 1, 1993, the student learning goals recommended by the Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding in its December 1, 1992 final report. If the Legislature does not so act, the commission and the modification of basic education requirements in 1998 shall be null and void.

The commission is required to coordinate its activities with the State Board of Education and the state superintendent, seek advice broadly from the public, and report annually to the Legislature and the State Board of Education. The commission terminates September 1, 1998.

The commission must establish technical advisory committees to assist the commission with its major responsibilities. The commission undertakes these responsibilities only if the Legislature adopts student learning goals by July 1, 1993.

- o Identify essential academic learning requirements for elementary and secondary students. At a minimum, these

requirements shall include reading, writing, speaking, science, history, geography, mathematics, and critical thinking. In developing these essential learning requirements, the commission shall incorporate the student learning goals identified by the Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding.

- o Present to the State Board of Education (SBE) and the state Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) statewide elementary and secondary academic assessment systems to determine if students are mastering the learning requirements. The elementary assessment system is presented to the SBE and SPI by December 1, 1995, and implemented beginning the 1996-97 school year unless delayed or prevented by the Legislature. Mastery of each component of the learning requirements is required before students can progress in subsequent components.

The secondary assessment is presented to the SBE and SPI by December 1, 1996, and implemented in the 1997-98 school year, unless the Legislature acts to delay or prevent implementation. The secondary assessment shall lead to a certificate of mastery. The certificate of mastery is required for graduation.

- o By December 1, 1996, recommend to the Legislature, SBE and SPI a statewide accountability system to evaluate accurately and fairly the level of learning occurring in schools. The commission shall also recommend to the Legislature steps that should be taken to assist districts and schools in which learning is significantly below expected levels of performance.
- o Develop strategies to assist educators in helping students master the essential learning requirements.
- o Establish a Quality Schools Center to plan, implement, and evaluate a professional development process. The center shall: have an advisory council; coordinate its activities with the SBE and SPI; employ and contract with individuals committed to quality reform; develop a six-year plan; and use best practices research regarding instruction, management, curriculum development, and assessment.
- o Develop recommendations on the time, support and resources needed by schools and districts to help students achieve the essential learning requirements, and estimate the expected cost of implementing the academic assessment systems during the 1995-97 biennium and beyond.
- o Develop recommendations for repeal or amendment of federal, state, and local laws and rules that inhibit schools.
- o Develop recommendations for the Higher Education Coordinating Board for entrance requirements that would

assist schools in adopting strategies designed to help students achieve the essential learning requirements.

### PART III - SCHOOL BOARD POWERS

School boards are given broad discretionary power to adopt policies that provide for the development and implementation of programs and practices that benefit the education of citizens, and promote the effective, efficient, or safe maintenance and operation of school district programs, activities, services, or practices. School boards must give prior notice before adopting policies and provide reasonable opportunity for public written or oral comment.

Any school or school district may receive a waiver from the statutory requirements pertaining to school building self-study, teacher classroom contact hours, and the basic education program hour requirements. To receive the waiver the school district must submit to the state Board of Education a plan for restructuring its educational program or the educational program of individual schools in the district. The plan must include specific standards for increased student learning the district expects to achieve, how the district plans to achieve the higher standards and eliminate learning disparities based on gender and ethnicity, and how the district will determine if the standards are being met. The plan does not have to be approved by the State Board.

If a district intends to waive the program hour offerings requirement, it must provide at least a district-wide annual average of 1,000 instructional hours for grades one through 12, and 450 instructional hours in kindergarten.

Waivers shall be renewed every three years upon the SBE receiving a renewal request from the school district board of directors.

The Student Learning Objectives Law is repealed.

### PART IV - STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

If a student's scores on the state 4th, 8th, or 11th grade tests indicate that the student needs help in identified areas, the district must adjust the curriculum in the identified areas. Districts shall notify parents of their child's performance on the state tests.

The statutory state minimum high school graduation requirements are repealed and the State Board of Education is again directed to establish state high school graduation requirements in rule.

For a seventh or eighth grader to receive high school graduation credit for taking a high school class, the content of the class must exceed the requirements of a seventh or eighth grade class.



PART V: BASIC EDUCATION AMENDMENTS -- EFFECTIVE 1998

Effective September 1, 1998:

- o The goal of the Basic Education Act is to provide students an opportunity to master the essential learning requirements as identified by the Commission on Student Learning.
- o The Basic Education Program program hour offering requirement is amended to require a total instructional offering of 450 hours for students enrolled in kindergarten, and a district-wide annual average total instructional offering of 1,000 hours for students enrolled in grades one through 12. The instructional program shall include the essential learning requirements and such other subjects and activities the school district determines.
- o The requirements for school building self-study and teacher contact hours are repealed.

The amendments and repealers cited above shall become effective September 1, 1998, unless a law is enacted stating that a school accountability and assessment system is not in place.

The following provisions of SSB 5953 are deleted from the House amendment:

- o Expanding the scope of the entrance-to-practice exam for initial teacher certification, effective August 31, 1993, to also test a candidate's knowledge of subject matter.
- o Removing from collective bargaining the setting of the student calendar and directing boards to establish by May 30 annually, the schedule of student attendance days for the following school year.
- o Requiring districts to publish annually a school district accountability report.
- o Directing the state superintendent, subject to funding, to prepare and administer an annual assessment of all students in grade 12 and, beginning in 1998, requiring passage of this exam in order to graduate. statewide grade 12 assessment.
- o Establishing the Washington Educational Progress Oversight Panel to report annually to the Legislature and the Governor on the progress of educational restructuring efforts throughout the state.