

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSCR 8401

As Passed Senate, March 16, 2003

Brief Description: Authorizing an interim study creating a master plan for education.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Carlson, Johnson, Shin, Jacobsen, McAuliffe, Schmidt, Rasmussen and B. Sheldon).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/10/03, 3/3/03 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 3/16/03, 43-5.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8401 be substituted therefor, and the substitute concurrent resolution do pass.

Signed by Senators Carlson, Chair; Schmidt, Vice Chair; Horn, Kohl-Welles, Mulliken, B. Sheldon and Shin.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: Research suggests that creating a more integrated, seamless education system involves grappling with a host of complex issues, including standards, testing, educator preparation, college admissions policies, governance, and funding streams, to name just a few. Over the past decade, a number of states have begun to move away from dealing with such issues on a piecemeal basis in favor of a more comprehensive approach. The shorthand term for such initiatives, P-16 or P-20, reflects the central vision of a coherent, flexible continuum of public education that stretches from preschool through the baccalaureate degree or beyond.

Summary of Bill: A collaborative interim study will make recommendations for the development of a "Master Plan for Education -- Prekindergarten through University."

The Senate and the House of Representatives Education and Higher Education Committees make up the study group. Co-chairs are selected by the study group "one to represent K-12 education and one to represent higher education."

Involved in the group are interested parties, including but not limited to educators, including staff, faculty, administration, governing board members, from both the public and private sector; public policy groups both regional and national; state organizations; advocacy groups; researchers; business and labor leaders; community leaders; parents; and students.

An interim report is submitted to the appropriate legislative committees by December 1, 2003, and a final report by December 1, 2004.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Washington State has a system of education where already there is much collaboration leading to change. Washington is a leader in dual credit options including AP, IB, Tech. Prep. And Running Start.

The HECB stands ready to help in any way that is useful and asks that the Master Plan process be remembered. While OSPI is supportive of the elimination of barriers, the scope of the resolution is huge and might require narrowing. Maybe a study should focus on: (1) disparate assessments, (2) misaligned standards and expectations, and (3) missing guidance and advising.

The faculty wants direct involvement in the process and is happy to be included. The students support the effort to confront the issues and look forward to being involved.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Don Carlson; Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor; Bruce Botka, HECB; Brian Jeffries, Transition Coordinator, OSPI; Jim Huckabay, CWU, CFR; Armando Manguia, EWU, WSL.

House Amendment(s): An interim work session of the House and Senate Education and Higher Education committees, along with stakeholders, will be held prior to December 31, 2003. The attendees at the work session will share findings and recommendations for their separate work on strategic planning, coordination, and governance in K-12 and higher education. Also discussed will be opportunities for further collaboration and oversight.