

SENATE BILL REPORT

SCR 8401

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, March 3, 2003

Brief Description: Creating a joint select committee to develop a master plan for education.

Revised for 1st Substitute: Authorizing an interim study creating a master plan for education.

Sponsors: 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].

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 Substitute 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.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: A study group of legislators will make recommendations for a Master Plan. Recommendations will address but not be limited to issues of access, achievement, accountability, affordability, and quality of our schools and colleges. The number of people invited to participate is expanded to include, staff, faculty, administration, and governing board members; regional and national public policy groups and state organizations; advocacy groups; and researchers.

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.