
SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2955

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Hunter, Jarrett, Haigh, Cox, Tom, Schual-Berke, Kagi, Quall, Ruderman, Hunt, Santos, Armstrong, Nixon, O'Brien, Rockefeller, Edwards, Linville, Wallace, Conway and Morrell)

READ FIRST TIME 02/10/04.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a joint task force on K-12 finance;
2 creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that more than a
5 quarter of a century has passed since the current school finance system
6 was first created, and that the challenges facing our schools and
7 students have grown and changed dramatically during that time. The
8 legislature intends to examine the school finance system to determine
9 whether it is appropriately linked to the demands of education reform
10 and to the goal of providing all children in the state the opportunity
11 to meet standards.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The joint task force on K-12 finance is
13 created to study the common school finance system and to develop
14 alternative funding models for that finance system. The alternatives
15 shall include one or more models that can be fully funded within the
16 existing total federal, state, and local capital and operating
17 expenditures for public schools and may include alternatives that
18 require new or additional funding.

- 1 (2) The task force shall, at a minimum:
- 2 (a) Consider the constitutional and legal requirements underlying
- 3 the current finance system;
- 4 (b) Examine the statutory definition of basic education to
- 5 determine whether the current definition aligns with and supports the
- 6 goals and requirements of the state's education reform laws and
- 7 recommend a new definition if one is needed to effect the alignment;
- 8 (c) Hold at least one widely publicized public hearing in the area
- 9 served by each educational service district to accept public comment on
- 10 the existing definition of basic education and on possible
- 11 modifications to that definition;
- 12 (d) Compare Washington's common school funding system with those in
- 13 other states that are beginning to link finance systems with education
- 14 reform and expected levels of student achievement;
- 15 (e) Design alternative common school finance systems for Washington
- 16 that reflect principles that include but need not be limited to the
- 17 following:
- 18 (i) The finance system should be aligned with the policy
- 19 expectations and goals established under education reform;
- 20 (ii) Funds should be distributed equitably so that all children
- 21 have the opportunity to meet the state's academic standards and become
- 22 prepared for postsecondary education, including career and technical
- 23 education;
- 24 (iii) Staffing should be recognized as a key component of school
- 25 district costs, including the number of and compensation for
- 26 certificated instructional staff, certificated administrative staff,
- 27 and classified staff;
- 28 (iv) Stable and predictable basic education funding should be
- 29 provided by the state to school districts;
- 30 (v) Local flexibility and choice in program delivery at the
- 31 district and school levels should be enhanced; and
- 32 (vi) Accountability for taxpayers that focuses on levels of student
- 33 achievement should be provided;
- 34 (f) Review state funding and school district expenditures for the
- 35 transitional bilingual instruction program, with special attention to
- 36 the effectiveness of the current state formula that provides funding to
- 37 school districts for the program;

1 (g) Review school district expenditures for and state funding of
2 special education, including the adequacy and efficiency of the state
3 safety net program;

4 (h) Review state and local funding for school facility construction
5 and modernization, and examine the extent to which the provision of
6 adequate school facilities should be included within the definition of
7 basic education;

8 (i) Review food services funding and expenditures at the state and
9 local levels;

10 (j) Examine the state formula for calculating the maximum local
11 levy authority, levy equalization, and levy rollbacks, and make
12 recommendations for changes in that formula to ensure greater equity,
13 stability, and predictability among school districts in their ability
14 to collect local levies to supplement state basic education support for
15 school maintenance and operation;

16 (k) Design one or more alternative compensation models that attract
17 and retain high performing teachers in all Washington schools and in
18 all academic subject areas and, in addition, may do one or more of the
19 following:

20 (i) Reward teachers for improving their skills and knowledge in a
21 manner that translates into improved student learning;

22 (ii) Recognize the need for appropriate compensation for teachers
23 to cover the cost of professional development and continuing education;
24 and

25 (iii) Recognize regional cost-of-living differences as well as
26 recruitment challenges facing rural schools and schools with large
27 numbers of educationally disadvantaged students; and

28 (1) Review the role of noncertificated staff and the appropriate
29 types of compensation for these staff.

30 (3) The task force shall consist of the following members:

31 (a) Four members from the house of representatives, two from each
32 major caucus, appointed by each caucus;

33 (b) Four members from the senate, two from each major caucus,
34 appointed by each caucus.

35 (4) The chair shall be elected from its membership by the task
36 force.

37 (5) The task force shall select the persons or entities to conduct

1 various components of the study and shall approve the expenditure of
2 funds.

3 (6) Appointments to the task force shall be completed within thirty
4 days of the effective date of this section.

5 (7) The task force shall receive staff and logistical support from
6 the office of financial management, the office of the superintendent of
7 public instruction, the legislative evaluation and accountability
8 program committee, the office of program research of the house of
9 representatives, and senate committee services.

10 (8) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for
11 travel expenses as provided in RCW 44.04.120. Other members of the
12 task force and the members of the advisory committee may be reimbursed
13 for travel expenses by the agencies or organizations that appointed or
14 nominated them.

15 (9) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to
16 the legislature by October 1, 2006. All findings and recommendations
17 of the task force shall be by majority vote of its members.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act expires June 30, 2007.

--- END ---