
SENATE BILL 5603

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senators Hargrove and McAuliffe

Read first time 01/31/2005. Referred to Committee on Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to studying early learning, K-12, and higher
2 education; creating new sections; providing an expiration date; and
3 declaring an emergency.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) The early years mark the most extraordinary period of growth
7 for young children. The state's role in providing access to early
8 learning opportunities has never been consistently defined;

9 (2) More than a quarter of a century has passed since the current
10 school finance system was first created, and the challenges facing our
11 schools and students have grown and changed dramatically during that
12 time. Policies have been established creating new expectations and
13 goals for students under education reform;

14 (3) Demographic pressures and work force needs will continue to
15 increase demand for access to postsecondary education and training.
16 Public two-year and four-year institutions of higher education are also
17 important avenues for programs such as adult basic education and
18 English as a second language that are the foundation for employment and

1 further education for an increasing number of people. Students have
2 paid an increasing cost of their education with tuition growing faster
3 than personal income or inflation; and

4 (4) Through a comprehensive study, the legislature will have solid
5 information to determine how best to use its resources to create a
6 strong education system that will provide an educated citizenry and a
7 thriving economy in this state.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The comprehensive education study
9 steering committee is created.

10 (2) Members of the steering committee shall include: The governor
11 who shall chair the steering committee; the director of the office of
12 financial management; two members from the house of representatives
13 with one appointed by each major caucus; two members from the senate
14 with one appointed by each major caucus; four citizens appointed by the
15 governor; and the chairs of each of the three advisory committees
16 created under subsection (3) of this section. The chair of the
17 advisory committee on K-12 shall be the superintendent of public
18 instruction. The chair of the advisory committee on early learning
19 shall be appointed by the governor from a list of names submitted by
20 groups representing early learning. The chair of the advisory
21 committee on higher education shall be selected by the governor from a
22 list of three or more names submitted by the state board for community
23 and technical colleges and the council of presidents.

24 (3) The steering committee shall appoint the members of the
25 advisory committee on early learning, the advisory committee on K-12,
26 and the advisory committee on higher education.

27 (4) The steering committee shall receive staff and logistical
28 support from the office of financial management.

29 (5) Nonlegislative members of the steering committee shall be
30 reimbursed for travel expenses under RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The steering committee:

32 (a) Shall direct and coordinate the studies created in this
33 section. In conducting the studies, consideration shall be given to
34 recently completed, related finance studies;

35 (b) May enter into contracts as needed to support the work of the
36 study;

1 (c) Shall develop recommendations based on the work of the studies
2 in this section; and

3 (d) Shall develop recommendations about how the state can best
4 provide stable funding for student learning for young children,
5 students in the public schools, and students in the public colleges and
6 universities.

7 (2) A comprehensive K-12 finance study shall include, but not be
8 limited to:

9 (a) The constitutional and legal requirements underlying the
10 current finance system and how those requirements are affected by the
11 goal under education reform to provide all students with the
12 opportunity to achieve the state standards;

13 (b) The strengths and weaknesses of the current state and local
14 finance formulas and how those formulas are used by local school
15 districts to meet state requirements and student learning goals;

16 (c) Potential changes to the current finance system including the
17 methods of allocating funds, levels of funding, and how student
18 achievement is affected;

19 (d) Reviewing the funding systems in at least five other states;
20 and

21 (e) Specific issues facing schools: Assuring program
22 accountability; improving effectiveness in state-level governance;
23 identifying efficiencies in district spending practices; providing
24 programs that assist students in meeting standards; helping students
25 stay in school; impacts of the certification requirements for teachers;
26 and appropriate preparation requirements for paraeducators.

27 (3) A comprehensive study of early learning shall include, but not
28 be limited to:

29 (a) Defining the populations being served, those that could be
30 served, and program access;

31 (b) Determining the state's role in supporting quality early
32 learning opportunities;

33 (c) Determining the state's role in training persons providing
34 services; and

35 (d) Providing for smooth transitions to K-12 programs.

36 (4) A comprehensive study of higher education shall include, but
37 not be limited to:

38 (a) Options for creating a new funding system;

1 (b) The number and distribution of enrollments at two and four-year
2 institutions of higher education needed to meet demographic and work
3 force training needs;

4 (c) Methods for determining the cost of instruction in various
5 program areas;

6 (d) The appropriate share of the cost of instruction that should be
7 funded through tuition, general fund-state subsidies, and financial
8 aid;

9 (e) Providing for smooth transitions from high school to college,
10 including dual credit options and adequate preparation for
11 college-level coursework;

12 (f) Options for using existing capacity in independent colleges and
13 universities;

14 (g) A review of higher education governance as it relates to fiscal
15 policy for higher education; and

16 (h) Options for coordinating capital and operating appropriations.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act expires July 1, 2007.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act is necessary for the immediate
19 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
20 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
21 immediately.

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