
Education Committee

HB 2781

Brief Description: Enhancing Washington state history and government course requirements for high school graduation.

Sponsors: Representatives Wallace, Chase, Sells, Conway, Morrell, Haigh, Hankins and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires enhancement of Washington state history and government courses to include content regarding commerce in Washington and the state's place in a global economy.

Hearing Date: 1/29/08

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

High school graduation requirements are established by the State Board of Education (SBE). Current graduation requirements include two and one-half credits in social studies. At least one credit of this total must cover United States (U.S.) history and government, and one-half credit is required in Washington state history and government. Study of the U.S. and Washington Constitutions is a requisite part of these courses. State law encourages, but does not require, that the Washington state history and government course include information about the history, culture, and government of the American Indian people.

Beginning with the 2008-09 school year, school districts require students in the 11th or 12th grades to complete at least one classroom based assessment in civics.

Summary of Bill:

Findings are made that it is important that students have a firm understanding of the state and its institutions, and that the current high school graduation requirements for course work in Washington state history and government should be enhanced to ensure students understand the complex issues of today's world and Washington's place in the global community. Beginning with

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the 2009-10 school year, school districts are required to ensure that Washington state history and government courses includes the following content:

- commerce in Washington state and Washington's place in the global economy;
- the Constitution of the state of Washington and Washington state politics;
- Washington state geography; and,
- Washington state history and culture.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 22, 2008.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.