
HOUSE BILL 1944

State of Washington 61st Legislature 2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Kagi, Walsh, Sullivan, Haigh, Carlyle, Quall,
Kenney, and Ormsby

Read first time 02/03/09. Referred to Committee on Early Learning &
Children's Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to developing and implementing a kindergarten
2 assessment; adding a new section to chapter 43.215 RCW; adding a new
3 section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.320
4 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that gathering quality
7 information about a child's knowledge, skills, and abilities when the
8 child enters kindergarten empowers parents to assist in their
9 children's learning processes and supports educators in developing
10 meaningful instruction for the child. The legislature further finds
11 that a uniform kindergarten assessment process can provide valuable
12 feedback to early learning programs engaged in quality improvement
13 efforts and will support cross-systems communication and promote
14 seamless transitions to kindergarten for children and families. The
15 legislature also finds that stakeholder involvement is an important
16 element of successful program development and implementation. The
17 legislature further finds that the early learning advisory council
18 includes a broad continuum of stakeholder representation. It is

1 therefore the intent of the legislature to direct the council to
2 convene a work group to develop and implement a uniform statewide
3 kindergarten assessment process.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 (1) The early learning advisory council, in collaboration with the
7 office of the superintendent of public instruction, shall convene a
8 work group to develop and implement a statewide kindergarten
9 assessment. The work group shall include representatives from school
10 districts, early learning providers, tribal councils, and organizations
11 or groups reflecting cultural and linguistic diversity. The purposes
12 of the assessment include:

13 (a) Providing parents and teachers with information about a child's
14 knowledge, skills, and abilities upon entering kindergarten in order to
15 inform instruction for the child;

16 (b) Facilitating communication with parents about what children are
17 learning and to empower parents to assist their children; and

18 (c) Providing feedback to early learning programs to enable
19 continuous improvement, support transitions, and improve alignment
20 between early learning programs and kindergarten classrooms. The
21 assessment shall not be used to screen or otherwise preclude children
22 from entering kindergarten if they are otherwise eligible for
23 enrollment.

24 (2) The kindergarten assessment shall be uniform across the state
25 and the assessment process must be:

26 (a) Developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically
27 relevant;

28 (b) Sufficiently flexible and adaptable to accommodate children
29 with disabilities and special needs;

30 (c) Cost-effective in a way that maximizes the benefit to students,
31 teachers, and parents and minimizes the use of resources that would
32 otherwise be available for instruction; and

33 (d) Designed to provide data and reporting using a single, easy-to-
34 use, web-based platform.

35 (3) The work group shall:

36 (a) Identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be assessed;

1 (b) Determine the extent of desirable alignment with early learning
2 standards and benchmarks;

3 (c) Define the assessment methodology and approaches to be
4 implemented for all children, including children from diverse cultures
5 and languages and children with disabilities and special needs;

6 (d) Specify data collection needs, tools, and procedures;

7 (e) Determine whether and how parents may opt out of the process
8 and forgo the assessment on behalf of a child;

9 (f) Identify a training plan and implementation strategy for use by
10 school districts and schools;

11 (g) Select pilot schools and districts; and

12 (h) Examine results of the pilot test and make adjustments as
13 necessary or appropriate to any element of the process before statewide
14 implementation.

15 (4) The kindergarten assessment shall be pilot tested in selected
16 schools and districts during the 2010-11 school year.

17 (5) The work group shall provide a status report to the governor
18 and the legislature not later than January 15, 2010.

19 (6) Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, all school districts
20 shall implement the statewide kindergarten assessment.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300
22 RCW to read as follows:

23 The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in
24 collaboration with the early learning advisory council, shall convene
25 a work group to develop and implement a kindergarten assessment
26 pursuant to section 4 of this act.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.320
28 RCW to read as follows:

29 (1) Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, all school districts
30 shall implement the statewide kindergarten assessment developed under
31 section 2 of this act.

32 (2) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to
33 implement this section.

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