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**HB 1276** - H AMD **215**

By Representatives Reykdal, Becker, Keiser

**ADOPTED 03/08/2013**

Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the following:

"NEW SECTION. **Sec.** The legislature finds that low-income youth are not only at higher risk of dropping out of school, they are also less likely to have dependable access to sufficient and nutritious food. Innovative partnerships between community-based organizations, schools, food banks, and farms or gardens offer promise to address both dropout prevention and food security for such youth, as well as enhancing health and nutrition in the surrounding community. These types of partnerships should be supported as pilot projects and carefully evaluated to assure that desired outcomes are met and to identify opportunities for expansion and replication in other parts of the state.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The dropout prevention through farm engagement pilot project is established for a three-year period beginning in the 2013-14 school year.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall select two pilot projects from school districts that agree to partner with community-based organizations, food banks, and farms or gardens to establish an alternative high school program targeted primarily to at-risk youth as provided in subsection (3) of this section. One of the selected projects must be a currently operating program with a record of success in engaging low-income and disengaged youth. The second selected project must create a new program in a different community. One of the projects must be selected from east of the crest of the Cascade mountains and one must be selected from west of the crest of the Cascade mountains. The selected projects must operate near farm-related activities and may include partnerships with farm-oriented student clubs and organizations. Participating in this pilot project may be incorporated into a student's culminating project to meet any community service requirements.

(3) Dropout prevention through farm engagement pilot projects must have the following characteristics:

(a) Primarily target low-income and disengaged youth who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of high school;

(b) Provide participating youth with opportunities for community service such as building food gardens for low-income families and work-based learning and employment training during the school year and during the summer through a farm or garden program;

(c) Provide participating youth with opportunities to earn core credits and elective credits toward high school graduation, including but not limited to science, health, and career and technical education credits;

(d) Offer youth development support and services to participating youth including social emotional learning, counseling, leadership training, and career and college guidance; and

(e) Improve food security for participating youth and the community through the farm or garden program.

(4) For each annual average full-time equivalent student enrolled in the pilot project, including enrollment during the summer months, the participating school district shall receive a basic education allocation as calculated under RCW 28A.150.260 and the omnibus appropriations act for a skill center student. The allocation under this subsection does not apply to a student's enrollment in courses of study that are not part of the pilot project. The allocations provided for the pilot project based on the basic education allocation as calculated under RCW 28A.150.260 and the omnibus appropriations act for a skills center student may not be used to provide participating youth with stipends. No funds from levies under RCW 84.52.0531 may be used to provide participating youth with stipends. Any stipends that are provided to participating youth through other funds must be prorated based on attendance, and youth who are absent for a day may not receive any stipend amount for that day.

(5) The purpose of the dropout prevention through farm engagement pilot project is to measure the effectiveness and cost-benefit of a particular alternative high school program on improving outcomes for at-risk youth. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall conduct a rigorous evaluation after the pilot projects have been operating for two years, including analysis of a statistical comparison group of students who did not participate in the project. The office shall submit the evaluation results to the education committees of the legislature by December 1, 2015, including recommendations for whether the pilot projects should be continued or replicated in other parts of the state.

(6) Outcomes to be measured under the pilot project include:

(a) Student GPA overall and in science;

(b) Number of earned credits in core courses and elective courses;

(c) Incidence of discipline issues;

(d) School attendance rates;

(e) High school graduation and GED attainment;

(f) Student health and nutrition;

(g) Acreage used for fresh produce;

(h) Volume of produce produced and made available to students, families, school district food programs, and community food banks; and

(i) Hours of community service activity by students.

(7) This section expires August 31, 2016."

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|  | EFFECT:  Makes the following changes to the underlying bill:   * Requires that one project is selected from west of the Cascades and one from east of the Cascades. * Requires that the projects operate near farm-related activities. * Allows partnerships with farm-related student clubs and organizations. * Allows participation in the pilot project to be incorporated into a student's culminating project to meet any community service requirements. * Specifies that the opportunities given to youth include employment training. * Prohibits allocations provided for the pilot project from being used for providing participating youth with stipends. * Prohibits funds from levies from being used to provide participating youth with stipends. * Requires that any stipends that are provided to participating youth from other funds be prorated based on attendance and students who are absent may not receive any stipend amount for that day. |

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