

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1248

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Education

**Title:** An act relating to supporting music education for young children in public schools.

**Brief Description:** Supporting music education for young children in public schools.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Maxwell, Pettigrew, Lytton, Stonier, Orwall, McCoy, Bergquist, Freeman, Tarleton, Morrell, Jinkins, Haigh, Goodman, Kirby, Upthegrove, Tharinger, Fey, Santos and Roberts.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Education: 1/29/13, 2/8/13, 2/14/13, 2/15/13 [DP].

#### **Brief Summary of Bill**

- Provides grants to implement a music education curriculum in state-funded all-day kindergarten classes, if funds are appropriated.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Stonier, Vice Chair; Bergquist, Haigh, Hunt, Lytton, Maxwell, McCoy, Orwall, Pollet and Seaquist.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Dahlquist, Ranking Minority Member; Magendanz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fagan, Hargrove, Hawkins, Hayes, Klippert, Parker, Pike and Warnick.

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

#### **Background:**

##### Music Education.

Providing students opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in "arts" is one of the statutory goals of Basic Education. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has

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developed Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) for grades kindergarten through 12 in four of the arts: music, dance, theatre, and visual arts. All school districts are required to provide instruction in the EALRs.

The approach to providing music education for students in elementary schools varies. Some school districts use an itinerant music teacher who travels from building to building during the week; others rely on the regular classroom teacher to provide music education. Others may have a dedicated music teacher for the building.

#### All-Day Kindergarten.

All school districts must provide half-day kindergarten for students. State funding to support all-day kindergarten is being phased in, beginning in schools with the highest percentage of low-income students. As of the 2012-13 school year, 222 schools received funding to implement all-day kindergarten, serving approximately 18,000 students.

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#### **Summary of Bill:**

If funds are appropriated for this purpose, the OSPI allocates grants for a Music Does Matter program to support music education for young children. Funds are allocated to schools with state-funded all-day kindergarten programs. If funds are not sufficient to cover all kindergarten classes, the OSPI allocates funds first to schools with the highest percentage of low-income students.

The grant funds must be used to purchase a standards-based music curriculum specially designed for preschool, kindergarten, and first grade students that may be taught by the regular classroom teacher. Grant recipients must implement this curriculum in state-funded all-day kindergarten classes.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

#### **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Music really does matter. It is a lifelong gift and should be part of every child's education. There are innovative programs to teach music education in the early grades and give those children the chance to become singers and play a musical instrument. This is not about replacing qualified music teachers. For the youngest students, this is about replacing no access to music at all.

Research has proven an undeniable link between music and academic achievement. Music is beneficial for developing phonological skills, which is the gold standard for pre-reading for kindergarteners. Music reinforces math and introduces social studies and geography. The most compelling reason to teach music, however, is that students love it. Not every child is going to be a musician, but they should be given the opportunity to express themselves in creative ways. Throughout the history of civilization, music has been a fundamental expression of culture.

(With concerns) There is agreement with the underlying intent. Teachers have long had the position that students deserve a rich, full curriculum in public schools that includes not only traditional coursework, but also the arts. Emphasis on academic rigor and testing, coupled with budget cuts, has led to elimination of music programs. However, the teaching of music has a specific pedagogy. This could be interpreted as implying that all music instruction in all grades could occur through a rote system rather than being delivered by a trained music teacher.

(Opposed) There is whole-hearted support for music education and the value that it adds to public schools. However, a music curriculum cannot be adequately taught by someone who is not a music specialist. There are supplemental programs designed for young children, but they need to be in the hands of trained music educators. Asking overworked classroom teachers to add music to their tasks is too much. All of the positive research about music education is based on having a highly qualified teacher providing the instruction. The bill also appears to favor a particular program. Schools should have flexibility to purchase the program of their choice.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Maxwell, prime sponsor; Rourke O'Brien, Children's Music Foundation; Emily Hume, Seattle Public Schools; Sinae Cheh, Morning Star; and Sayoko Kuwahara, Insight Regulatory Consulting, LLC.

(With concerns) Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association.

(Opposed) Bruce Caldwell and Mario Brown, Washington Music Educators Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.