

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1511

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As of March 20, 2015

**Title:** An act relating to teaching Washington's tribal history, culture, and government in the common schools.

**Brief Description:** Requiring Washington's tribal history, culture, and government to be taught in the common schools.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Ortiz-Self, Hurst, Appleton, Stokesbary, Goodman, Reykdal, Moscoso, Rodne, Pollet, Magendanz, Zeiger, Johnson, Tharinger, Tarleton, Fitzgibbon, Van De Wege, Santos, Wylie, Ormsby, Walkinshaw, Gregerson and Farrell).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/04/15, 62-34.

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/17/15.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** There are 29 federally recognized Indian tribes whose reservations are located in Washington. In a 2012 report, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) reported that 264 school districts in 2010 had between 1 and 1095 Native American or Alaskan Native students attending their schools.

Legislation enacted in 2005 encouraged OSPI to help school districts identify federally recognized Indian tribes within or near school districts and school districts were encouraged to do the following:

- incorporate curricula about tribal history, culture, and government of the nearest federally recognized tribe and work with tribes to develop such materials;
- collaborate with tribes to create materials, programs, and cultural exchanges; and
- collaborate with OSPI on curricular areas of tribal government and history that are statewide in nature.

Legislation enacted in 2005 directed OSPI to create the Office of Native Education (ONE). ONE was tasked with several duties including facilitating the development and implementation of curricula and instructional materials regarding native languages, culture

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and history, and the concept of tribal sovereignty. ONE posts curriculum and other resources for elementary, middle, and high schools on its website.

Washington's high school graduation requirements include a minimum of one-half credit of Course work in Washington State history and government. Courses designed to meet this requirement are encouraged to include information on the culture, history, and government of Washington Indian tribes.

**Summary of Bill:** The reference to the Centennial Accord in the intent section is removed. A reference is made to the “Since Time Immemorial” curriculum developed by OSPI and available online for free to schools and school districts. School districts must meet the requirements of the bill by using the curriculum developed and made available online by OSPI. The OSPI curriculum may be modified in order to incorporate elements that have a regionally specific focus or to incorporate the curriculum into existing curricular materials. The requirement that school districts near Washington's borders must work with tribes in Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia to develop curriculum is removed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This is the House companion bill to Senate Bill 5433, which this committee heard and the Senate passed to the House. It is critical to the success of all students, not just those who are a part of a tribal community, to learn about the history, culture, and government of our tribes. Ten years ago school districts were encouraged by the Legislature to collaborate with the tribes in or near the district but too few have done it. This bill requires school districts to use the work with tribes and teach the curriculum developed by OSPI. The bill in its current form has been improved from the original version and the changes mean that there should be no cost to school districts or the state since the OSPI curriculum is already available.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Ortiz-Self, prime sponsor; Dylan Doty, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe; Mike Moran, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation; Lucinda Young, WA Education Assn.; Deb Merle, WA State School Director's Assn.

**Persons Signed in to Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.