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## Education Committee

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### HB 1453

**Brief Description:** Promoting agriculture science education in schools.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Blake, Lytton, Chandler, Kretz, Hayes, Haler, Tarleton, Stanford and Santos.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to designate one or more high schools to serve as resources and examples of how to combine: (1) an interdisciplinary curriculum for agriculture science education; and (2) active partnerships with businesses and the local community to connect learning beyond the classroom.
- Creates the Agriculture Science Education Grant Program and specifies that grant funds may be used for professional development for certificated instructors, consumable laboratory equipment, laboratory equipment, and administrative costs.

**Hearing Date:** 2/6/17

**Staff:** Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

#### Background:

Legislation enacted in 2010 (ch. 238, Laws of 2010, enacted as House Bill 2621) expressed a legislative commitment to supporting multiple strategies to improve teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in the state's public schools. The 2010 legislation directed the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to designate up to three middle schools and up to three high schools to serve as lighthouse schools.

As specified in the legislation, these lighthouse schools would serve as best practice examples and provide technical assistance and advice to other schools creating an alternative learning environment focused on STEM.

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Designated lighthouse schools are awarded grants of up to \$20,000. Since 2011, 32 schools and four school districts have been designated under the STEM lighthouse program.

A specific curriculum for agricultural science education (CASE) has been developed through a diverse group of public and private partners. Use of the CASE curriculum requires teachers to successfully complete 50 to 100 hours of intense professional development per course. A limited number of schools in Washington have teachers that have completed CASE certification requirements

### **Summary of Bill:**

To the extent funds appropriated for this purpose, the SPI must designate one or more high schools to serve as resources and examples of how to combine:

- an interdisciplinary curriculum for agriculture science education with a strong focus on STEM; and
- active partnerships with businesses and the local community to connect learning beyond the classroom.

The designated high school or schools must serve as lighthouse programs and provide technical assistance and advice to other schools and communities in the initial stages of creating a curriculum for agriculture science education. The designated schools must have proven experience with the curriculum and a willingness to serve as a model program.

In implementing the lighthouse programs, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must work with the designated school or schools to:

- publicize the models of best practices in STEM instruction used by the designated schools; and
- encourage other schools and communities to work with the designated schools to replicate similar models.

A curriculum for agriculture science education lighthouse account is created, with expenditures authorized by the SPI. The purpose of the account is to support schools designated as lighthouse schools in serving as resources to other schools and communities interested in replicating similar models. Revenues to the account may include gifts from the private sector, federal funds, any appropriations made by the Legislature, or revenues from other sources. Grants to the designated lighthouse schools and their administration must be paid from the account.

### Agriculture Science Education Grant Program.

The agriculture science education grant program is created. The creation of the program is subject to the availability of funds for this purpose. In accordance with the grant program, the OSPI must establish and publish funding criteria for agriculture science education equipment and professional development grants to school districts. The OSPI, in establishing the funding criteria, must solicit and consider comments from members of the public and from persons with relevant educational and agricultural expertise.

Eligible uses of the grant funds include, but are not limited to:

- professional development for certificated instructors implementing a curriculum for an agriculture science education program;

- consumable laboratory equipment supplies needed for the adoption or continuation of agriculture science education curricula;
- equipment commonly used in the agricultural industry with sensors that register scientific data, including, but not limited to, carbon dioxide levels, soil moisture, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity; and
- administrative costs directly attributable to the adoption or continuation of agriculture science education curricula.

Grants awarded for professional development may not exceed \$3,000 per instructor per school year. Grants awarded in accordance for other purposes may not exceed \$15,000 per school district per school year. Recipients of funds may reapply for subsequent grants from the agriculture science education grant program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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