AN ACT Relating to establishing a comprehensive initiative to increase learning opportunities and improve educational outcomes in climate science literacy; amending RCW 28A.230.020; adding a new section to chapter 28A.415 RCW; creating a new section; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 1. (1) The legislature finds that knowledge, skills, and opportunities in science literacy, emphasizing climate science, should be increased for all students in Washington. The legislature intends to foster capacity between and among the educational sectors to enable continuous and sustainable growth of the learning and teaching of science literacy including climate science literacy. The legislature intends to foster high quality programs to increase the number of students in the kindergarten through twelfth grade pipeline who are prepared and aspire to continue to apply their understanding of how the world works within and across science disciplines to improve the social, economic, and environmental conditions of the local and global community, whether it be at a college, university, or in the workforce.

(2) The legislature also finds that critical knowledge and innovative strategies for effectively teaching climate science can be
strengthened by qualified community-based organizations. Community-based organizations are uniquely positioned to assist formal K–12 educators to infuse locally relevant questions, problems, issues, and opportunities so that students learn more about their community's environment, assume a sense of stewardship to conserving fragile ecosystems in a changing climate, and develop empathy for nonhuman organisms. Community-based organizations will extend the classroom learning by partnering and collaborating with school districts to offer teachers learning experiences that can be implemented easily with their students across the K–12 spectrum.

Sec. 2. RCW 28A.230.020 and 2013 c 23 s 48 are each amended to read as follows:

All common schools shall give instruction in reading, handwriting, orthography, written and mental arithmetic, geography, the history of the United States, English grammar, physiology and hygiene with special reference to the effects of alcohol and drug abuse on the human system, science with special reference to the environmental and sustainability standards, and such other studies as may be prescribed by rule of the superintendent of public instruction. All teachers shall stress the importance of the cultivation of manners, the fundamental principles of honesty, honor, industry, and economy, the minimum requisites for good health including the beneficial effect of physical exercise and methods to prevent exposure to and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, and the worth of kindness to all living creatures and the land. The prevention of child abuse may be offered as part of the curriculum in the common schools.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 28A.415 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the superintendent of public instruction must establish and manage a grant program for nonprofit community-based organizations and educational service districts to create and implement plans to provide teacher training in next generation science standards, including climate science standards. In establishing and managing the grant program, the superintendent of public instruction must use available learning resources and share
training resources as open educational resources in accordance with
RCW 28A.300.803.

(2) Grant awards must be prioritized for comprehensive and
targeted comprehensive schools and communities historically
underserved by climate science education. These communities may
include, but are not limited to, tribal nations, including tribal
compact schools, migrant students, schools with high free and
reduced-price lunch populations, rural and remote schools, students
in alternative learning education environments, students of color,
English language learner students, and students receiving special
education services.

(3) When selecting and prioritizing grant recipients, the
superintendent of public instruction may consider the applicant's
success in providing Washington teachers with professional
development related to student progress in achieving successful
understandings of climate science standards.

(4) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Climate science" means the science and engineering
practices, cross-cutting concepts, and disciplinary core ideas found
in the Washington state science standards that lead a student toward
climate science literacy, specifically, and science literacy, more
generally.

(b) To provide focus and clarity to efforts to increase learning
opportunities and improve educational outcomes in science and
sustainability literacy with an emphasis on climate science, "climate
science literacy" means an understanding of one's influence on
climate and climate's influence on individuals, society, and the
environment. A climate-literate person can: (i) Understand the
essential principles of the earth's climate system; (ii) know how to
assess scientifically credible information about climate; (iii)
communicate about climate and climate change in a meaningful way; and
(iv) make informed and responsible decisions with regard to actions
that may affect climate.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. This act is necessary for the immediate
preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
effect July 1, 2019.

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