

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1617

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Aligning state and school holidays.

Sponsors: House Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations (originally sponsored by Representatives Morgan, Leavitt, Johnson, J., Ramel, Callan, Davis, Taylor, Santos, Simmons, Riccelli, Ormsby and Harris-Talley).

House Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations
Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

Background:

State Holidays.

Washington recognizes 11 days as state legal holidays: New Year's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Presidents' Day; Memorial Day; Juneteenth; Independence Day; Labor Day; Veterans' Day; Thanksgiving Day; Native American Heritage Day; and Christmas Day.

Another 17 days are recognized by the Legislature, but they are not considered legal holidays. Some of those days commemorate specific events, such as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day. Other days commemorate groups of people, such as Korean-American Day, or certain ideas, such as Human Trafficking Awareness Day and Public Lands Day.

School Holidays.

Washington recognizes 10 days as school holidays: New Year's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Presidents' Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Veterans' Day; Thanksgiving Day; Native American Heritage Day; and Christmas Day.

Juneteenth.

On June 19, 1865, more than two years after the effective date of the Emancipation Proclamation, people in Galveston, Texas finally learned that the Civil War had ended and enslaved people had been freed. June 19 has subsequently been celebrated as Juneteenth or

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Emancipation Day to commemorate the abolishment of slavery and recognize the contributions of Black/African Americans to society. In 2021 Juneteenth became a state holiday in Washington. That act did not, however, explicitly provide that Juneteenth is also a school holiday.

Summary:

All state holidays are also school holidays on which school may not be taught. The list of specific school holidays is removed.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	88	8
Senate	45	3

Effective: July 1, 2022