

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1273

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to high school and beyond planning.

Brief Description: Concerning high school and beyond planning.

Sponsors: Representatives Berg, Reed and Pollet; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/31/23, 2/9/23 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Establishes new and revised requirements for High School and Beyond Plans (HSBPs) that are a prerequisite for graduating from a public high school.
- Prescribes duties for the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) related to transitioning and adopting a statewide online platform for HSBPs.
- Requires school districts to transition to the statewide online platform within two years of its adoption by the OSPI.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Shavers, Vice Chair; Rude, Ranking Minority Member; McEntire, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Callan, Eslick, Harris, McClintock, Ortiz-Self, Pollet, Sandlin, Steele, Stonier and Timmons.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Graduation Requirements.

To qualify for a high school diploma, public school students must satisfy credit and subject area requirements established by the Legislature and the State Board of Education (SBE), fulfill any locally established requirements, complete a High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP), and meet the requirements of at least one graduation pathway option.

Although graduation requirements are largely developed at the state level and subject to frequent revisions, determinations about student compliance with statewide requirements are made at the local level.

High School and Beyond Plans.

General Requirements. Each student must complete an HSBP. The purpose of the HSBP is to guide the student's high school experience and inform course taking that is aligned with the student's goals for education or training and career after high school.

The HSBP must be initiated for students during grades 7 or 8 and must contain specific, minimum elements prescribed in statute, including the identification of career and education goals, information about dual credit programs, a four-year plan for high school course taking, and certain scholarship and financial aid information. For students who are not on track to graduate, the HSBP must identify available interventions and academic support, courses, or both, that are designed to enable those students to meet graduation requirements. The HSBP must also be updated to reflect student results on statewide high school assessments and revised as necessary for changing interests, goals, and needs.

School districts are encouraged to involve parents and guardians in the process of developing and updating the HSBP, and the HSBP must be provided to the students' parents or guardians in their native language if that language is one of the two most frequently spoken non-English languages of students in the district.

In addition to statutory requirements, school districts may establish local HSBP requirements that serve the needs and interests of their students, but all determinations of whether a student has met the requirements for an HSBP remain at the local level.

Electronic Platform. Legislation adopted in 2019 required school districts, beginning in the 2020-21 school year, to ensure that an electronic HSBP platform is available to all students who are obligated to have an HSBP.

The 2019 legislation directed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), subject to specific legislative funding, to facilitate the creation of a list of available electronic platforms for the HSBP. Platforms that are eligible to be included on the list

must meet delineated requirements, including: enabling students to create and revise their HSBPs; granting parents, guardians, educators, and counselors appropriate access to students' HSBPs; and allowing for portability between platforms for students that transfer.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In addition to its constitutional charge of supervising all matters pertaining to public schools, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and its office has numerous and broad responsibilities prescribed in statute, including:

- making rules and regulations necessary for the administration of public education requirements;
- preparing courses of study and other materials and books for the discharge of education duties;
- fulfilling financial responsibilities, including distributing legislatively allocated funds to districts for the operation of the public school system, and awarding numerous state and federally funded grants; and
- satisfying numerous reporting and other duties assigned by the Legislature.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

General Requirements. New and revised requirements for HSBPs are established. For example, the modified requirements direct school districts to:

- involve parents and legal guardians to the greatest extent feasible in the process of developing and updating the HSBP;
- provide the HSBP to the student and the students' parents or legal guardians in a language the student and parents or guardians understand;
- annually provide students in grades 8 through 12 and their parents or legal guardians with comprehensive information about the graduation pathway options offered by the district; and
- notify parents or legal guardians of students who have not met assessment standards or are behind in the completion of graduation requirements about opportunities for academic interventions, academic supports, and courses, preferably through a parent conference and at least annually, until the student is on track to graduate.

School districts are also strongly encouraged to partner with student serving community-based organizations that support career exploration and preparation for postsecondary and career pathways. These partnerships may include HSBP coordination and planning, data sharing agreements, and secure access to individual student HSBPs.

Requirements governing the minimum elements that must be included in an HSBP are modified. For example, the HSBP element must include:

- identification of secondary and postsecondary education and training goals;
- information on the potential impacts of their course selections on postsecondary opportunities;

- an identification of available career and technical education equivalency courses that can satisfy core subject area graduation requirements;
- an identification, if applicable, of career and technical education and paid work experience opportunities that can lead to technical college certifications and apprenticeships; and
- an identification, if applicable, of opportunities for partial credit accrual to eliminate barriers for on-time grade level progression and graduation.

Statewide Online Platform. The OSPI is directed to facilitate the transition to, and adoption of, a statewide online platform (platform) for the HSBP. In meeting this directive, the OSPI must conduct a cost analysis and feasibility study to inform development or adoption of a platform. The analysis must:

- include an inventory of existing vendors who meet applicable platform criteria;
- include an estimate of the anticipated costs associated with the development of a platform that incorporates the required features and capabilities;
- address the need for technical assistance and professional development to support the transition to the platform; and
- be submitted to the Governor, and the education policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature by September 2024.

In implementing duties for transitioning to a platform, the OSPI must seek input from the SBE, educators, school and district administrators, school counselors, families, students, higher education, and community partners who support students' career and college preparation.

The platform must include specified features and capabilities to ensure equity in HSBP implementation and engagement throughout the state. These features and capabilities are:

- full integration between HSBP course planning capabilities and the most commonly used student information data platforms;
- college, career, and aptitude assessments that provide relevant career exploration recommendations to students;
- capabilities permitting students, parents or legal guardians, applicable school district personnel, and approved community partners who support students' career and college preparation to develop support and recovery plans for students, if needed;
- accessibility options for students needing accommodations, including visual aids and voice dictation;
- document printing capabilities that align with student and staff needs;
- the ability to retrieve student course and grade information;
- sufficient flexibility for incorporating differing and locally determined school district requirements; and
- the ability to grant secure access to the platform to student serving community-based providers that support career exploration and postsecondary and career pathways.

In meeting platform transition requirements, the OSPI must also address how the platform

will align with school to postschool transition plans for students with an individualized education program transition plan.

Transition to Statewide Platform. Subject to funding requirements and after cost analysis and feasibility requirements have been met, the OSPI must develop and adopt a platform. Within two years of adoption of a platform by the OSPI, school districts must transition to the platform.

The OSPI may partner with community and regional networks and organizations that support students' career and college preparation in the analysis, selection, and implementation of a platform.

The OSPI must develop guidance, provide technical assistance, and support the facilitation of statewide professional development for school districts and partner organizations in transitioning to the platform.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill changes the original bill by:

- making numerous revisions to HSBP requirements that are added and modified in the underlying bill, including:
 - specifying that HSBPs must be updated with the assistance of staff;
 - removing references to language access policies and procedures that are required by current law;
 - encouraging school districts to partner with student-serving community-based organizations that support career exploration and preparation for postsecondary and career pathways, and specifying that these partnerships may include HSBP coordination and planning, data sharing agreements, and secure access to individual student HSBPs;
 - obligating the HSBPs to include an identification of secondary and post-secondary education and training goals; and
 - requiring the academic plan for course taking in the HSPB to include an identification, if applicable, of career and technical education and paid work experience opportunities that can lead to technical college certifications and apprenticeships;
- making numerous revisions to requirements obligating the OSPI to facilitate the transition to and adoption of a statewide online platform for HSBPs, including:
 - requiring the statewide platform to include the ability to grant secure access to student-serving community-based providers that support career exploration and post-secondary and career pathways;
 - requiring the OSPI to develop guidance, provide technical assistance, and support the facilitation of statewide professional development for school districts and partner organizations in transitioning to the statewide platform;
 - authorizing the OSPI to partner with community and regional networks and

- organizations that support students' career and college preparation in the analysis, selection, and implementation of a statewide platform;
- requiring the OSPI to seek input from the Washington Student Achievement Council and defined institutions of higher education;
 - removing references to "a statewide tool;" and
 - making various content edits, such as changing "The ability to print and download high school and beyond plans in one document, without requiring students to access multiple screens" to "Document printing capabilities that align with student and staff needs;"
- requiring the OSPI, when identifying best practices for HSPBs that districts and schools may employ, to consult with institutions of higher education that are authorized to participate in specified student financial aid programs;
 - removing sections that do not require cross-reference citation amendments;
 - making other formatting and conforming changes; and
 - adding intent language.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The purpose of high school is to prepare our students for success. The state does not have a centralized electronic platform for HSPBs and many students are unaware of HSBP requirements. This bill will initiate the transition to a common online platform for HSBPs. This will allow additional students to access a tool for creating HSBPs. This bill will also help transferring students and will decrease the responsibilities of school districts to identify and fund individual HSBP platforms.

This bill is a response to the inconsistencies of the HSPB platforms that are being used. Proponents of the bill hope that school districts will support the concept and contribute ideas for an online platform. Amendments to strengthen and clarify the bill's provisions are being developed.

The bill should acknowledge the work that is being done with HSBP platforms by school districts. Some school districts have found platforms that work for their needs. There is no need to start from scratch, and supporters are working with districts that have found platforms that work for them. Some of those platforms include Career Technical Education components and grade-by-grade checklists.

The enhancements to HSPB requirements and the creation of an online platform are good ideas. There are concerns about implementation timelines and they should be extended by at least two years. School districts should receive one-time funding to assist with the transition to the new platform.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Some districts have already completed the process of reviewing and selecting HSBP platforms. A transition to a new statewide platform could create disruptions. Consideration should be given to the implementation efforts of school districts, including the related training that those districts provided.

Some districts begin implementing HSBP requirements in the grade 6. It is not the data that is important, but the personnel who support it. Training, time, and staff supports are needed to make this proposal work.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative April Berg, prime sponsor; Natalya Yudkovsky, Washington State Parent Teacher Association; Jenee Myers Twitchell, Washington STEM; and Jenny Plaja, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

(Other) Kate Atvars; and Debbie Reeder, West Valley School District.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.