
Education Committee

SSB 5626

Brief Description: Expanding and enhancing media literacy and digital citizenship in K-12 education.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Liias, Warnick, Hunt, Nobles, Pedersen and Wilson, C.).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs, subject to appropriation, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish a program to expand the capability of school districts to integrate media literacy and digital citizenship into given subject areas through teacher support.
- Establishes a grant program to support school district and educational service district activities related to professional development on the topics of media literacy and digital citizenship, as well as integrating these topics into other subject areas.

Hearing Date: 3/13/23

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship Grants.

In 2021 legislation was enacted that directed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to establish a grant program to support media literacy and digital citizenship through school district leadership teams.

The OSPI defines "media literacy" as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act

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using a variety of forms of communication. Statute defines "digital citizenship" to include the norms of appropriate, responsible, and healthy behavior related to current technology use, including digital and media literacy, ethics, etiquette, and security. The term "digital citizenship" also includes the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, develop, produce, and interpret media, as well as internet safety and cyberbullying prevention and response.

For a school district to qualify for a media literacy and digital citizenship grant, the grant proposal must provide that the grantee create a district leadership team that develops a curriculum unit on media literacy or digital citizenship, or both, that may be integrated into social studies, English language arts, or health. In developing the curriculum unit, school districts are encouraged to work with school district teacher-librarians or a school district library information technology program, if applicable. The developed curriculum unit must be made available as an open educational resource. Grant recipients are expected to evaluate the curriculum unit they develop.

Subject to appropriation, up to 10 grants per year must be awarded for establishing media literacy professional learning communities with the purpose of sharing best practices in media literacy. These grant recipients must develop an online presence for their community to model new strategies and to share ideas, challenges, and successful practices. These grant recipients must also attend group meetings convened by the OSPI for the purpose of sharing best practices and strategies in media literacy education. Additional activities permitted for the use of these grants include organizing teachers from across a school district to develop new instructional strategies and to share successful strategies, sharing successful practices across a group of school districts, and facilitating coordination between educational service districts and school districts to provide training.

At least one grant awarded in each award cycle must be for developing and using a curriculum that contains a focus on synthetic media as a major component. "Synthetic media" is defined as an image, an audio recording, or a video recording of an individual's appearance, speech, or conduct that has been intentionally manipulated with the use of digital technology in a manner to create a realistic but false image, audio, or video.

A school district that receives a grant is not prohibited from receiving a grant in subsequent grant cycles. The OSPI may accept gifts, grants, or endowments from public or private sources for the grant program, which expires July 31, 2031.

State Learning Standard Development, Use, and Revision.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is responsible for developing and revising the state learning standards that identify the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be able to do based on four basic education learning goals established by the Legislature. There are learning standards available in 14 content areas. The standards for content areas named in goals one and two are required to be taught in public schools, for example English language arts, social studies, and health. Standards for content areas named in goals three and four must only be taught if the subject is offered, for example educational

technology.

Prior to developing, revising, or adopting state learning standards, the OSPI must submit any proposed state learning standards to the State Board of Education (SBE) in writing for review at an SBE meeting. The SBE may provide a response to the OSPI's proposal for consideration prior to final adoption. In addition, the SBE may propose new or revised state learning standards to the OSPI and the OSPI must respond to the SBE's proposal in writing.

When the OSPI proposes revisions to the state learning standards, it must also, upon request, provide opportunities for the Legislature to review the proposed revisions before they are adopted.

Educational Technology Learning Standards.

Goal three of the basic education learning goals requires schools to integrate technology literacy and fluency in their curriculum. In 2018 the OSPI adopted the 2016 Technology Standards for Students released by the International Society for Technology in Education as its state learning standards for educational technology. The OSPI states that, among other things, these standards complement statewide efforts to enhance instruction in digital citizenship and media literacy.

Digital Citizenship, Internet Safety, and Media Literacy Policy and Procedures.

School districts are required to annually review their policy and procedures on electronic resources and internet safety. In reviewing and amending the policy and procedures, a school district must involve specified community members, consider best practices and existing resources for instruction in these topics, and consider customizing the Washington State School Directors' Association's model policy and procedure on this topic.

Resources on Digital Citizenship, Media Literacy, and Internet Safety.

The OSPI is required to identify and develop open educational resources to support digital citizenship, media literacy, and internet safety in schools. These resources are maintained on a web-based location that also includes links to recommended successful practices and resources to support digital citizenship, media literacy, and internet safety.

Summary of Bill:

Program to Integrate Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship into Other Subjects.

Subject to appropriation, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must establish a program to expand the capability of school districts to integrate media literacy and digital citizenship into given subject areas through teacher support. As part of this program, the OSPI must assemble a cadre of subject-area teachers who will work to help ensure media literacy is effectively integrated into their respective subject areas under any revised state learning standards.

The program must operate in a two-year cycle, under the following schedule:

1. In year one, the program must support a cadre of teachers in analyzing how the full range of media literacy skills fall within current state learning standards, including the identification of gaps in learning standards where media literacy skills are not addressed.
2. In year two, the program must support a cadre of teachers in becoming trainers on media literacy within their given subject areas. These teachers must develop and deliver professional development focused on the ways in which any revised state learning standards will affect teaching and learning within their given subject areas. The professional development must include instruction to other teachers and integrate feedback and suggestions in developing future training sessions.

Teachers in the program will receive a stipend for their participation that may vary based on the role of the teacher in either developing and delivering professional development or participating in training sessions. Funds equivalent to these stipends may be disbursed to school districts for the purpose of substitute teachers or other school district costs associated with a teacher's absence due to participation in the program.

The OSPI must establish and publish criteria for participation in this program, including teacher qualifications, participation guidelines, and reimbursement procedures.

Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship Grants.

The media literacy and digital citizenship grant program is modified and bifurcated. The purpose of the programs is changed from "supporting media literacy and digital citizenship through school district leadership teams" to "supporting media literacy and digital citizenship development and integration in school districts."

The grant program for school districts to develop curriculum units on media literacy, digital citizenship, or both through district-created leadership teams is expanded to allow these topics to be integrated into any subject areas, rather than only into social studies, English language arts, or health. The developed curriculum units must be made available as an open educational resource.

A new grant program is established, subject to appropriation. Under this program, grants may be awarded to school districts or educational service districts for the following purposes:

1. developing strategies to utilize existing funding in integrating media literacy into various subject areas;
2. organizing learning sessions with experts in the field of media literacy and digital citizenship;
3. professional development on issues of media literacy including on any revised state learning standards created by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction that include media literacy;
4. ongoing support to school districts in considering actions to ensure successful implementation of any revised state learning standards that include the areas of either media literacy, digital citizenship, or both; and
5. acquiring resources on media literacy instruction and integration.

If a school district or educational service district plans to partner with a nonprofit for the purpose of assisting in the administration of a grant it is applying for, the intent to partner with a nonprofit must be included in the grant proposal.

The expiration date of the grant programs is July 31, 2033.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 24, 2023.

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