

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5813

As of January 17, 2024

Title: An act relating to mandating instruction on agricultural literacy for students in grades seven through 12.

Brief Description: Mandating instruction on agricultural literacy for students in grades seven through 12.

Sponsors: Senators Dozier, Braun, Lias, Muzzall, Torres, Warnick and Wilson, J..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/17/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires school districts to offer instruction in agricultural literacy beginning no later than the 2025-26 school year.
- Requires that instruction in agricultural literacy be offered each student at least once before completing grade 12.
- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to make curricular resources related to agricultural literacy available in a library of openly licensed courseware.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

Background: School Curriculum in Washington State. Common schools in Washington are subject to curriculum requirements set by state law. These requirements include that all common schools provide instruction in, among other things, reading, arithmetic, and science with special reference to the environment. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) may prescribe other required curriculum areas by rule.

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.

State law also prescribes various areas in which school districts must offer instruction or are encouraged to do so. Examples of these areas include instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, sex trafficking awareness and prevention, and the Holocaust.

Summary of Bill: Beginning no later than the 2025-26 school year, school districts must offer instruction in agricultural literacy. Instruction may be offered beginning in grade seven, but each student must be offered the instruction at least once before completing grade 12. Instruction, at the discretion of the school or school district, may be integrated into a relevant course, or a course may be repurposed to include the instruction.

To the extent possible, OSPI must make curricular resources related to agricultural literacy available in their library of openly licensed courseware.

For the purposes of the bill, "agricultural literacy" is defined as an understanding of how the agricultural industry works including: where food comes from; who grows it; agriculture's effect on the economy; the environment; technology; lifestyle; and its relationship to livestock.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 8, 2024.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Our state can do a better job of teaching agriculture in public schools. Agriculture has a profound effect on our state's economy, environment, and technology. We have moved so far from understanding where our food has come from. In 2022, agriculture contributed over \$13 billion to the state economy.

OTHER: Additional staff requirements should be accompanied with additional investments in staff. Principals and teachers are concerned about support for implementation.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Perry Dozier, Prime Sponsor.

OTHER: Roz Thompson, Association of Washington School Principals; Nasue Nishida, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.