
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2636

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Rude, Pollet, Marshall, and Santos)

READ FIRST TIME 02/04/26.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring independent, balanced, and objective
2 reviews of the performance, operations, and funding of the state's
3 public education system; adding a new section to chapter 28A.655 RCW;
4 and creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that
7 Washington's system of public education is foundational to the
8 state's economic vitality, civic health, and long-term prosperity.
9 Over time, the legislature has enacted numerous policy requirements
10 affecting public schools and school districts, many of which have
11 imposed operational, administrative, and instructional obligations.

12 (2) The legislature further finds that not all policy
13 requirements have been accompanied by sufficient or sustainable
14 funding, and that cumulative mandates, particularly those enacted
15 without full fiscal consideration, divert resources away from core
16 educational priorities and student learning.

17 (3) The legislature, therefore, intends to require independent,
18 balanced, and objective reviews of the performance, operations, and
19 funding of the state's K-12 public education system. The purpose of
20 the reviews is to evaluate whether existing statutory requirements
21 are achieving their intended outcomes, are improving student success,

1 remain relevant and effective, and represent an efficient use of
2 public resources.

3 (4) The legislature also intends that the reviews required by
4 this act inform future legislative decision making by identifying
5 requirements that should be maintained, modified, consolidated, or
6 eliminated, and by highlighting instances where obligations imposed
7 on schools and school districts were enacted without appropriate or
8 sufficient funding. These ongoing reviews are intended to support
9 alignment between policy, performance, and funding in Washington's
10 public education system.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.655
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 (1) The public education review advisory council is established.

14 (2) The council has 15 members as follows:

15 (a) The state auditor or the auditor's designee, who is a
16 nonvoting member;

17 (b) A chair of the joint legislative audit and review committee
18 or a chair's designee, who is a nonvoting member;

19 (c) The chairs of each of the two largest caucuses of the senate
20 and the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives shall
21 each appoint a member. None of these appointees may be members of the
22 legislature;

23 (d) The superintendent of public instruction or the
24 superintendent's designee;

25 (e) The chair of the state board of education or the chair's
26 designee;

27 (f) The executive director of the Washington state charter school
28 commission or the executive director's designee;

29 (g) One school principal, selected by an organization
30 representing public school principals;

31 (h) One school director, selected by an organization representing
32 public school directors;

33 (i) Two educators, one from a public primary school and one from
34 a public secondary school, both selected by an organization
35 representing public school educators;

36 (j) One representative selected by an organization representing
37 public school business professionals; and

38 (k) One representative selected by an association representing
39 public school administrators.

1 (3) Persons appointed by the caucus chairs should be individuals
2 who represent a balance of perspectives and constituencies and have
3 an understanding of education policy, the funding of public schools,
4 and the delivery of elementary and secondary education to public
5 school students. These appointees should have knowledge and expertise
6 in pedagogical practices, performance management, fiscal analysis,
7 and other fields relevant to public education.

8 (4) The council shall elect a chair from among its members to
9 serve for a term of two years. Chairs may be reappointed to serve
10 more than one term.

11 (5) Members appointed under subsections (2)(c) and (g) through
12 (k) of this section serve for terms of four years, with the terms
13 expiring on June 30th on the fourth year of the term. However, in the
14 case of the initial terms, the members appointed by the chairs of
15 senate caucuses shall serve four-year terms, and the members
16 appointed by the chairs of house of representatives caucuses shall
17 serve three-year terms, with each of the terms expiring on June 30th
18 of the applicable year. Appointees may be reappointed to serve more
19 than one term.

20 (6) The joint legislative audit and review committee shall
21 provide staff support to the council. The state board of education
22 and the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
23 provide necessary support and information to the joint legislative
24 audit and review committee. Staff support must include administrative
25 assistance for the chair and the council as a body, but does not
26 include individualized administrative assistance to councilmembers.

27 (7)(a) On or before October 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the
28 council shall make recommendations to the joint legislative audit and
29 review committee for the examination of specific policy requirements
30 and funding provisions for public schools enacted by the Washington
31 state legislature. The recommendations, for purposes of guiding the
32 review work performed by the joint legislative audit and review
33 committee, must be in a prioritized order.

34 (b) Questions of the joint legislative audit and review committee
35 about implementing the recommendations provided under this subsection
36 (7), including questions about the scope or sequencing of
37 recommendations, must be submitted to the council for its resolution
38 and response.

39 (8) The joint legislative audit and review committee, for each
40 policy requirement or funding provision recommended for review, or

1 for as many as the committee has workload capacity to accommodate and
2 in the priority order established by the council, must evaluate
3 whether the policy requirement or provided funding:

4 (a) Achieves the goal or outcome expressed or reasonably inferred
5 by the applicable legislation;

6 (b) Improves student outcomes or performance;

7 (c) Has a positive cost-benefit result;

8 (d) Has ongoing relevance and education value; and

9 (e) Should be maintained, modified, or repealed.

10 (9) The council shall meet at least three times each year and may
11 hold additional meetings at the call of the chair or by a majority
12 vote of the voting members of the council. The members of the council
13 must be compensated in accordance with RCW 43.03.220 and reimbursed
14 for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.
15 Council meetings occurring before July 1, 2027, must be held
16 remotely.

17 (10) Beginning November 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the
18 joint legislative audit and review committee shall, in accordance
19 with RCW 43.01.036, issue a report to the governor and the
20 appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature on
21 examinations conducted in accordance with this section during the
22 preceding year.

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