
SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2636

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

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

READ FIRST TIME 02/09/26.

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

19 (6) Members selected under subsections (2)(g) through (k) of this
20 section serve on the council for durations determined by the
21 organizations they represent.

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

29 (8)(a) On or before October 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the
30 council shall make recommendations to the joint legislative audit and
31 review committee for the examination of specific policy requirements
32 and funding provisions for public schools enacted by the Washington
33 state legislature. The office of the superintendent of public
34 instruction shall provide information and assistance to the council
35 for making recommendations required by this section as the council
36 may reasonably request. The recommendations, for purposes of guiding
37 the review work performed by the joint legislative audit and review
38 committee, must be in a prioritized order.

39 (b) Questions of the joint legislative audit and review committee
40 about implementing the recommendations provided under this subsection

1 (8), including questions about the scope or sequencing of
2 recommendations, must be submitted to the council for its resolution
3 and response.

4 (9) Subject to its approved work plan and available resources,
5 the joint legislative audit and review committee shall determine the
6 timing and scope of any evaluations of policy requirements or funding
7 provisions recommended by the council for review. In making this
8 determination, the committee shall consider its overall workload,
9 other legislative assignments, and the priorities identified by the
10 council.

11 (10) The joint legislative audit and review committee may also
12 determine that its available capacity is insufficient to undertake
13 new reviews recommended by the council in a particular year. If this
14 occurs, the committee must notify the council and provide information
15 regarding when capacity may become available for future reviews.

16 (11) In performing reviews under this section, the joint
17 legislative audit and review committee must evaluate whether the
18 policy requirement or provided funding:

19 (a) Achieves the goal or outcome expressed or reasonably inferred
20 by the applicable legislation;

21 (b) Improves student outcomes or performance;

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

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

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

25 (12) The council shall meet at least annually and may hold
26 additional meetings at the call of the chair or by a majority vote of
27 the voting members of the council. The members of the council must be
28 compensated in accordance with RCW 43.03.220 and reimbursed for
29 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.
30 Council meetings occurring before July 1, 2027, must be held
31 remotely.

32 (13) Beginning November 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the
33 joint legislative audit and review committee shall, in accordance
34 with RCW 43.01.036, issue a report to the governor and the
35 appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature on
36 examinations conducted in accordance with this section during the
37 preceding year.

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