S-3645.1

SENATE BILL 5922

State of Washington 69th Legislature 2026 Regular Session

By Senators Wellman, Hansen, Frame, and Nobles

Prefiled 12/19/25. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

AN ACT Relating to transportation vehicle fund transfers; and amending RCW 28A.160.200 and 28A.160.130.

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

Sec. 1. RCW 28A.160.200 and 1995 1st sp.s. c 10 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The superintendent shall develop a reimbursement schedule to pay districts for the cost of student transportation vehicles purchased after September 1, 1982. While it is the responsibility of each district to select and pay for each student transportation vehicle purchased by the district, each district shall be paid a sum based on the category of vehicle, anticipated lifetime of vehicles of this category, and state reimbursement rate for the category plus inflation as recognized by the reimbursement schedule established in this section as set by the superintendent. Categories and reimbursement rates of vehicles shall be those established under RCW 28A.160.195. The accumulated value of the payments and the potential investment return thereon shall be designed to be equal to the replacement cost of the vehicle less its salvage value at the end of its anticipated lifetime. The superintendent shall revise at least annually the reimbursement payments based on the current and anticipated future cost of comparable categories of transportation

equipment. Reimbursements to school districts for approved transportation equipment shall be placed in a separate transportation vehicle fund established for each school district under RCW 28A.160.130. However, educational service districts providing student transportation services pursuant to RCW 28A.310.180(4) and receiving moneys generated pursuant to this section shall establish and maintain a separate transportation vehicle account in the educational service district's general expense fund for the purposes and subject to the conditions under RCW 28A.160.130 and 28A.320.300.

(2) To the extent possible, districts shall operate vehicles acquired under this section not less than the number of years or useful lifetime now, or hereafter, assigned to the category of vehicles by the superintendent. School districts shall properly maintain the transportation equipment acquired under the provisions of this section, in accordance with rules established by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. If a district fails to follow generally accepted standards of maintenance and operation, the superintendent of public instruction shall penalize the district by deducting from future reimbursements under this section an amount equal to the original cost of the vehicle multiplied by the fraction of the useful lifetime or miles the vehicle failed to operate.

(3) The superintendent shall annually develop a depreciation schedule to recognize the cost of depreciation to districts contracting with private carriers for student transportation. Payments on this schedule shall be a straight line depreciation based on the original cost of the appropriate category of vehicle.

(4) If, due to changing student populations or transportation needs, a school district chooses to reduce its overall fleet of student transportation vehicles by forgoing vehicle replacement, the school district may petition the superintendent of public instruction for permission to transfer depreciation payments and earned interest from a fully depreciated vehicle to another fund for alternative use. If the superintendent of public instruction determines that the reduction in student transportation vehicles is appropriate due to forecasted declines in student enrollment or other relevant factors affecting the district's transportation program, the petition must be approved.

Sec. 2. RCW 28A.160.130 and 2022 c 200 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) There is created a fund on deposit with each county treasurer for each school district of the county, which shall be known as the transportation vehicle fund. Money to be deposited into the transportation vehicle fund shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) The balance of accounts held in the general fund of each school district for the purchase of approved transportation equipment and for major transportation equipment repairs under RCW 28A.150.280. The amount transferred shall be the balance of the account as of September 1, 1982;

(b) Reimbursement payments provided for in RCW 28A.160.200 except those provided under RCW 28A.160.200(3) that are necessary for contracted payments to private carriers;

(c) Earnings from transportation vehicle fund investments as authorized in RCW 28A.320.300; and

(d) The district's share of the proceeds from the sale of transportation vehicles, as determined by the superintendent of public instruction.

(2) Funds in the transportation vehicle fund may be used for the following purposes:

(a) Purchase of pupil transportation vehicles pursuant to RCW 28A.160.200 and 28A.150.280;

(b) Payment of conditional sales contracts as authorized in RCW 28A.335.200 or payment of obligations authorized in RCW 28A.530.080, entered into or issued for the purpose of pupil transportation vehicles;

(c) Major repairs to pupil transportation vehicles;

(d) To complete a feasibility plan to transition from gas or diesel pupil transportation vehicles to electric or zero emission pupil transportation vehicles;

(e) Purchase, installation, and repair of electric pupil transportation vehicle charging stations and other zero emission pupil transportation vehicle fueling stations and for other costs necessary for station installation; and

(f) Converting or repowering existing gas or diesel pupil transportation vehicles to electric or zero emission pupil transportation vehicles.

(3) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules which shall establish the standards, conditions, and procedures governing the establishment and use of the transportation vehicle

fund. The rules shall not permit the transfer of funds from the transportation vehicle fund to any other fund of the district except as authorized under RCW 28A.160.200(4).

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