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**SENATE BILL 6260**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Wellman and C. Wilson; by request of Office of Financial Management

Read first time 01/21/26. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to efficiencies and programming changes in public  
2 education; amending RCW 28A.160.200, 28A.230.215, and 28A.600.402;  
3 and declaring an emergency.

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

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

7 (1) The superintendent shall develop a reimbursement schedule to  
8 pay districts for the cost of student transportation vehicles  
9 purchased after September 1, 1982. While it is the responsibility of  
10 each district to select and pay for each student transportation  
11 vehicle purchased by the district, each district shall be paid a sum  
12 based on the category of vehicle, anticipated lifetime of vehicles of  
13 this category, and state reimbursement rate for the category plus  
14 inflation as recognized by the reimbursement schedule established in  
15 this section as set by the superintendent. Categories and  
16 reimbursement rates of vehicles shall be those established under RCW  
17 28A.160.195. The accumulated value of the payments and the potential  
18 investment return thereon shall be designed to be equal to the  
19 replacement cost of the vehicle less its salvage value at the end of  
20 its anticipated lifetime. Beginning with buses that are scheduled for  
21 depreciation payments as of September 2025 and those qualifying for

1 payments after that date, the superintendent shall use a minimum  
2 anticipated lifetime of 180 months. The superintendent shall revise  
3 at least annually the reimbursement payments based on the current and  
4 anticipated future cost of comparable categories of transportation  
5 equipment. Reimbursements to school districts for approved  
6 transportation equipment shall be placed in a separate transportation  
7 vehicle fund established for each school district under RCW  
8 28A.160.130. However, educational service districts providing student  
9 transportation services pursuant to RCW 28A.310.180(4) and receiving  
10 moneys generated pursuant to this section shall establish and  
11 maintain a separate transportation vehicle account in the educational  
12 service district's general expense fund for the purposes and subject  
13 to the conditions under RCW 28A.160.130 and 28A.320.300.

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

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

31 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.215 and 2023 c 271 s 4 are each amended to  
32 read as follows:

33 (1) The legislature finds that fully realizing the potential of  
34 high school and beyond plans as meaningful tools for articulating and  
35 revising pathways for graduation will require additional school  
36 counselors and family coordinators. The legislature further finds  
37 that the development and implementation of an online electronic  
38 platform for high school and beyond plans will be an appropriate and  
39 supportive action that will assist students, parents and guardians,

1 educators, school counselors, and other staff who support students'  
2 career and college preparation as the legislature explores options  
3 for funding additional school counselors.

4 (2) Beginning in the 2020-21 school year, each school district  
5 must ensure that an electronic high school and beyond plan platform  
6 is available to all students who are required to have a high school  
7 and beyond plan.

8 (3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
9 facilitate the transition to a universal online high school and  
10 beyond plan platform that will ensure consistent and equitable access  
11 to the needed information and support to guide students' educational  
12 experience and ensure preparation for their postsecondary plans.

13 (a) By January 1, 2024, the office of the superintendent of  
14 public instruction must develop a preliminary list of existing  
15 vendors who can provide or build a platform that meets the criteria  
16 outlined in subsection (4) of this section and that supports the high  
17 school and beyond plan elements identified in RCW 28A.230.212 and has  
18 the capabilities to support the new elements identified in section 5,  
19 chapter 271, Laws of 2023. The office of the superintendent of public  
20 instruction must submit the list of existing vendors and estimated  
21 costs associated with statewide implementation of the universal  
22 platform to the governor and the education policy and fiscal  
23 committees of the legislature.

24 (b) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
25 specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public  
26 instruction must select the vendor that will be responsible for  
27 developing the universal platform by June 1, 2024.

28 (c) By October 1, 2024, the office of the superintendent of  
29 public instruction must develop an implementation plan including both  
30 an estimated timeline and updated cost estimates, including the  
31 technical assistance, technology updates, ongoing maintenance  
32 requirements, and adjustments to the technology funding formula, and  
33 statewide professional development that may be needed, for completing  
34 full statewide implementation of the universal platform in all school  
35 districts. In the implementation plan, the office of the  
36 superintendent of public instruction may include a cost alternative  
37 for educational service districts to host the universal platform for  
38 school districts of the second class when such a district does not  
39 have sufficient technology resources to implement and maintain the  
40 universal platform.

1 (4) (a) In addition to the requirements outlined in RCW  
2 28A.230.212, the universal platform must have the capability to be  
3 routinely updated and modified in order to include the following  
4 elements and capabilities to ensure equity in high school and beyond  
5 plans implementation and engagement across the state that:

6 (i) Enable students to create, personalize, and revise their high  
7 school and beyond plan;

8 (ii) Comply with all necessary state and federal requirements for  
9 student privacy and allow for students to opt in or opt out of  
10 portions of the universal platform related to third-party information  
11 sharing;

12 (iii) Use technology that can quickly be adapted to include  
13 future statutory changes, administrative changes, or both, as well as  
14 integrate enhancements to improve the features and functionality;

15 (iv) Facilitate the automatic import of academic course, credit,  
16 and grade data at a regular interval from the most commonly used  
17 district student information system platforms and manual import from  
18 less commonly used systems so that students' progress towards  
19 graduation in the high school (~~(and)~~) and beyond plan is accurately  
20 reflected at any given time;

21 (v) Allow for translation into the most common non-English  
22 languages across the state in accordance with the model language  
23 access policy and procedures as required under chapter 28A.183 RCW;

24 (vi) Include multiple and varied in-platform assessments with  
25 viewable results that can inform career and postsecondary goals  
26 including, but not limited to, personality, learning styles,  
27 interests, aptitudes, and skills assessments;

28 (vii) Include a catalog containing meaningful, high quality  
29 career exploration opportunities and resources beyond the traditional  
30 college, career, and aptitude assessments that are submitted by  
31 approved entities (community organizations, institutions of higher  
32 education that are authorized to participate in state financial aid  
33 programs under chapter 28B.92 RCW, and employers) and vetted by  
34 state-selected approvers that allow students to register for or apply  
35 to participate in the opportunities (programs, classes, internships,  
36 preapprenticeships, online courses, etc.) or access the resources.  
37 The universal platform should use completion data from these  
38 opportunities to make recommendations to students to include in their  
39 high school (~~(and)~~) and beyond plans;

1 (viii) A dedicated space in which to build a direct connection to  
2 potential employers, including industry associations, trade  
3 associations, labor unions, service branches of the military,  
4 nonprofit organizations, and other state and local community  
5 organizations so students can learn from experts in different  
6 occupational fields about career opportunities and any necessary  
7 education and training requirements;

8 (ix) A secure space for staff, parents or guardians, and approved  
9 community partners who support students' academic progress and career  
10 and college preparation, to make notes that can inform staff efforts  
11 to connect students to academic and career connected learning  
12 opportunities and develop support and credit recovery plans for  
13 students, as needed;

14 (x) Accessibility options for students needing accommodations  
15 including, but not limited to, visual aids and voice dictation for  
16 students with limited literacy skills;

17 (xi) Indefinite access for students to their high school  
18 (~~(and)~~) and beyond plan, regardless of current school affiliation  
19 or lack thereof, in both mobile and desktop applications, that  
20 includes the capability to download and print their plan in one  
21 document, without requiring students to access multiple screens;

22 (xii) Inclusion of in-state labor market, apprenticeship, and  
23 postsecondary education performance data, including employment and  
24 earning outcomes, certificate and degree completion outcomes, and  
25 demographics of enrolled students or employees, to inform students'  
26 exploration and consideration of postsecondary options;

27 (xiii) A dedicated space where students can store additional  
28 evidence of their learning and postsecondary preparation, such as  
29 videos, essays, art, awards and recognitions, screencasts, letters of  
30 recommendation, industry certifications, microcredentials or other  
31 mastery-based learning recognitions, and work-integrated learning  
32 experiences. The universal platform should include the ability for  
33 students and staff to provide access to this portfolio in its  
34 entirety or in selected parts to relevant third parties, including  
35 institutions of higher education that are authorized to participate  
36 in state financial aid programs under chapter 28B.92 RCW, branches of  
37 the military, potential employers, or preapprenticeship  
38 opportunities;

39 (xiv) Access to data reporting features that allow schools,  
40 districts, and state agencies to review data stored within the

1 universal platform, and allow data to be broken down by demographic,  
2 socioeconomic, and other identified characteristics, for the purposes  
3 of analyzing student use of the universal platform, improving student  
4 access to the information, guidance, and opportunities that can help  
5 them maximize their secondary education experience and postsecondary  
6 preparation, and informing state-level support for high school and  
7 beyond plan implementation;

8 (xv) A space for the student to indicate the graduation pathway  
9 option or options the student has selected to complete and how the  
10 selected option or options align with the student's career and  
11 postsecondary education goals; and

12 (xvi) The ability for school districts to customize or add  
13 features unique to local needs and local graduation requirements,  
14 including the capability to auto-align data with the local school  
15 districts' graduation requirements or the ability to enter those  
16 requirements manually.

17 (b) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must  
18 also ensure that the universal platform will permit transition plans  
19 required by RCW 28A.155.220 to be incorporated into the universal  
20 platform in a manner that eliminates the need to create duplicate or  
21 substantially similar transition plans in other electronic or  
22 nonelectronic formats.

23 (5)(a) Within two years of completing the universal platform  
24 development and alignment with the requirements in this section and  
25 RCW 28A.230.212, school districts must provide students with access  
26 to the adopted universal platform.

27 (b) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must  
28 develop guidance and provide technical assistance and support for the  
29 facilitation of statewide professional development for school  
30 districts and partner organizations in using the universal platform.

31 (c) The superintendent shall withhold up to 1.9 percent of school  
32 district allocations generated under RCW 28A.150.260(8)(b) solely for  
33 the central provision of licenses to the universal platform required  
34 under this section. The withheld funds may not be used for salaries  
35 or benefits for employees of the office of the superintendent of  
36 public instruction.

37 (6) In carrying out subsections (3)(b) and (4) of this section,  
38 the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall seek  
39 input from the state board of education, educators, school and  
40 district administrators, school counselors, career counseling

1 specialists, families, students, the Washington student achievement  
2 council, institutions of higher education that are authorized to  
3 participate in state financial aid programs under chapter 28B.92 RCW,  
4 and community partners who support students' career and college  
5 preparation. The office of the superintendent of public instruction  
6 may partner with existing community and regional networks and  
7 organizations who support students' career and college preparation in  
8 the analysis, selection, and implementation of the universal  
9 platform.

10 (7) As used in this section "universal platform" means the  
11 universal online high school and beyond plan platform.

12 (8) The office of the superintendent of public instruction may  
13 adopt and revise rules as necessary to implement this section.

14 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.600.402 and 2023 c 350 s 1 are each amended to  
15 read as follows:

16 (1) Students participating in running start programs may be  
17 funded up to a combined maximum enrollment of 1.4 full-time  
18 equivalents in the 2025-26 school year and 1.2 full-time equivalents  
19 in subsequent years, including school district and institution of  
20 higher education enrollment.

21 (2) In calculating the combined full-time equivalents, the office  
22 of the superintendent of public instruction:

23 (a) Must adopt rules to fund the participating student's  
24 enrollment in running start courses provided by the institution of  
25 higher education during the summer academic term, up to a maximum of  
26 10 college credits per student per summer academic term; and

27 (b) May average the participating student's September through  
28 June enrollment to account for differences in the start and end dates  
29 for courses provided by the high school and the institution of higher  
30 education.

31 (3) Running start programs as a service delivery model and  
32 associated funding levels beyond 1.0 full-time equivalent per student  
33 are not part of the state's statutory program of basic education  
34 under chapter 28A.150 RCW.

35 (4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in  
36 consultation with the state board for community and technical  
37 colleges, the participating institutions of higher education, the  
38 student achievement council, and the education data center, must  
39 annually track, and report to the fiscal committees of the

1 legislature, the combined full-time equivalent experience of students  
2 participating in running start programs, including course load  
3 analyses and enrollments by high school and participating  
4 institutions of higher education.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
6 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of  
7 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes  
8 effect immediately.

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