
SENATE BILL 6320

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Senators Hansen, Cortes, Hasegawa, and Nobles

Read first time 01/27/26. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to alternative learning experiences; amending RCW
2 28A.250.010, 28A.232.010, and 28A.250.020; reenacting and amending
3 RCW 28A.500.015; and adding a new section to chapter 28A.232 RCW.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.500.015 and 2025 c 405 s 1 and 2025 c 404 s 2
6 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

7 (1) Beginning in calendar year 2020 and each calendar year
8 thereafter, the state must provide state local effort assistance
9 funding to supplement school district enrichment levies as provided
10 in this section.

11 (2)(a) For an eligible school district with an actual enrichment
12 levy rate that is less than \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value in the
13 school district, the annual local effort assistance funding is equal
14 to the school district's maximum local effort assistance multiplied
15 by a fraction equal to the school district's actual enrichment levy
16 rate divided by \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value in the school
17 district.

18 (b) For an eligible school district with an actual enrichment
19 levy rate that is equal to or greater than \$1.50 per \$1,000 of
20 assessed value in the school district, the annual local effort

1 assistance funding is equal to the school district's maximum local
2 effort assistance.

3 (c) Beginning in calendar year 2022, for state-tribal education
4 compact schools established under chapter 28A.715 RCW, the annual
5 local effort assistance funding is equal to the actual enrichment
6 levy per student as calculated by the superintendent of public
7 instruction for the previous year for the school district in which
8 the state-tribal education compact school is located, up to a maximum
9 per-student amount of \$1,550 as increased by inflation from the 2019
10 calendar year, multiplied by the student enrollment of the state-
11 tribal education compact school in the prior school year.

12 (3) The state local effort assistance funding provided under this
13 section is not part of the state's program of basic education deemed
14 by the legislature to comply with the requirements of Article IX,
15 section 1 of the state Constitution.

16 (4) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this
17 section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

18 (a) "Eligible school district" means a school district where the
19 amount generated by a levy of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value in
20 the school district, divided by the school district's total student
21 enrollment in the prior school year, is less than the state local
22 effort assistance threshold.

23 (b) "Inflation" means the implicit price deflator for the
24 previous calendar year using the official current base, compiled by
25 the bureau of economic analysis, United States department of
26 commerce.

27 (c) "Maximum local effort assistance" means the difference
28 between the following:

29 (i) The school district's actual prior school year enrollment
30 multiplied by the state local effort assistance threshold; and

31 (ii) The amount generated by a levy of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of
32 assessed value in the school district.

33 (d) "Prior school year" means the most recent school year
34 completed prior to the year in which the state local effort
35 assistance funding is to be distributed.

36 (e) "State local effort assistance threshold" means \$1,550 per
37 student, increased for inflation beginning in calendar year 2020.

38 (f) "Student enrollment" means the average annual full-time
39 equivalent student enrollment, reduced by the ~~((alternative learning
40 experience adjustment. Alternative learning experience adjustment~~

1 equals ~~(f) (i) of this subsection minus (f) (ii) of this subsection if~~
2 ~~a school district's full-time equivalent student enrollment in~~
3 ~~alternative learning experience courses exceeds 33 percent of average~~
4 ~~annual full-time equivalent student enrollment.~~

5 ~~(i) The full-time equivalent students enrolled in an alternative~~
6 ~~learning experience course.~~

7 ~~(ii) Average annual full-time equivalent student enrollment~~
8 ~~multiplied by 33 percent)) full-time equivalent student enrollment~~
9 ~~for students attending remote or online alternative learning~~
10 ~~experience programs that do not meet the funding restoration~~
11 ~~requirements under section 2 of this act.~~

12 (5) For districts in a high/nonhigh relationship, the enrollments
13 of the nonhigh students attending the high school shall only be
14 counted by the nonhigh school districts for purposes of funding under
15 this section.

16 (6) For school districts participating in an innovation academy
17 cooperative established under RCW 28A.340.080, enrollments of
18 students attending the academy shall be adjusted so that each
19 participant district receives its proportional share of student
20 enrollments for purposes of funding under this section.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.232
22 RCW to read as follows:

23 (1) School districts may petition the office of the
24 superintendent of public instruction for restoration of funding under
25 RCW 28A.500.015(4)(f) on a per-student basis.

26 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction may
27 restore funding to districts under this section only for students
28 who:

29 (a) Reside within the boundaries of the petitioning district; and

30 (b) Have provided the district with a written certification
31 signed by a health care practitioner attesting that the student is
32 unable to attend courses at a school building in their resident
33 school district for reasons of immunosuppression, severe and chronic
34 illness, severe injury, or severe bullying that has resulted in a
35 documented medical condition.

36 (3) For purposes of this section, "health care practitioner"
37 means a physician licensed under chapter 18.71 or 18.57 RCW, a
38 naturopath licensed under chapter 18.36A RCW, a physician assistant

1 licensed under chapter 18.71A RCW, or an advanced registered nurse
2 practitioner licensed under chapter 18.79 RCW.

3 (4) The superintendent of public instruction may adopt rules to
4 implement this section.

5 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.250.010 and 2013 2nd sp.s. c 18 s 504 are each
6 amended to read as follows:

7 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter
8 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

9 (1)(a) "Multidistrict online provider" means:

10 (i) A (~~private~~) public or nonprofit organization that enters
11 into a contract with a school district to provide online courses or
12 programs to K-12 students from more than one school district;

13 (ii) A (~~private~~) public or nonprofit organization that enters
14 into contracts with multiple school districts to provide online
15 courses or programs to K-12 students from those districts; or

16 (iii) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, a school
17 district that provides online courses or programs to students who
18 reside outside the geographic boundaries of the school district.

19 (b) "Multidistrict online provider" does not include a school
20 district online learning program in which fewer than ten percent of
21 the students enrolled in the program are from other districts under
22 the interdistrict student transfer provisions of RCW 28A.225.225.
23 "Multidistrict online provider" also does not include regional online
24 learning programs that are jointly developed and implemented by two
25 or more school districts or an educational service district through
26 an interdistrict cooperative program agreement that addresses, at
27 minimum, how the districts share student full-time equivalency for
28 state basic education funding purposes and how categorical education
29 programs, including special education, are provided to eligible
30 students.

31 (2)(a) "Online course" means a course or grade-level coursework
32 where:

33 (i) More than half of the course content is delivered
34 electronically using the internet or other computer-based methods;

35 (ii) More than half of the teaching is conducted from a remote
36 location through an online course learning management system or other
37 online or electronic tools;

38 (iii) A certificated teacher has the primary responsibility for
39 the student's instructional interaction. Instructional interaction

1 between the teacher and the student includes, but is not limited to,
2 direct instruction, review of assignments, assessment, testing,
3 progress monitoring, and educational facilitation; and

4 (iv) Students have access to the teacher synchronously,
5 asynchronously, or both.

6 (b) "Online school program" means a school program that offers a
7 sequential set of online courses or grade-level coursework that may
8 be taken in a single school term or throughout the school year in a
9 manner that could provide a full-time basic education program if so
10 desired by the student. Students may enroll in the program as part-
11 time or full-time students.

12 (c) An online course or online school program may be delivered to
13 students at school as part of the regularly scheduled school day. An
14 online course or online school program also may be delivered to
15 students, in whole or in part, independently from a regular classroom
16 schedule, but such courses or programs must comply with RCW
17 28A.232.010 and associated rules adopted by the superintendent of
18 public instruction to qualify for state basic education funding.

19 (3) "Online provider" means any public or nonprofit provider of
20 an online course or program, including multidistrict online providers
21 under RCW 28A.250.020, all school district online learning programs,
22 and all regional online learning programs.

23 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.232.010 and 2018 c 56 s 1 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this
26 chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

27 (a) "Alternative learning experience course" means a course, or
28 for grades kindergarten through eight grade-level coursework, that is
29 a delivery method for the program of basic education and is:

30 (i) Provided in whole or in part independently from a regular
31 classroom setting or schedule, but may include some components of
32 direct instruction;

33 (ii) Supervised, monitored, assessed, evaluated, and documented
34 by a certificated teacher employed by the school district or under
35 contract as permitted by applicable rules; and

36 (iii) Provided in accordance with a written student learning plan
37 that is implemented pursuant to the school district's policy and
38 rules adopted by the superintendent of public instruction for
39 alternative learning experiences.

1 (b) "In-person" means face-to-face instructional contact in a
2 physical classroom environment.

3 (c) "Instructional contact time" means instructional time with a
4 certificated teacher. Instructional contact time must be for the
5 purposes of actual instruction, review of assignments, testing,
6 evaluation of student progress, or other learning activities or
7 requirements identified in the student's written student learning
8 plan. Instructional contact time must be related to an alternative
9 learning experience course identified in the student's written
10 student learning plan. Instructional contact time may occur in a
11 group setting between the teacher and multiple students and may be
12 delivered either in-person or remotely using technology.

13 (d) "Online course" means an alternative learning experience
14 course that has the same meaning as provided in RCW 28A.250.010.

15 (e) "Remote course" means an alternative learning experience
16 course that is not an online course where the written student
17 learning plan for the course does not include a requirement for in-
18 person instructional contact time. No minimum in-person instructional
19 contact time is required. The remote course must be provided by a
20 public or nonprofit organization.

21 (f) "Site-based course" means an alternative learning experience
22 course where the written student learning plan for the course
23 includes a requirement for in-person instructional contact time.

24 (g) "Total weekly time" means the estimated average hours per
25 school week the student will engage in learning activities to meet
26 the requirements of the written student learning plan.

27 (2) School districts may claim state funding under RCW
28 28A.232.020, to the extent otherwise allowed by state law including
29 the provisions of RCW 28A.250.060, for students enrolled in remote,
30 site-based, or online alternative learning experience courses. High
31 school courses must meet district or state graduation requirements
32 and be offered for high school credit.

33 (3) School districts that offer alternative learning experience
34 courses may not provide any compensation, reimbursement, gift,
35 reward, or gratuity to any parents, guardians, or students for
36 participation in the courses. School district employees are
37 prohibited from receiving any compensation or payment as an incentive
38 to increase student enrollment of out-of-district students in
39 alternative learning experience courses. This prohibition includes,
40 but is not limited to, providing funds to parents, guardians, or

1 students for the purchase of educational materials, supplies,
2 experiences, services, or technological equipment. A district may
3 purchase educational materials, equipment, or other nonconsumable
4 supplies for students' use in alternative learning experience courses
5 if the purchase is consistent with the district's approved
6 curriculum, conforms to applicable laws and rules, and is made in the
7 same manner as such purchases are made for students in the district's
8 regular instructional program. Items so purchased remain the property
9 of the school district upon program completion. School districts may
10 not purchase or contract for instructional or cocurricular
11 experiences and services that are included in an alternative learning
12 experience written student learning plan, including but not limited
13 to lessons, trips, and other activities, unless substantially similar
14 experiences and services are available to students enrolled in the
15 district's regular instructional program. School districts that
16 purchase or contract for such experiences and services for students
17 enrolled in an alternative learning experience course must submit an
18 annual report to the office of the superintendent of public
19 instruction detailing the costs and purposes of the expenditures.
20 These requirements extend to contracted providers of alternative
21 learning experience courses, and each district shall be responsible
22 for monitoring the compliance of its providers with these
23 requirements. However, nothing in this subsection shall prohibit
24 school districts from contracting with school district employees to
25 provide services or experiences to students, or from contracting with
26 online providers approved by the office of the superintendent of
27 public instruction pursuant to chapter 28A.250 RCW.

28 (4) Each school district offering or contracting to offer
29 alternative learning experience courses must:

30 (a) Report annually to the superintendent of public instruction
31 regarding the course types and offerings, and number of students
32 participating in each;

33 (b) Document the district of residence for each student enrolled
34 in an alternative learning experience course; and

35 (c) Beginning in the 2013-14 school year and continuing through
36 the 2016-17 school year, pay costs associated with a biennial measure
37 of student outcomes and financial audit of the district's alternative
38 learning experience courses by the office of the state auditor.

39 (5) A school district offering or contracting to offer an
40 alternative learning experience course to a nonresident student must

1 inform the resident school district if the student drops out of the
2 course or is otherwise no longer enrolled.

3 (6) School districts must assess the educational progress of
4 enrolled students at least annually, using, for full-time students,
5 the state assessment for the student's grade level and using any
6 other annual assessments required by the school district. Part-time
7 students must also be assessed at least annually. However, part-time
8 students who are either receiving home-based instruction under
9 chapter 28A.200 RCW or who are enrolled in an approved private school
10 under chapter 28A.195 RCW are not required to participate in the
11 assessments required under chapter 28A.655 RCW. The rules must
12 address how students who reside outside the geographic service area
13 of the school district are to be assessed.

14 (7) Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, school districts must
15 designate alternative learning experience courses as such when
16 reporting course information to the office of the superintendent of
17 public instruction under RCW 28A.300.500.

18 (8) (a) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules
19 necessary to implement this section.

20 (b) Rules adopted for weekly direct personal contact requirements
21 and monthly progress evaluation must be flexible and reflect the
22 needs of the student and the student's individual learning plan
23 rather than specifying an amount of time. In addition, the rules must
24 reduce documentation requirements, particularly for students making
25 satisfactory progress, based on the unique aspects of the alternative
26 learning experience course types defined in this section and taking
27 into consideration the technical and system capabilities associated
28 with the different course types.

29 (c) The rules must establish procedures that address how the
30 counting of students must be coordinated by resident and nonresident
31 districts for state funding so that no student is counted for more
32 than one full-time equivalent in the aggregate.

33 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28A.250.020 and 2013 2nd sp.s. c 18 s 505 are each
34 amended to read as follows:

35 (1) The superintendent of public instruction, in collaboration
36 with the state board of education, shall develop and implement
37 approval criteria and a process for approving online providers; a
38 process for monitoring and if necessary rescinding the approval of
39 courses or programs offered by an online provider; and an appeals

1 process. The criteria and processes for multidistrict online
2 providers shall be adopted by rule by December 1, 2009.

3 (2) No private or for-profit entity may be approved as an online
4 provider or multidistrict online provider under this section. The
5 superintendent of public instruction must rescind the approval of any
6 private or for-profit online providers or multidistrict online
7 providers no later than August 1, 2026.

8 (3) When developing the approval criteria, the superintendent of
9 public instruction shall require that providers offering online
10 courses or programs have accreditation, or are candidates for
11 accreditation, through the Northwest accreditation commission or
12 another national, regional, or state accreditation program listed by
13 the office of the superintendent of public instruction. In addition
14 to other criteria, the approval criteria shall include the degree of
15 alignment with state academic standards and require that all teachers
16 be certificated in accordance with Washington state law. When
17 reviewing online providers that offer high school courses, the
18 superintendent of public instruction shall assure that the courses
19 offered by the provider are eligible for high school credit. However,
20 final decisions regarding whether credit meets the school district's
21 graduation requirements shall remain the responsibility of the school
22 districts.

23 ~~((3))~~ (4) Initial approval of online providers by the
24 superintendent of public instruction shall be for four years. The
25 superintendent of public instruction shall develop a process for the
26 renewal of approvals and for rescinding approvals based on
27 noncompliance with approval requirements. Any multidistrict online
28 provider that was approved by the digital learning commons or
29 accredited by the Northwest association of accredited schools before
30 July 26, 2009, and that meets the teacher certification requirements
31 of subsection ~~((2))~~ (3) of this section, is exempt from the initial
32 approval process under this section until August 31, 2012, but must
33 comply with the process for renewal of approvals and must comply with
34 approval requirements.

35 ~~((4))~~ (5) The superintendent of public instruction shall make
36 the first round of decisions regarding approval of multidistrict
37 online providers by April 1, 2010. The first round of decisions
38 regarding approval of online providers that are not multidistrict
39 online providers shall be made by April 1, 2013. Thereafter, the

1 superintendent of public instruction shall make annual approval
2 decisions no later than November 1st of each year.

3 ~~((5))~~ (6) The superintendent of public instruction shall
4 establish an online learning advisory committee within existing
5 resources that shall provide advice to the superintendent regarding
6 the approval criteria, major components of the website, the model
7 school district policy, model agreements, and other related matters.
8 The committee shall include a representative of each of the following
9 groups: ~~((Private and public))~~ Public online providers, parents of
10 online students, accreditation organizations, educational service
11 districts, school principals, teachers, school administrators, school
12 board members, institutions of higher education, and other
13 individuals as determined by the superintendent. Members of the
14 advisory committee shall be selected by the superintendent based on
15 nominations from statewide organizations, shall serve three-year
16 terms, and may be reappointed. The superintendent shall select the
17 chair of the committee.

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