

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - BOARD MEETING

Week in Review

The Governor called a 30-day special session, which commenced Tuesday, April 26.

Legislators did not reach a compromise budget prior to the April 24 cutoff, but did come to an agreement on several bills of interest.

Bills on the Move

As of this writing, the following bills of interest will now move forward for the Governor's consideration:

- (HB 1521) OSPI must develop criteria to identify innovation public schools, and with available funds, develop a logo, certificate, and other strategies to encourage and highlight innovation schools.
- (SHB 1524) Allows students to meet state minimum graduation requirements for students who complete all the requirements of the International Baccalaureate Diploma.
- (E2SHB 1546) Authorizing creation of STEM innovation schools and innovation zones in school districts. SBE was asked to review this bill prior to the Governor's signature. We feel that the waiver portion of the bill runs parallel to the current waiver authority of SBE, and thus did not recommend any changes to the bill's language.
- (HB 1594) Identifying standards for teaching financial education and aid school that wish to use those standards (voluntary and subject to state funding).
- (E2SHB 1599) Providing financial incentives to reduce dropouts.
- (2SSB 5427) Requires schools receiving all-day kindergarten support to use a kindergarten readiness assessment (WAKids) or seek a waiver for an alternative assessment.

The 2011 Legislative Session – In the Context of the Board's work

What follows is a review of the 2011 regular legislative session in the context of the State Board of Education's (SBE) strategic plan:

1. Accountability: As with 2010-2011, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction will continue to direct federal funds to Required Action Districts through an application and review process (including designation by and plan approval from SBE). We had hoped to increase the number of recipient schools and offer state-prescribed alternatives to the four federal models, but this work will be on hold until supported by state revenue.
2. Math: HB 1412 (signed by Governor) requires students in the classes of 2013-2014 to pass only one End of Course (EOC) math assessment for graduation. Students in the graduating class of 2015 will need to pass two math EOCs to earn a diploma.
3. Science: Science assessments are not funded in the House or Senate budgets. E2SHB 1443 (not passed yet), allows students in the classes of 2013-2016 to graduate without meeting standard on the high school science assessment (pending the completion of one science

- course after 10th grade. Note: there is still debate on whether this post-assessment class is a third credit or just a third class (e.g. a replacement for a previous failing grade)).
4. Standards: Attempts to halt the adoption of the Common Core Standards did not move past floor debate. However, E2SHB 1443 does require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to conduct a fairness and bias review before making revisions to Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements.
 5. Graduation Requirements: Beyond revising state assessment requirements, the Legislature has made no move to alter high school credit requirements. The 2011 Legislative Session did produce more subtle changes. HB 1594 (awaiting Governor's signature) encourages districts to adopt the JumpStart Coalition National Standards in K-12 Personal Finance Education and to provide students the opportunity to master them. SB 1524 (signed by Governor) provides that students who complete specified requirements of an International Baccalaureate Diploma Program are considered to have satisfied state minimum high school graduation requirements. As for proposals still in the mix, E2SHB 1443 will require districts to define a high school credit, using the SBE and Washington State School Directors' Association sample policy as a guide. SB 5919 (not passed yet) will remove the deadlines for the recommendations of the QEC in exchange for a legislator-created implementation schedule (to be developed at a later date).
 6. Governance: Several governance bills were on the radar early in the session, including SB 5639, a bill which largely mirrored the Governor's call for the creation of a Department of Education. The House countered with ESHB 1849, a bill designed to create a study of current governance practices with the intention of advising reform measures in 2012. Both the Department of Education bill (SB 5639) and HB 1849 also mired in the Senate. Though money is provided in both House and Senate budgets for education governance work, the odds are slim that education governance will move forward this year.
 7. Achievement Gap and Early Learning: Both proposed budgets offer support for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, the continued implementation full-day kindergarten, and lower class sizes in high-poverty schools. 2SSB 5427 (awaiting Governor's signature) will require school districts receiving all-day kindergarten support to use the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Schools assessment or seek a waiver for an alternative. HB 1669 will change the term "achievement gap" to "opportunity gap."
 8. High School and College Preparation: E2SHB 1808 (signed by Governor) requires all public high schools in the state to work toward the goal of offering a sufficient number of dual credit courses to give students the opportunity to earn the equivalent of one year's worth of postsecondary credit. Colleges are also required to develop a master list of postsecondary courses that can be fulfilled by achieving a qualifying score on proficiency exams or by meeting demonstrated competencies. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will annually publish on its website the agreed-upon list of high school courses qualifying for postsecondary credit and the exam scores and demonstrated competencies meeting postsecondary requirements.
 9. Effective Workforce: HB 1600 (awaiting Governor's signature) encourages the Professional Educator Standards Board to develop and adopt standards for a specialty endorsement in elementary mathematics. Elements of SB 5914 (not passed yet) contained many provisions related to teacher performance and pay. Some of those provisions will be explored in the compensation working group as directed by E2SHB 1443. This same bill calls for principals to base RIF decisions on an employee's performance evaluation, a measure the Governor has stated she will veto.