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SENATE BILL 5318

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Senators Hunt, Takko, Warnick, and Brown

1 AN ACT Relating to agriculture science education in public  
2 schools; adding new sections to chapter 28A.188 RCW; and creating a  
3 new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes that the  
6 agriculture sector is one of the largest in the state, and that  
7 maintaining the productivity and vitality this important sector  
8 requires educational investments in public schools and a workforce  
9 with the relevant skills that employers need to be successful in a  
10 competitive global marketplace.

11 (2) The legislature recognizes also that science, technology,  
12 engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs are critical components  
13 of the public school curriculum and that student opportunities to  
14 access applicable courses, especially when they include opportunities  
15 for meaningful interactions with employers and community members,  
16 give students knowledge and skills that will benefit them as they  
17 transition to postsecondary careers and education.

18 (3) The legislature acknowledges that some public schools in  
19 Washington have successfully implemented a curriculum for agriculture  
20 science education, a STEM-based curriculum developed with the  
21 assistance of teachers and agriculture professionals at the national

1 level, but that necessary instructor training and equipment costs  
2 have been barriers to a wider implementation of the curriculum.

3 (4) The legislature, therefore, intends to promote:

4 (a) An interdisciplinary curriculum for agriculture science  
5 education with a strong focus on science, technology, engineering,  
6 and mathematics;

7 (b) Appropriate and effective professional development  
8 opportunities for teachers using a curriculum for agriculture science  
9 education;

10 (c) Funding options for consumable and nonconsumable laboratory  
11 purchases necessary to fully implement a curriculum for agriculture  
12 science education;

13 (d) Active partnerships between high schools successfully using a  
14 curriculum for agriculture science education and those in the initial  
15 stages of creating a curriculum for agriculture science education;  
16 and

17 (e) Active partnerships with businesses and the local community  
18 to connect learning beyond the classroom.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.188  
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 (1) Subject to funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the  
22 superintendent of public instruction shall designate one or more high  
23 schools to serve as resources and examples of how to combine:

24 (a) An interdisciplinary curriculum for agriculture science  
25 education with a strong focus on science, technology, engineering,  
26 and mathematics; and

27 (b) Active partnerships with businesses and the local community  
28 to connect learning beyond the classroom.

29 (2) The designated high school or schools shall serve as  
30 lighthouse programs and provide technical assistance and advice to  
31 other schools and communities in the initial stages of creating a  
32 curriculum for agriculture science education. The designated schools  
33 must have proven experience with the curriculum and a willingness to  
34 serve as a model program.

35 (3) In addition, the office of the superintendent of public  
36 instruction shall work with the designated high school or schools to:

37 (a) Publicize the models of best practices in science, technology,  
38 engineering, and mathematics instruction used by the designated

1 schools; and (b) encourage other schools and communities to work with  
2 the designated schools to replicate similar models.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.188  
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 The curriculum for agriculture science education lighthouse  
6 account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. The purpose  
7 of the account is to support schools designated as lighthouse schools  
8 under section 2 of this act to serve as resources to other schools  
9 and communities interested in replicating similar models. Revenues to  
10 the account may include gifts from the private sector, federal funds,  
11 any appropriations made by the state legislature, or revenues from  
12 other sources. Grants to the designated lighthouse schools and their  
13 administration must be paid from the account. Only the superintendent  
14 of public instruction or the superintendent's designee may authorize  
15 expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment  
16 procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not  
17 required for expenditures.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.188  
19 RCW to read as follows:

20 (1) Subject to the availability of funds for this specific  
21 purpose, the agriculture science education grant program is created.

22 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
23 establish and publish funding criteria for agriculture science  
24 education equipment and professional development grants to school  
25 districts. The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in  
26 establishing the funding criteria, must solicit and consider comments  
27 from members of the public and from persons with relevant educational  
28 and agricultural expertise.

29 (3) Eligible uses of the grants include, but are not limited to:

30 (a) Professional development for certificated instructors  
31 implementing a curriculum for an agriculture science education  
32 program;

33 (b) Consumable laboratory equipment supplies needed for the  
34 adoption or continuation of agriculture science education curricula;

35 (c) Equipment commonly used in the agricultural industry with  
36 sensors that register scientific data, including, but not limited to,  
37 carbon dioxide levels, soil moisture, dissolved oxygen, and  
38 turbidity; and

1 (d) Administrative costs directly attributable to the adoption or  
2 continuation of agriculture science education curricula.

3 (4)(a) Grants awarded in accordance with subsection (3)(a) of  
4 this section may not exceed three thousand dollars per instructor per  
5 school year. Grants awarded in accordance with subsection (3)(b)  
6 through (d) of this section may not exceed fifteen thousand dollars  
7 per school district per school year.

8 (b) Recipients of grants awarded under this section may reapply  
9 for subsequent grants from the agriculture science education grant  
10 program.

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