
SENATE BILL 6124

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senator Hunt

Prefiled 12/31/19.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a statewide environmental
2 sustainability education program; adding a new section to chapter
3 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that environmental
6 and sustainability education offers a rich and meaningful context for
7 integrated learning and teaching. The legislature also finds that
8 nonprofit community-based organizations are uniquely positioned to
9 strengthen classroom learning by partnering and collaborating with
10 schools and local employers to offer K-12 educators work-integrated
11 learning experiences that address the Washington state science
12 learning standards including next generation science standards. Close
13 collaboration with educational service district's regional science
14 coordinators can optimize learning by helping align next generation
15 science standards implementation with community-based organization
16 initiatives to ensure all students have access to engaging field
17 experiences allowing them to understand the scientific, social, and
18 economic impacts of healthy community resources such as gardens,
19 watersheds and water systems, energy systems, or forests so they can
20 participate in solutions to problems such as ocean acidification,
21 rural economic development, or ecosystems impacted by megafires.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300

2 RCW to read as follows:

3 (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
4 provide state leadership for the integration of environmental and
5 sustainability content with curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

6 (2)(a) Subject to funds appropriated for this specific purpose,
7 the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall contract
8 with a Washington state-based qualified 501(c) nonprofit community-
9 based organization to integrate the state learning standards in
10 English language arts, mathematics, and science with the FieldSTEM
11 model of outdoor field studies and project-based and work-based
12 learning opportunities aligned with the environmental, natural
13 resources, and agricultural sectors.

14 (b) The Washington state nonprofit organization must work
15 collaboratively with the office of the superintendent of public
16 instruction and educational service districts to:

17 (i) Build systemic programming that connects administrators,
18 school boards, and communities to support teacher practice and
19 student opportunities for the strengthened delivery of environmental
20 and sustainability education;

21 (ii) Support K-12 educators to teach students integrated,
22 equitable, locally relevant, real-world environmental science and
23 engineering outdoors, aligned to Washington science and environmental
24 and sustainability education standards, and provide opportunities to
25 engage students in renewable natural resource career awareness; and

26 (iii) Deliver learning materials, opportunities, and resources
27 including, but not limited to:

28 (A) Providing opportunities outside the classroom to connect
29 transdisciplinary content, concepts, and skills in the context of the
30 local community;

31 (B) Encouraging application of critical and creative thinking
32 skills to identify and analyze issues, seek answers, and engineer
33 solutions;

34 (C) Creating community-connected, local opportunities to engage
35 students in stewardship projects that enhance their interest in
36 sustaining the ecosystem and respecting natural resources;

37 (D) Providing work-based learning opportunities for careers in
38 the environmental science and engineering, natural resources,
39 sustainability, renewable energy, agriculture, and outdoor recreation

1 sectors and build skills for completion of industry recognized
2 certifications; and

3 (E) Providing models for integrating since time immemorial in
4 teaching materials so that students learn the unique heritage,
5 history, culture, and government of the nearest federally recognized
6 Indian tribe or tribes.

7 (c) Priority focus must be given to schools that have been
8 identified for improvement through the Washington school improvement
9 framework and communities historically underserved by science
10 education. These communities can include, but are not limited to,
11 tribal nations including tribal compact schools, migrant students,
12 schools with high free and reduced-price lunch populations, rural and
13 remote schools, students in alternative learning environments,
14 students of color, English language learner students, and students
15 receiving special education services.

16 (3) For the purposes of this section, a "qualified 501(c)
17 nonprofit community-based organization" means a nonprofit
18 organization physically located in Washington state that:

19 (a) Has at least fifteen years of experience collaborating with
20 school districts across the state to provide high quality
21 professional development to kindergarten through twelfth grade
22 educators to teach students real-world environmental science and
23 engineering outside the classroom;

24 (b) Whose materials and instructional practices align with
25 Washington's environmental and sustainability learning standards and
26 the Washington state learning standards, including the common core
27 standards for mathematics and English language arts;

28 (c) Whose materials and instructional practices emphasize the
29 next generation science standards to support local, relevant, and
30 field-based learning experiences; and

31 (d) Delivers project-based learning materials and resources that
32 incorporate career connections to local businesses and community-
33 based organizations, contain professional development support for
34 classroom teachers, have measurable assessment objectives, and have
35 demonstrated community support.

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