

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3038 Required Action for Districts With Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools

Background

In 1993 the Legislature directed the Commission on Student Learning (CSL) to, among other things, adopt criteria to identify successful schools and districts, those in need of assistance, and those in need of state-level intervention. The CSL expired on June 30, 1999, without such a system being created. During the 1999 Legislative Session the Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission (A+ Commission) was created and given the same task. In 2001 the A+ Commission proposed an accountability system to the Legislature, including a voluntary focused assistance program. The legislation did not pass, but funds were, and continue to be, provided in the budget for a voluntary focused assistance and school improvement program.

In 2005 the Legislature abolished the A+ Commission and charged the State Board of Education (SBE) with identifying successful schools and districts, those in need of assistance, and those in need of state-level intervention. In 2008 the SBE adopted an accountability framework that included using an accountability index that used multiple indicators to identify schools and districts for recognition, improvement, and additional state support. The 2009 legislature directed the SBE to continue to refine the framework, including a system targeting schools and districts that have not demonstrated sufficient improvement through the voluntary system.

For the 2010 Session, the SBE, along with the Governor and OSPI, proposed required intervention for a limited number of school districts with persistently lowest-achieving schools.

Brief Summary of Substitute House Bill 3038

- Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to annually identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools in the state, using federal definitions.
- Directs the SPI to recommend, and the State Board of Education (SBE) to designate school districts for required action if they have a persistently lowest-achieving school, based on criteria established by the SPI, and subject to the availability of federal school improvement funds.

- Requires the SPI to contract for an academic performance audit for required action districts and requires these districts to prepare a plan to implement one of four federal intervention models in their persistently lowest-performing schools.
- Provides for re-opening or negotiating addenda to collective bargaining agreements to make changes needed to implement a required action plan and, if there is an impasse, provides for mediation and a superior court order to resolve disputes.
- Requires plans to be submitted to the SPI for approval (original bill has SBE approve the plans) and directs districts to implement them, subject to availability of federal funds.
- Allows for a district to request reconsideration by the SBE if the plan is rejected, based on whether the SPI gave appropriate consideration to the unique circumstances of the school district.
- Creates a joint select legislative committee to examine options and models for significant state action in the case of persistent lack of improvement in a required action district (new addition).

Senate Substitute Bill 6696 maintains the original SBE required action language with some technical adjustments and adds a requirement that the SBE have ongoing collaboration with the Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee on measures used for recognition of schools to close the achievement gap.