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HOUSE BILL 2026

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By Representatives Haigh, Cox, Kagi, Ericksen, Keiser, Hunt, Lovick, Doumit, Linville, Eickmeyer, Barlean, D. Schmidt, Ogden, Tokuda, Conway, Edmonds and Santos

Read first time 02/13/2001. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the environmental education partnership fund;  
2 adding new sections to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The state of Washington faces many  
5 complex environmental issues requiring a well-informed citizenry.  
6 Effective environmental education programs provide the foundation for  
7 the development of environmentally literate children and adults,  
8 setting the stage for lifelong learning. Furthermore, environmental  
9 education offers many opportunities for achieving excellence in our  
10 schools. Well-designed programs, integrated with the state's essential  
11 academic learning requirements, can contribute to the state's  
12 educational reform goals. Recent studies have shown that integrated,  
13 multidisciplinary environmental education programs provide the  
14 following benefits:

- 15 (a) Better performance on standardized measures of academic  
16 achievement in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies;  
17 (b) Increased engagement and enthusiasm for learning;  
18 (c) Reduced discipline and classroom management problems; and  
19 (d) Greater pride and ownership in accomplishments.

1 (2) Therefore, the purpose of the environmental education  
2 partnership trust fund is to further the development of environmental  
3 education in the state by:

4 (a) Raising money from public and private sources to fund  
5 environmental education initiatives and programs throughout the state;  
6 and

7 (b) Disbursing the money to programs through a competitive grant-  
8 making process with oversight from a board of trustees managed in the  
9 office of the superintendent of public instruction. These activities  
10 would include, but are not limited to:

11 (i) Developing a statewide plan to set priorities for environmental  
12 education;

13 (ii) Encouraging the development of environmental education  
14 projects in schools, outdoor learning areas, communities, and  
15 businesses;

16 (iii) Enhancing preservice training in environmental education for  
17 future educators;

18 (iv) Providing continuing in-service training for educators;

19 (v) Providing for transportation services to learning sites;

20 (vi) Supporting conferences and meetings that focus on  
21 environmental education needs and issues; and

22 (vii) Providing for the purchase of equipment and supplies needed  
23 for the implementation of the programs in this section.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 (1) The Washington environmental education partnership fund is  
27 hereby created to provide environmental education opportunities for  
28 teachers and students to meet the Washington high school graduation  
29 requirements and to help achieve the highest quality of excellence in  
30 education through compliance with the essential academic learning  
31 requirements.

32 (2) Under the partnership fund in this section, funds shall be  
33 disbursed through grants with oversight from a board of trustees  
34 managed in the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

35 (3) The board of trustees, representing a diverse array of  
36 interests, backgrounds, and geographical location, shall consist of  
37 thirteen members.

1 (4) Eleven members of the board shall be appointed by the governor  
2 and include representation from:

- 3 (a) Tribal governments;
- 4 (b) Environmental education practitioners;
- 5 (c) Environmental organizations;
- 6 (d) Agriculture, business, and industry;
- 7 (e) K-12 public and private school administrators;
- 8 (f) K-12 public and private school teachers;
- 9 (g) Nonformal education institutions;
- 10 (h) Institutions of higher education;
- 11 (i) Local governments; and
- 12 (j) Parents.

13 (5) One member of the board shall be a senator, appointed by the  
14 majority leader of the senate, and one member of the board shall be a  
15 representative, appointed by the speaker of the house of  
16 representatives.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 (1) Money raised from public and private sources shall fund  
20 effective environmental education activities throughout the state.  
21 These activities may include:

- 22 (a) Transportation for students and teachers to education sites;
- 23 (b) Environmental education projects, both in the classroom and  
24 outdoors;
- 25 (c) Preservice training for future educators;
- 26 (d) In-service training for educators; and
- 27 (e) Supplies needed for implementation of the programs in this  
28 subsection (1).

29 (2) The board of trustees shall establish and publish funding  
30 criteria. These criteria shall be based on compliance with the  
31 essential academic learning requirements. The criteria may also  
32 include environmental education programs with one or more of the  
33 following features:

- 34 (a) Methods that encourage critical thinking;
- 35 (b) Multidisciplinary approaches to environmental issues;
- 36 (c) Service learning components; and

1 (d) Programs that target underserved and multicultural populations.

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