



April 1, 2016

The Honorable Kim Wyman
Secretary of State
PO Box 40220
Olympia, WA 98504-0220

Dear Secretary Wyman:

I am returning herewith unsigned, to become law without my signature, Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6194 entitled:

“AN ACT Relating to public schools that are not common schools.”

My guiding principles in reviewing Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6194 have been to provide for strong public accountability of the taxpayer dollars spent on educating our children, to have schools that foster innovation and creativity for all our students, and to ensure existing charter schools continue to serve the students now enrolled.

It is the last of these that is, at this moment, most compelling to me. I am not interested in closing schools in a manner that disrupts the education of hundreds of students and their affected families.

One of the common characteristics of successful charter schools is a focus on teachers, who are both well compensated and continually mentored and trained to succeed. I believe that we need all of our teachers, not just those in these select schools, to be better trained, mentored and compensated. For the newest teachers in particular, we need to continue strengthening our mentoring programs across the state. I will continue to fight for this principle and these priorities.

However, I remain deeply concerned about the public accountability and oversight provisions of this bill. At its foundation, our public school system relies upon locally elected boards to oversee the expenditures of taxpayer money. This bill provides an option for similar oversight, but would ultimately allow unelected boards to make decisions about how to spend public money. I can think of no other situation where the Legislature or the people would condone that, especially when we are fighting to meet the needs of the almost one million children in our public schools.



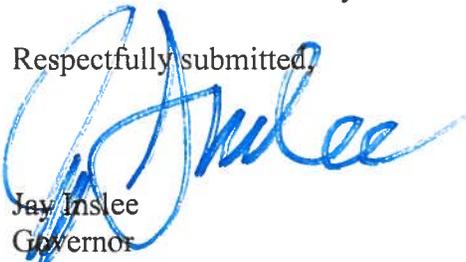
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Despite my deep reservations about the weakness of the taxpayer accountability provisions, I will not close schools.

I remain committed to seeing all of Washington's K-12 students succeed. To do so, we must not only satisfy our constitutional obligation to fully fund our schools, but also ensure that all our educational efforts meet the strict standards of the law.

I will continue to focus my efforts here.

Respectfully submitted,



Jay Inslee
Governor