

## KOMO News

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### State schools chief: Sanctions not needed yet

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Randy Dorn

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) - Lawmakers should be given until the 2015 legislative session to make progress in fixing how the state pays for public education, Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn said in a brief to the state Supreme Court.

If lawmakers don't do enough by next year, plaintiffs should then be allowed to petition the high court for sanctions, including asking that state spending not related to the 2012 McCleary decision be barred, Dorn proposed in a brief his office said was filed Monday.

In June, the Supreme Court ordered the state to appear before it on Sept. 3 and show how it has followed court orders in the McCleary decision or be held in contempt. The McCleary decision said lawmakers are not meeting their constitutional duty to fully pay for basic education.

Dorn argued that sanctions aren't the proper course of action at this time.

Last month, lawyers representing the state also argued against sanctions or a contempt finding when they filed the state's brief with the high court.

The state attorney general's office said in the filing that the 2015 legislative session will be key

in reaching a consensus on education funding and urged the Supreme Court to wait until after the session to consider sanctioning lawmakers with contempt - something it says has never happened before.

Lawmakers were given until 2018 to fix the problem. The Legislature has been making yearly progress reports on its efforts to fulfill the McCleary decision, and every year, the court has said in response that lawmakers aren't doing enough.

The most recent report to the court, filed at the end of April, acknowledged that the Legislature didn't make a lot of progress in 2014. However, it said there were ideas for fixing the situation during the 2015 legislative session, which will be a longer session.

A total of \$982 million will be added to state education spending over the next two years, with most of the money going to classroom supplies, student transportation and the Learning Assistance Program for struggling students. The Legislature also made down payments toward all-day kindergarten and smaller classes in the early grades.