

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2551

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to special educational services demonstration projects.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to special educational services demonstration projects.

Sponsor(s): By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives H. Sommers, Peery, Brough and Valle).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, February 3, 1992, DPS;
Appropriations, February 9, 1992, DPS(ED);
Passed House, February 15, 1992, 94-0;
Amended by Senate;
Passed Legislature.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 19 members: Representatives Peery, Chair; G. Fisher, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; Vance, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Betrozoff; Broback; Brumsickle; Carlson; G. Cole; Dorn; P. Johnson; Jones; J. Kohl; Neher; Orr; Rasmussen; Roland; H. Sommers; and Valle.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS**

Majority Report: *The substitute bill by Committee on Education be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.* Signed by 25 members: Representatives Locke, Chair; Inslee, Vice Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; Silver, Ranking Minority Member; Morton, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Belcher; Bowman; Brekke; Carlson; Dorn; Ebersole; Hine; Lisk; May; Mielke; Nealey; Peery; Pruitt; Rust; D. Sommers; H. Sommers; Valle; Vance; and Wang.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7153).

Background: In 1991, legislation was passed (ESHB 1329) that authorized school district demonstration projects intended to promote the blending of funds to improve the provision of services to students who qualify for learning disabled, bilingual, learning assistance and other special need funds. The legislation also was intended to reduce the need to complete lengthy assessments of students before they qualify for the learning disabled special education status, and to reduce the number of students labeled as special education students.

One problem with not categorizing or "labeling" students is determining the amount of categorical funds that should be allocated to school districts for these students. The 1991 legislation provided that the allocation for learning disabled students be based on an average of the previous three years. Under this formula, if projects do result in less labeling, state handicapped allocations to school districts would be reduced over time. The intent of the original legislation was to be revenue neutral and not penalize schools for labeling fewer students.

Summary of Bill: Language is added to clarify that the intent of the Special Education Services Demonstration projects is to discourage unnecessary labeling of students while still providing state funding for needed services.

Provisions are modified regarding state handicapped funding for projects participating in the special education services demonstration projects. The use of a three-year rolling average for new projects is eliminated, but may be used for approved projects as of January 31, 1992. Most significantly, provisions are added that allow school districts that have projects designed to reduce unnecessary labeling of students as handicapped to use prior handicap enrollments as the basis for funding during, and two years after, the project.

This act expires January 1, 1996.

Fiscal Note: Requested on substitute, February 4, 1992.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: (Education): It was not intended that school districts participating in these projects would lose funding: the intent was to be revenue neutral. For these projects to be successful a stable funding base is needed.

(Appropriations): None.

Testimony Against: (Education): None.

(Appropriations): None.

Witnesses: (Education): Matt Temmel, Legislative Budget Committee (supports).

(Appropriations): None.