

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6180

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 11, 1992

Brief Description: Protecting education programs.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Bailey, Erwin, Oke, Barr, Nelson and Skratek)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6180 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Erwin, Vice Chairman; Craswell, Metcalf, Murray, Oke, and Pelz.

Staff: Larry Davis (786-7422)

Hearing Dates: January 20, 1992; January 30, 1992; February 3, 1992

BACKGROUND:

The Legislature initiated budgetary support for the Fair Start program beginning in the 1990-91 school year and increased the funding level for the program with passage of the 1991-93 operating budget. It is suggested that establishing this program in statute will provide greater stability to school districts in providing coordinated planning and delivery of prevention and early intervention services to young children.

SUMMARY:

The Fair Start program is established in statute but is not part of the state's basic education obligation. The Superintendent of Public Instruction establishes the program to assist school districts in providing prevention and early intervention programs and services for children in preschool through grade six. Funds are distributed on the basis of a district's student enrollment in grades K-6.

Districts may use Fair Start funds to implement or enhance an elementary grades' prevention and intervention program using child intervention specialists or community-based public or private human service providers, defined as including but not limited to: licensed mental health professionals, child psychiatrists, health care providers, social service caseworkers or social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, and school social workers.

Districts are required to provide services to children on a priority basis determined by need as defined locally. Districts report their definitions of need to the SPI and the SPI reports this information to the Legislature and the

Governor. The use of Fair Start funds with regard to health care is limited to services and information regarding nutrition and poor health.

Districts must submit to the SPI certain information, including: the district's goals and plan for providing prevention and early intervention services to students; and how grant funds will be used for related in-service purposes. Districts must document that community-based public or private human service providers, district and building level staff, and parents participated in the development of the district's goals and plan.

School and educational service districts accepting Fair Start funds must enter into written interagency agreements with community-based public or private human service providers to assure delivery of appropriate services to students. To the greatest extent possible, delivery of services shall not be duplicative, emphasize the most efficient and cost-effective use of Fair Start funds, and be provided on a 12-month basis.

The state Superintendent and Department of Social and Health Services must adopt rules which provide for appropriate coordination between the Primary Intervention Program (PIP) and Fair Start programs.

The state Superintendent develops specific measures to evaluate the success of the projects and the Fair Start program, and, jointly with DSHS, conducts a longitudinal evaluation of the Fair Start program. Reporting requirements are set forth.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR (Fair Start):

Collaboration between school districts and other agencies is vital, is supported and should be expected, but services should not be required to be provided via contracts with other agencies. A continuum of services is necessary and appropriate. Collaboration is important along the continuum but not necessary every step of the continuum. Districts need the option and flexibility of utilizing the most appropriate personnel to provide services to students. The Fair Start emphasis on prevention and early intervention in the early elementary grades is important and this is where the focus should remain. Placing Fair Start language in statute would give greater nondebatable guidelines to districts.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Karen Davis, Washington Education Association; Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals; Margaret Casey, Children's Alliance and Children's Budget Coalition;

Suzy Mygatt Wakefield, HARK Coalition and American School Counselors Association; David Addicott, HARK Coalition and Washington School Counselors Association; Amy Sie, HARK Coalition and Association for Primary Intervention Programs; Donna Smith, HARK Coalition; Bob Schabot, HARK Coalition and Washington State PTA; John Kvamme, Tacoma Public Schools and Washington Association of School Administrators; Karyn Clarke, Tacoma Public Schools; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association