

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1878

As Reported By House Committee On:

Higher Education

Title: An act relating to parent and education partnerships.

Brief Description: Creating a parenting task force to study parent and education partnerships.

Sponsors: Representatives Mason, Sheahan, Morris, Kessler, Radcliff, Van Luven, Veloria, O'Brien, Dunn, Kenney, Keiser, Dickerson, Hatfield, Carlson, Tokuda, Lambert, Thompson, Mulliken, Conway, Blalock, Kastama, Lantz, Wensman, Cooper, Wolfe, Gombosky, Quall, Cody, Anderson, Regala, Ogden and Linville.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/25/97, 2/27/97 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Carlson, Chairman; Radcliff, Vice Chairman; Mason, Ranking Minority Member; Kenney, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Butler; Dunn; O'Brien; Sheahan and Van Luven.

Staff: Marilee Scarbrough (786-7196).

Background: The 1995 National Education Goals Report states that increased family involvement is associated with desirable student achievement and behavioral outcomes. Positive outcomes of family involvement include higher mathematics and reading scores; better report card grades; improved attendance; improved behavior; improved attitudes in middle and high school; reduced likelihood that a student will repeat a grade or be in the lower half of his/her class; and decreased likelihood that a student will be suspended or expelled from school.

The U.S. Department of Education reported in its publication, "Strong Families, Strong Schools," that (1) teachers rated strengthening parental involvement in their children's education as the most important educational policy priority in the coming years; (2) that nearly half of 14- to 17-year-olds reported that they would like to talk to their parents more about school work; and (3) that nine out of 10 business

executives rated lack of parental involvement as the biggest obstacle to school reform. Many family involvement programs involve long-term intervention to help students complete high school and continue on to higher education.

Summary of Bill: A Parenting Task Force is established. The task force will study parent and education partnerships in education. Specifically, the task force will: (1) study partnerships that exist in other states; (2) study the dissemination of information to parents, community support of parenting programs, and academic counseling practices currently used in Washington to aid parents in managing their child's education; and (3) recommend models for improving communication, for assuring a smooth transition from secondary to postsecondary education, and for professional training of educators.

The task force members will include two members of the House of Representatives and two members of the Senate, four parents of K-12 students, and two K-12 professionals. In addition, the task force will include one member from higher education, one member from business, and one representative from social service providers.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Higher Education Coordinating Board will provide staff support. The task force will submit its findings and recommendations to the House and Senate Higher Education Committees by December 1, 1998.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 13, 1997.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: We need to improve parent involvement. We are reforming education, but we do not have a strong vehicle for parent involvement. Education reform has not looked at the parent's role in empowering their child's education. We need a clear and strong definition of a parent's relationship with schools. As we look at system change, we must look at how the parent's role changes. We need counselors that can work with youngsters and help them to achieve.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Dawn Mason, prime sponsor (pro); Katherine Baxter (pro); Bob McKenzie, Center for Systems Integrity (pro); Ella B. Guilford, University Place District, Curtis Junior High School (pro); and Rachel Kaena, African-American Parents Council of Seattle (pro).