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HOUSE BILL 2271

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State of Washington

56th Legislature

1999 Regular Session

By Representative Gombosky

Read first time 03/16/1999. Referred to Committee on Appropriations.

1 AN ACT Relating to elementary school counselors; adding new  
2 sections to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that an increasing  
5 number of children are coming to school from backgrounds that reflect  
6 many of society's dysfunctions. The backgrounds of these young  
7 students often inhibit the students' abilities to take full advantage  
8 of the educational opportunities offered to them. The legislature also  
9 finds that these children would benefit greatly from early intervention  
10 by school counselors trained to help the children adapt to the demands  
11 of the educational system. The legislature intends to provide an  
12 opportunity for school districts to hire counselors for their  
13 elementary schools through a voluntary grant program.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 (1) The school counselors voluntary grant program is established.  
17 The purpose of the program is to provide school districts with the

1 funding to hire and support counselors to work with elementary school  
2 children.

3 (2) The program shall be administered by the office of the  
4 superintendent of public instruction. In its administration of the  
5 program, the responsibilities of the office of the superintendent of  
6 public instruction shall include, but need not be limited to:

7 (a) Adoption and distribution of rules and program guidelines;

8 (b) Use of simple, brief, and clear application processes, forms,  
9 and reporting requirements that help make the program accessible to  
10 school districts with minimal administrative teams;

11 (c) Selection of grant recipients;

12 (d) The annual adjustment of grant amounts, which may reflect  
13 compensation increases and other fiscal changes adopted by the  
14 legislature; and

15 (e) Distribution of a report by November 15th of each even-numbered  
16 year to the governor, the education and fiscal committees of the  
17 legislature, the educational community, and other interested parties.  
18 The report shall focus primarily on the results of the grants made for  
19 each recipient and of the program as a whole, and shall include any  
20 recommendations for program improvements. The first report shall  
21 include information on the number of school counselors needed by the  
22 school system, the cost of hiring and supporting the counselors, the  
23 numbers of qualified counselors available for schools, and  
24 recommendations for ensuring an adequate supply of trained counselors  
25 for the public schools.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
27 RCW to read as follows:

28 Any school district may participate in the program subject to the  
29 following requirements:

30 (1) Grant funds shall be used to hire qualified school counselors  
31 to work exclusively with elementary school children.

32 (2) Grant funds shall supplement and not supplant funding provided  
33 by the district to support elementary school counselors during a base  
34 year determined by the superintendent of public instruction.

35 (3) During the 1999-2000 biennium, priority shall be given to  
36 school districts that indicate the greatest need. The need may be  
37 determined through factors that include, but need not be limited to,  
38 elementary schools with the lowest percentage of school counselors and

1 schools with a high percentage of children in need of the services of  
2 a school counselor.

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