

Education

HB 1029

Brief Description: *Establishing a process to resolve issues regarding payments owed by nonhigh school districts to high school districts.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Haigh, Eickmeyer, Hunt and Cox.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Provides for mediation of disputes over amounts owed to high school districts from nonhigh school districts.*

Hearing Date: *1/24/01*

Staff: *Sydney Forrester (786-7120).*

Background:

Washington school districts are defined as either high school districts or nonhigh school districts, based on whether or not they offer a high school program. There are approximately forty-eight nonhigh districts. High school-aged students from these nonhigh districts attend school in a neighboring high school district. The high district then receives the state basic education allocation for those students attending from the nonhigh district.

The high school district also is entitled to reimbursement from the nonhigh district for the cost of non-basic education activities. The superintendent of public instruction determines the amount due from a nonhigh district to a high district. The amount due is based on: 1) the high district's total maintenance and operations authorized levy amount; 2) divided by the number of full-time students from the high district expected to be enrolled; and 3) multiplied by the number of full-time students from the nonhigh district expected to be enrolled in the high district in the coming year. The amount due is adjusted upward or

downward based on actual enrollment for the previous year and is payable in two installments.

The high district is authorized to assess the nonhigh district a lesser amount than that calculated by the superintendent. If a lesser amount is assessed, the high district must notify the superintendent and the nonhigh district.

Nonhigh districts sometimes do not pay the full amount due to the high district. These partial payments are a potential source of disputes between high districts and nonhigh districts. There is no statutorily defined process for resolving these disputes

Summary of Bill:

The bill provides for the mediation of disputes between high school districts and nonhigh school districts over the amount due the high district for the increased costs of educating high school-aged students from the nonhigh districts. When a dispute arises between a nonhigh district and a high district over the amount due, or the payment schedule, either district may petition the educational service district to appoint a mediator. If the districts are in different ESD's, the petitioning district's ESD will receive the petition.

If no agreement by mediation is reached within forty-five days, the ESD must hold a hearing within thirty days. The ESD must adopt an amount due or a payment plan within thirty days of the hearing date.

The cost of mediation must be paid by the petitioning district. The amount due as adopted by the superintendent of the ESD constitutes the applicable amount due from the nonhigh district to the high district.

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

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Received on January 25, 2001.*