
Education Committee

PSHB 2012

Brief Description: Creating a special services pilot program.

Sponsors: Representatives Fromhold, Cox, Kenney, Hunter, Quall, Moeller, Chase and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Makes certain legislative findings regarding the benefits of early intensive invention services.
- Establishes a pilot program to provide early intensive intervention services in reading and language.
- Provides for funding of the pilot program through separate appropriation of non special education moneys.
- Declares an intent that a district's access to safety net funding will not be impacted.
- Requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to create a modified safety net application form.

Hearing Date: 3/4/03

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

Proponents of early intervention approaches, including approaches aimed at less labeling of students, cite to the various desirable outcomes achieved by such approaches:

- Reduced growth in special education eligible populations;
- Increases in the percentage of students meeting state academic standards;
- Increased emphasis on prevention of academic failure;
- Increased rated of students graduating from high school;
- Increased emphasis on accountability for academic outcomes; and
- Reduced risk of incurring Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) sanctions.

In 1991, at the request of the Legislative Budget Committee (LBC) the Legislature authorized K-12 special services demonstration projects. The LBC's 1993 report regarding the nine demonstration projects authorized indicated: (1) intensive testing has little diagnostic value and is often unconnected with the special education interventions subsequently authorized for the students; and (2) over regulation at the state and federal level often results in uncoordinated programs with excessive paperwork to comply with categorical program rules.

Summary of Proposed Substitute Bill:

A six year pilot program is established with the objective of reducing the number of children who eventually may require specialized programs through the provision of early intensive intervention services in reading and language. Two districts will be selected by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) by June 2003.

Pilot program funding will consist only of sources other than special education moneys. Participating districts will receive state funding by separate appropriation for the pilot program. The amount of pilot program funding will be equal to the district's special education funding for its average percentage special education enrollment for the 2001-02 and 2002-03 school years minus the district's annual actual funding for special education.

Participating districts must use multiple diagnostics to identify individual student literacy needs and use research-based instructional interventions to address individual student deficits in reading and language. Parents must be informed of diagnosed needs, have the opportunity to participate in designing interventions, and be encouraged to actively participate in the learning process.

Districts also must report progress annually to the OSPI and agree to participate in an evaluation of the program, including the contribution of funds and staff expertise for the design and implementation of the evaluation.

By December 2007, the OSPI must report to the Governor and the Legislature on the effectiveness of the program. The pilot program expires June 30, 2010.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 2/26/03.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.