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HOUSE BILL 3136

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State of Washington                      58th Legislature                      2004 Regular Session

By Representatives D. Simpson, Chase, Sullivan and McCoy

Read first time 01/28/2004. Referred to Committee on Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to facilitating parental involvement in education  
2 for immigrant families; and creating new sections.

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

4            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that a large and  
5 growing academic gap exists between children who come from families in  
6 which English is the families' first language and children from  
7 immigrant families. The legislature also finds that parental  
8 involvement in a child's education is one of the keys to overcoming the  
9 achievement gap. Research indicates that parental involvement in  
10 education leads to higher student achievement, improved graduation  
11 rates, better attendance, and fewer discipline problems. The  
12 legislature further finds that having school information and documents  
13 available in a family's first language would help that family work in  
14 partnership with their children's school.

15            The legislature intends to help school districts provide written  
16 materials in the languages most commonly understood by large segments  
17 of the districts' parents.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    By October 31, 2005, the superintendent of  
2 public instruction shall report to the governor and the legislative  
3 education and fiscal committees on the feasibility of having the state  
4 provide direct support to school districts for school information  
5 provided to parents and community members in the languages most  
6 commonly understood by large segments of the districts' immigrant  
7 parents.    In preparing the report, the superintendent of public  
8 instruction shall work in cooperation with the Washington state school  
9 directors association, organizations concerned with the language  
10 barriers faced by immigrant parents, and other interested  
11 organizations, and shall consider the following:

12        (1) The number of languages that are understood by large segments  
13 of immigrant parents throughout the state, in each first class  
14 district, and in each educational service district;

15        (2) A recommended percentage of parents that could be used to  
16 create a threshold over which school information and documents should  
17 be made available in an immigrant family's first language;

18        (3) A set of strategies and best practices that districts might use  
19 to communicate with immigrant families, including strategies to  
20 communicate in the families' first languages;

21        (4) The types of school information and documents that should be  
22 made available in an immigrant family's first language;

23        (5) The cost to school districts of providing school information in  
24 the languages most commonly understood by immigrant parents.    The  
25 funding information should include an estimate of current expenditures  
26 and an estimate of any additional expenditures that might be required  
27 to expand the number of languages or the amount of translated material  
28 provided to immigrant parents.

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