

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2773

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to instructional support services.

Brief Description: Regarding instructional support services in schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Barlow, Haigh, Seaquist, O'Brien, McCoy, Ormsby, Hasegawa, Schual-Berke, Moeller, Warnick, Roberts, Morrell and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/31/08, 2/1/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires allocation of funds to school districts for an additional .48 Certificated Instructional Staff per 1,000 full-time equivalent students in grades six through 12, to be used for increased instructional support services by certificated school counselors and librarians, if funds are provided for this purpose.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Liias, Roach, Santos and Sullivan.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Certificated Instructional Staff (CIS) is a term that includes teachers, counselors, librarians, nurses, school psychologists, and other individuals who must be certified by the state to provide instruction and instructional support services in public schools. The state funding formulas for the General Apportionment Program (the program that provides the bulk of state Basic Education funding) generally allocate funds to school districts based on a staffing ratio

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of 53.2 CIS per 1,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students in grades kindergarten through four and 46 CIS per 1,000 FTE students in grades five through 12. The formulas do not distinguish between the various types of CIS, nor is there any statement of legislative intent or direction to school districts about prioritizing among the various staff.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

If funds are provided, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction allocates funds to school districts for an additional .48 CIS per 1,000 FTE students in grades six through 12. Allocated funds must be used to increase instructional support services provided by certificated school counselors and librarians. These funds are not considered part of Basic Education.

The Legislature assumes that the funds are sufficient for school districts to provide an additional .5 FTE counselor or librarian for an average-sized high school of 600 students, prorated based on the size of the school for smaller and larger schools. However, school districts may allocate the funds to any school, grade level, and staffing configuration.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill clarifies that school districts have discretion to allocate the funds to any school, grade level, and staffing configuration.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill provides a greater opportunity for librarians and counselors to be a part of the student instructional team. Both have a significant impact on student achievement and are critical to schools. The education system has changed, but the state has not updated the funding formulas. In the long run, this should be part of Basic Education, but this is a great start. There is a groundswell of support for school librarians. In too many schools, the libraries are dark; the computers are off; and libraries are being staffed by part-time janitors or parent volunteers.

Every student, wealthy or poor, rural or urban, should have quality librarians and library materials. Librarians need time to plan in-depth research projects, teach classes, plan with teachers, and help students find the right book or the right resource. Too many library collections are woefully out-of-date. The discard bins at the public library have more recent publications than school libraries. Counselors not only provide guidance on educational and

social issues, but act as a resource and offer referral to other services. These types of support services are essential.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Barlow, prime sponsor; Jennifer Priddy, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Lisa Layera Brunkan and Kathy Kalich, Washington Coalition for School Libraries and Information Technology; and Donna Christensen, Washington State Parent Teacher Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (In support) Kim Howard, Washington State Parent Teacher Association .