
Education Committee

HB 1670

Brief Description: Articulating the purpose and role of school counselors.

Sponsors: Representatives Quall and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Defines a school counselor as a professional educator with state certification whose purpose and role is to plan, organize, and deliver a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program based on national counseling standards.

Hearing Date: 2/13/07

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Under state law, the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) is authorized to set standards for approval of preparation and certification programs for Educational Staff Associates (ESAs). Through administrative rules, the PESB defines seven types of ESA certification: school counselor, school speech pathologist/audiologist, school nurse, school occupational therapist, school physical therapist, school psychologist, and school social worker. There are different standards for each type of program and certification. Because the preparation programs are competency-based, there is extensive information in the administrative rules about standards for and the role of school counselors. However, there is no definition of school counselor, and only one reference to school counselors, in the state education code (Title 28A RCW).

Summary of Bill:

A school counselor is a professional educator with a valid counselor certification issued by the PESB. The purpose and role of a school counselor is to plan, organize, and deliver a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program that personalizes education; supports, promotes, and enhances development of all students; and is based on the National Standards for School Counseling Programs of the American School Counselor Association.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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