
Education Committee

HB 2458

Brief Description: Regarding the basic education funding allocation for certificated instructional staff.

Sponsors: Representatives Sullivan, Fromhold, McIntire, Lantz, Conway, Appleton, Green, Haler, Quall, Priest, Sells, VanDeWege, Upthegrove, Haigh, Hunt, Barlow, Simpson, Williams, McCoy, Rolfes, Morrell, Ormsby, Armstrong, Jarrett, Moeller, Wallace, Seaquist, Linville, Pedersen, Blake, Hasegawa, Hurst, Goodman, Kenney, Santos, Kessler, Nelson, Chase, Liias and Darneille.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides an enhanced staffing ratio in the statutory funding formula for Basic Education in grades K through three, to be phased in over a six-year period until the enhancement equals an additional 20.69 Certificated Instructional Staff per 1,000 full-time equivalent students.

Hearing Date: 1/31/08

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

By statute, the formula for distributing Basic Education funds to school districts is to be based on a staffing ratio of 49 Certificated Instructional Staff (CIS) per 1,000 average annual full-time equivalent (FTE) students in grades K through three and 46 CIS per 1,000 FTE students in grades four through 12. This is equal to one CIS for every 20.4 students in grades K through three, and one CIS for every 21.7 students in grades four through 12.

The formula in the operating budget for the General Apportionment Program provides an enhanced staffing ratio for grades K through four of 53.2 CIS per 1,000 FTE students, or one CIS for every 18.8 students. The enhancement is not considered part of Basic Education, and school districts must document actual staffing ratios at least equal to the allocation in order to receive the funds. If a district documents certain minimum staffing ratios for CIS, a portion of the enhanced

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funding can be used to employ additional classified instructional assistants, and in some cases to reduce class size through grade six.

The term CIS 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 funding formulas are for allocation purposes only, and there is no direction to school districts about prioritizing among the various staff. As a result, the staffing ratios do not provide an accurate indicator of class size.

Many researchers who study the impact of class size on student achievement rely on the Tennessee STAR study because of the unusual rigor of its research design. This study indicated that students in grades K through three who were in classes of 14 to 17 students achieved at a significantly higher level than those in larger classes.

Summary of Bill:

The statutory formula for distributing Basic Education funds to school districts includes an enhanced CIS staffing ratio for grades K through three, in addition to the 49 CIS per 1,000 FTE students in the base allocation, to be phased in as follows:

- for 2008-09, an additional 6.95 CIS per 1,000 FTE students;
- for 2009-10, an additional 9.7 CIS per 1,000 FTE students;
- for 2010-11, an additional 12.45 CIS per 1,000 FTE students;
- for 2011-12, an additional 15.19 CIS per 1,000 FTE students;
- for 2012-13, an additional 17.93 CIS per 1,000 FTE students; and
- for 2013-14 and thereafter, an additional 20.69 CIS per 1,000 FTE students.

School districts must document actual staffing ratios at least equal to the allocations in order to receive the enhanced funds and may use enhanced funds to provide facility improvements or additions related to class size reduction in grades K through three.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 22, 2008.

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