

HB 1573-S2 - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Provides that, subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall create a grant program to local partnerships of schools, families, and communities to begin the phase in of a statewide comprehensive dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval system. This program shall be known as the building bridges program. For purposes of this act, a "building bridges program" means a local partnership of schools, families, and communities that provides all of the following programs or activities: (1) A system that identifies individual students at risk of dropping out from middle through high school based on local predictive data, including state assessment data starting in the fourth grade, and provides timely interventions for such students, including a plan for educational success as already required by the student learning plan as defined under RCW 28A.655.061. Students identified shall include foster care youth and adjudicated youth;

(2) Coaches or mentors for students as necessary;

(3) Staff responsible for coordination of community partners that provide a seamless continuum of academic and nonacademic support in schools and communities;

(4) Retrieval or reentry activities; and

(5) Alternative educational programming, including, but not limited to, career and technical education preparatory programs and online learning opportunities.

Declares that the grant awarded under this act shall be for a two-year demonstration project focusing on providing fifth through twelfth grade students with a program that utilizes technology and is integrated with state standards, basic academics, cross-cultural exposures, and age-appropriate preemployment training. The project shall: (1) Establish programs in two western Washington and one eastern Washington urban areas;

(2) Identify at-risk students in each of the distinct communities and populations and implement strategies to close the achievement gap;

(3) Collect and report data on participant characteristics and outcomes of the project, including the characteristics and outcomes specified under this act; and

(4) Submit a report to the legislature by December 1, 2009.

Provides that the act shall be null and void if appropriations are not approved.

May 9, 2007

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning, without my approval as to Section 8, Second Substitute House Bill 1573 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval."

Sections 1 through 7 of this bill provide for the development and implementation of a grant program that, through collaborative school district, family and community partnerships and services, support vulnerable students who are at risk of dropping out of middle or high school. The grant program will be called the Building Bridges Program.

Section 8 deals with existing dropout prevention and high school completion programs run by community based organizations and community and technical colleges through contracts with school districts. Section 8 sets the criteria for determining state funding for students enrolled in these programs, and was intended to address concerns raised by community based organizations. I am vetoing Section 8 because it would have the unintended consequence of decreasing enrollment in existing high school completion programs available through community and technical colleges. The Superintendent of Public Instruction has indicated that the concerns of the community based organizations can be addressed through the rule making process for the new dropout prevention program.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 8 of Second Substitute House Bill 1573.

With the exception of Section 8, Second Substitute House Bill 1573 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine O. Gregoire
Governor