

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 2266

As Failed Senate, June 30, 2015

Title: An act relating to deferring implementation of class size reduction and school employee staffing formula changes.

Brief Description: Deferring implementation of class size reduction and school employee staffing formula changes.

Sponsors: Representative Sullivan.

Brief History: Passed House: 6/29/15, 72-26.

Committee Activity: Ways & Means:

Failed Senate: 6/30/15, 27-17 (notice given to reconsider).

Passed House: 6/29/15, 72-26.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Lorrell Noahr (786-7708)

Background: Prototypical School Funding Formula. In 2009 the Legislature adopted a statutory framework for a funding allocation model for public schools based on prototypical schools. The statute provides that the use of prototypical schools is intended to illustrate the level of resources needed to operate a school of a particular size with particular types and grade levels of students using commonly understood terms and inputs, such as class size, hours of instruction, and specified staff positions. Actual state funding allocations are adjusted from the school prototypes based on the actual number of students in each grade level at each school in the district.

Initiative 1351. Washington State voters approved Initiative 1351 (I-1351) November 4, 2014. I-1351 amended the prototypical school funding formula to lower class sizes in all grades; provide enhanced class size reductions in high poverty schools; and increase the allocation of school-based and district-wide staff units in all categories. The initiative specified a phase-in schedule for the funding of the new prototypical schools funding formula of 50 percent of the costs in the first biennium and full implementation in school year 2018-19.

Summary of Engrossed Bill: Legislative findings and intent are declared about educational reasons for temporary deferral of Initiative 1351, which include: (1) focus on the near-term

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implementation of ESHB 2261 and SHB 2776 as directed by the court, which includes class size reduction in early grades as recommended by the research reviewed by the Basic Education Funding Task Force and the Quality Education Council; and (2) practical issues of implementation, including production of new teachers, the need to avoid exacerbating teacher recruitment challenges, and time to plan and construct new classrooms.

The implementation schedule specified under I-1351 is revised, delaying by four years the implementation of allocations for class size reduction and increased staffing units. The first biennium by which the Legislature must begin to provide funding for prototypical staffing increases is changed to the 2019-21 biennium. Full funding is required to be provided by the end of the 2021-23 biennium.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.