

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1618

As of March 16, 2017

Title: An act relating to family and community engagement coordinators.

Brief Description: Concerning family and community engagement coordinators.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Ortiz-Self, Harris, Santos, Johnson, Bergquist and Kagi).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/27/17, 95-1.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/16/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the terms "parent involvement coordinator" in the prototypical school funding formula statute and "parent and family engagement coordinator" in the LAP statute to "family and community engagement coordinator."
- Specifies the minimum duties for a family and community engagement coordinator.
- Provides that funding allocated to school districts for family and community engagement coordinators may be used only for family and community engagement purposes.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Prototypical School Funding Formula. When the Legislature adopted the prototypical school framework for funding basic education in 2009, the framework did not include a parent involvement coordinator as one of the specified staff positions. However, in 2010, the Legislature added parent involvement coordinators to the specified staff positions in the framework but did not assign a funding value for the position. Both the 2013-15 and 2015-17 Omnibus Appropriations Acts allocated an amount sufficient to fund 0.0825 parent involvement coordinator for each prototypical elementary school but the value in statute was not changed. Initiative 1351, approved by voters in 2014, increases the value in the funding

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statute for parent involvement coordinators to 1.0 at each prototypical elementary, middle, and high school. The Legislature has delayed the beginning of the phase-in of the Initiative 1351 provisions until the 2019-21 biennium.

Parent Involvement Coordinators. In 2010, a workgroup convened by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction with the Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO) recommended to the Quality Education Council that the position of "parent involvement coordinator" be changed to "family involvement coordinator." The workgroup also provided a definition, suggested roles, and recommended a funding level of 1.0 for the prototypical elementary and middle schools, and 0.8 for the prototypical high school.

In 2015, the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Commission (EOGOAC) recommend the Legislature change the position of "parent involvement coordinator" to "family and community engagement coordinator" and determine an appropriate allocation for the position.

In 2016, the Legislature directed the OEO, with the EOGOAC and other education entities, to recommend a definition, model, or framework for the staff position referred to as "parent involvement coordinator" and "family and community engagement coordinator." The recommendations that were submitted December 1, 2016, did not include a definition or framework for the position but did include, among other things, the following:

- create a multi-year statewide workgroup, with on-going advisory duties, that reflects the communities in Washington in terms of demographics, geography, and lived experience; and
- fund fully the family involvement coordinator in the prototypical school funding model and specify that school districts may only use the funds for family and community engagement.

Learning Assistance Program (LAP). School districts may use LAP funding for outreach activities and support for parents of LAP students, including employing parent and family engagement coordinators. A district may use up to 5 percent of its LAP allocation to develop partnerships with community-based organizations, and others to deliver academic and nonacademic supports to students.

Summary of Bill: The term "parent involvement coordinator" in the prototypical school funding formula statute and the term "parent and family engagement coordinator" in the LAP statute are changed to "family and community engagement coordinator." The minimum duties for a family and community engagement coordinator are specified as the following:

- identifying and bridging barriers to students' and families' access to services;
- consulting with an advisory group of students' families, who reflect the demographic diversity within the school building or school district, concerning, among other things, how to support students and families in a culturally responsive manner; and
- partnering with community-based organizations to increase resources for family and community engagement, including academic and nonacademic services and programs for students and families.

Funding allocated to school districts for family and community engagement coordinators may be used only for family and community engagement purposes, including the specified minimum duties.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed, except section 3, which takes effect on September 1, 2017.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Because it is in the prototypical school funding model but not funded, schools are not sure what the Legislature wants them to do with this position. One title for this staff position needs to be chosen and their responsibilities need to be clarified. That is what this bill is doing. The community coordinator recognizes that some of our students do not have families but they do have communities that want to support them. Parents and families are the first and most important influence on children. Schools want and need to help empower families as their children's primary educators and nurturers. The more engaged and involved families are with the work of students in school, the more successful the students will be. Families and the community should be brought into the school to help support students. These staff can assist families and be connected and supported members of the community. We support the clarification but we suggest keeping the funding as an allocation and not require the funds to be spent for a specific purpose.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self, Prime Sponsor; Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals; Jessica Garcia, Washington State PTA; Sibusiso Ndhlovu, Student; Phetheni Ndhlovu, Parent.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.